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Commissioner

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TO: District Superintendents  
Superintendents of Schools  
Public School Administrators  
Nonpublic School Administrators  
Charter School Administrators

Date: August 26, 2020

Re: Updated Guidance on Driver and Traffic Safety Education in Response to COVID-19

### **Background**

On March 25, 2020, NYSED issued guidance related to Driver and Traffic Safety Education (DTSE) programs in response to the closure of school buildings due to COVID-19. This guidance was updated on April 20, 2020 to allow DTSE programs to permit students enrolled in these programs during the Spring 2020 session to complete unfinished classroom and laboratory portions of instruction in either the Summer 2020 or Fall 2020 sessions. On August 7, 2020 Governor Cuomo announced that schools would reopen in the fall for the 2020-21 school year with the determination of how individual districts reopen (in-person, remote, or hybrid model) made by local school districts under Department of Health guidelines.

### **Recommendations for Schools**

Because of the flexibilities allowed to schools and districts for scheduling in-person instruction in the 2020-2021 school year, NYSED, in consultation with the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles (NYSDMV), has determined that the 24 hours of DTSE program classroom instruction may be completed remotely by an appropriately credentialed DTSE (MV-283 lecture) teacher, including coursework for students seeking the Pre-licensing Course Completion Certificate (MV-278).

For the 24 hours of laboratory (in-vehicle) portion of instruction, due to the COVID-19 crisis, programs that began in Spring 2020 or programs that will begin in Fall 2020 or thereafter will now have the option of allowing students to complete the 24 hours of in-vehicle instruction under the supervision of a parent/guardian holding a valid NY State Driver's License if COVID-19-related circumstances (e.g., social distancing requirements) do not allow students to enter a vehicle with a professional driving instructor (either an instructor with a valid MV-283 Driver Education Instructor Certificate or an instructor with a valid MV-524 Driving School Instructor Certificate contracted to teach in a DTSE program).

The student's school must provide the parent/guardian with specific and detailed information regarding the 24 hours of in-vehicle instruction, observation and applied practice that the

parent/guardian will deliver. Upon completion of this instruction, the parent/guardian must document and attest to the student's school that the student has received the 24 hours of combined in-vehicle instruction, observation and applied practice. It is a school's responsibility to determine how the parent/guardian will document and attest to the completion of the 24 hours, as the school is ultimately responsible for the issuance of the MV-285 Certificate of Completion.

This guidance applies to all Spring 2020 DTSE programs that were unable to complete the classroom and/or laboratory portions of instruction due to COVID-19 closures and to all other NYSED-approved DTSE programs offered in New York State until such time as schools can safely resume in-person DTSE instruction.

Additional questions or concerns may be directed to [EMSCDRVED@nysed.gov](mailto:EMSCDRVED@nysed.gov).