



The History of Idaho Driver Education

An Overview



1946-1948



In 1946 the AAA reported that in 1946 there were 1,370 drivers under the age of 18 in Idaho, and 9,700 drivers between the ages of 18-24 were involved in fatal collisions.

In September of 1947 a survey was sent out to determine what areas of instruction were in greatest need of guidance around Idaho. Health, Physical Education, and Driver Education rated high on the list. Because of this survey, *A Guide to Driver Education for Idaho High Schools* was published by the State Department of Education.

On July 22, 1948 the Idaho high school standards were revised to allow the offering of Driver Education as a one-half unit of credit for graduation from Idaho high schools.

The 1948 Driver Education Standards:

- Placed Driver Education in the high schools so that training would reach students at the appropriate time.
- Created a full time Driver Education position at each high school.
- Estimated per pupil cost at \$24.84.
- Instructors had to be certified to teach Driver Education.
- Textbooks had to be one of the two that were state approved; either *Man and the Motor Car* or *Sportsmanlike Driving*.
- AAA helped secure a car for instructors who completed a training course sponsored by AAA.
- Instructional content had to include: 1) the driver and pedestrian, 2) correct driving habits, 3) how to drive, and 4) the motor car and traffic engineering.
- Vehicles had to be inspected by law enforcement prior to their use in Driver Education.

1962

The 36th legislative session provided a reimbursable driver education program and these *revised* standards:



1. Courses offered to persons age 14-18. Required for under age 16.
2. High school credit no longer allowed.
3. Permit (\$3) must be purchased prior to enrollment.
4. Enrollment open to the public, even if not enrolled in a public school.
5. Teachers must be certified in Idaho and have 2 credits in basic driver education with 3 years satisfactory driving experience.
6. Course must include 30 hours of classroom and 6 hours of in-car instruction.
7. Number of students in car limited to 3.
8. Reimbursements paid three times a year at \$55 per student.
9. Cars must have dual control brakes, seat belts, and be inspected by law enforcement.
10. Districts must complete an application for approval 30 days prior to school starting.

1988 to the Present



- 1988 Idaho's commercial school laws were created in 1988. It provided an alternative choice for young drivers. George Nakano offered the first commercial driving school in Idaho.
- 1989 The Idaho driving age was increased from 14 to 16.
- 1991 The Idaho driving age was decreased from 16 to 15.
- 2001 The four (4) month GDL program began.
- 2005 Law changed from 4/40 to "Children six (6) and under must be in an appropriate child safety restraint."
- 2006 The SDE approved the use of an online course through the Idaho Digital Learning Academy. This course became the first true online Driver Ed. course in the country.
- 2007 The GDL period was extended to six (6) months.
- 2007 Teen drivers can only have one non-relative in their car for the first six (6) months of their license.
- 2008 The SDE approved the use of an online course to train and certify new Driver Ed. instructors; the first course of its type in the country.
- 2008 Commercial and public permits were combined into one.

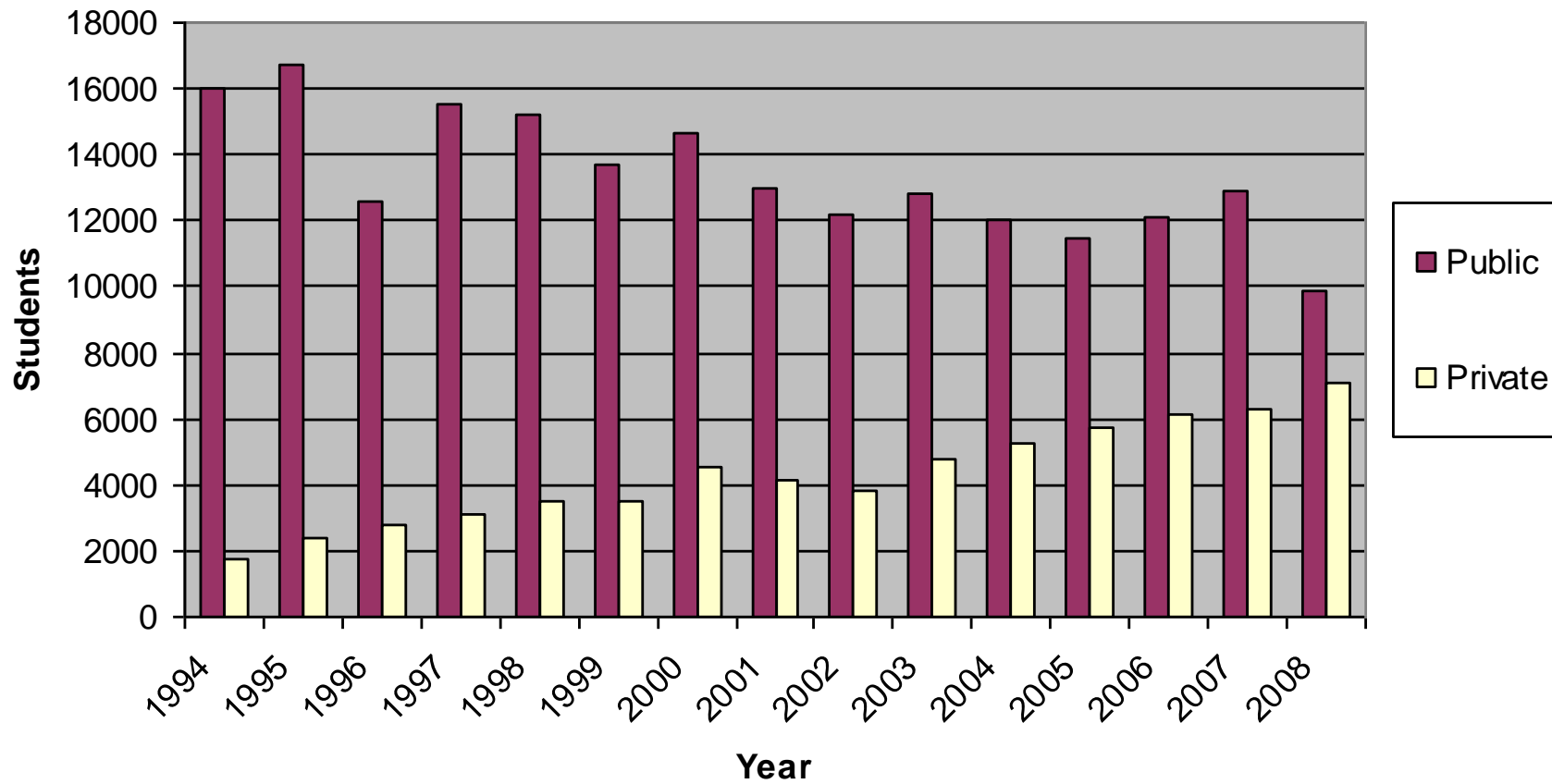
2009

- Private schools moved to the department of occupational licensing.
- Public “standards” were re-written and re-named “Operating Procedures for Idaho Public Driver Education Programs.”

2009 Rule Changes (The Highlights)

- Out of state students must have completed 30 hours of classroom to finish the driving in Idaho.
- Poor “attitude” defined for the first time.
- 10 hours of classroom per week maximum, 3 hours a day.
- Students may drive up to 90 minutes a day in two 45 minute sessions divided by a 45 minute break.
- Students may observe up to 3 hours a day.
- Instructors cannot have a current DUI. Two or more results in non-licensure.
- Instructor licenses last two years instead of one to match the physical and professional development hours.
- Initial Student Lists are no longer required.
- Students MUST be given a certificate of completion.
- Each parent must be contacted at least once during the course.
- Private schools contracting with a public school must use a public instructor and follow all public rules.

Idaho Driver Education Trends



Another view:

- In 1988, the Idaho population was just under 1,000,000. 12,823 students went through public Driver Education.
- In 2007, the Idaho population was just under 1,500,000 and 12,880 students went through public Driver Education.

The Future?

- Public Driver Education programs need more funding, more attention, and moved up the list of a district's priorities.
- Districts need to expand their programs and not be satisfied with the status quo. Six decades without growth is not acceptable.
- Reimbursement amounts will be increased in the near future to help programs grow.