

Alexandria Technical and Community College - Comments

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Comment

As an instructor at one of the most robust and comprehensive truck driving schools in the country, I thought it would be proper to weigh in. We are a member of Minnesota State and teach a full 16-week, 20 credit semester, which offers financial aid for qualified students. Our program director is a 3rd party examiner. As of now, he has not utilized this title. We are currently looking to partner with another Minnesota state college, and swap students for testing, ensuring no conflict of interest. Our standards, curriculum, behind the wheel training and student logged hours, far surpass a large majority of schools out there. We tout ourselves as the pinnacle of what a truck driving school should be. We advocate for broad sweeping FMCSA annual audits. There are a lot of "schools" in operation, that frankly, are not producing safe drivers. While we recognize the driver shortage, we believe in order to become part of the Training Provider Registry, there needs to be a regulation that requires a minimum amount of time spent on theory, behind the wheel range and road. We have great pride in producing not only safe drivers, but drivers that know basic skills, like map & trip planning, load securement, weights and measurements, and how to thoroughly fill out a paper logbook, just to name a few. This cannot be done in a 4-week or 160-hour program. We also recognize that there are potential drivers that do not need a full semester of training. Those that have been in construction, or off the farm, who've been exposed to trucking in ways that a shorter course makes sense, but this would be the minority of enrollment. Minimum timeframe requirements should be implemented and extremely stringent requirements for becoming a 3rd party examiner should be high priority. There is too much potential for fraud and danger to public safety, the way the current requirements are set.

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