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PRESS RELEASE

Back to School Means Giving Pedestrians a “Brake” in School Zones & Crosswalks

(Grand Junction, CO) – Starting Monday, August 20th, Grand Junction Police officers will be watching motorists on City streets closely as they travel through school zones and Mesa State College area crosswalks. Both the college, and most public and private schools begin their school year next Monday, which means school-bound pedestrians and bicyclists will be on the streets with drivers.

“After summer ends we typically hear from drivers that they are out of the habit of thinking about school zones and yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks,” said GJPD Traffic Unit Sergeant Doug Norcross. “It’s time to get back in the habit so that everyone gets safely to school and work.”

Sgt. Ron Stoneburner, who supervises the GJPD’s officers at Mesa State College, says his team will be watching for speeders and drivers who aren’t yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks. The team also has been educating students about where to cross, where not to cross, and using the new flashing lights on 12th Street at Kennedy and Bunting Avenues. “The City of Grand Junction installed high-visibility flashing lights last spring to make drivers aware that pedestrians are about to cross. We want all pedestrians to use the lights to ensure their own safety,” Stoneburner said.

GJPD Officers will watch more closely during the first few weeks, but will continue monitoring drivers in school zones and crosswalks throughout the year. **Fines for speeding in a school zone are doubled; speeding 5-9 mph over the posted speed in a school zone is a \$125 fine and 1 point against your driver’s license; speeding 10+ mph over the posted school zone speed is a \$150 fine and a 4-point license penalty.** Last year the GJPD Traffic Unit alone wrote 221 tickets for speeding in school zones during the school year.

For tips on how to get your young children to school and back home safely, go to:
<http://www.walktoschool.org/>. For District 51 elementary school walking route maps in City limits go to:
<http://www.gjcity.org/CityDeptWebPages/PublicWorksAndUtilities/TransportationEngineering/TEFilesTHatLINKintoDWStoreHere/Schools.htm>

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