



Students are returning to school everywhere across the United States, and since school zones, crosswalks, and school buses are most frequently used during the school months, it is important drivers remember the laws involving them. Keeping students safe should be everyone's priority.

Schools and Speed Limits

Areas surrounding schools often experience heavy amounts of traffic around school start and end times. With so many children walking home or running to vehicles, it is important to drive at a slower speed. Pay special attention to the following areas:

- **School Zones:** Often marked by flashing lights on a speed limit sign, you should slow down. Most areas require driving no faster than 20 miles per hour, but there are areas that require you drive under 15 miles per hour.
- **Drop Off and Pick Up Lanes:** Schools have designated areas for dropping off and picking up students. When in these areas, drive less than 10 miles per hour and be ready to brake if a student runs out from between cars. If you are going to need to park for more than a small moment, park in a parking stall to keep the lanes clear for others.
- **Neighborhoods:** Remember that a speed limit is the fastest you should be going, not the required speed. In neighborhoods and other areas outside of the marked school zone, go slow and watch out for kids. It only takes a small distraction for the child to not pay attention and step into traffic.

Laws for Crosswalks

While crosswalk laws don't change during the school year, they are more frequently used. In more dangerous intersections or roads with higher amounts of pedestrians, cities will use one of the following options:

- Crossing Guards
- Brightly Colored Flags
- Flashing Lights

In these situations, drivers are required to yield to the pedestrian. Stop when someone is in the road and wait for them to cross completely before proceeding. Keeping the intersection clear helps ensure the pedestrian's safety because they are more clearly seen from every direction.

Stopping for School Buses

School bus drivers are tasked with getting children to and from school safely. They stop at designated areas to pick up and drop off students. When a school bus stops, they pull on a lever that opens the door and starts signals on the front and back of the bus. A stop sign also extends out by the driver. These signals to other drivers that they need to stop. This helps keep students safe who may be running to catch the bus in the morning or crossing the street to get home in the afternoon.

Safety and Enforcement

Keeping students safe is a community responsibility. While you may be in a hurry to get to school, take your own kids to school, or get to work, it is important to slow down and pay attention to the laws. Since the consequences for breaking these laws can lead to serious injury and death, they have stiffer penalties. Plan to leave a little early and drive at a slower speed. Being a little late is better than causing serious injury or death to someone else, getting in a crash, or having to pay an expensive ticket.