

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Safety first: With school back in session, now is a good time to revisit traffic laws

August xx, 2017 — On September 6, 2017 more than 3,700 local students will take busses, carpools, sidewalks and bicycles to return to the Bainbridge Island School District.

Making sure every child gets to school safely is top priority for the Bainbridge Island School District and the Bainbridge Island Police Department. In that spirit, we are partnering to remind the community of important traffic laws:

- When a school bus stop paddle is activated, motorists and cyclists *in both directions* must stop. Last year bus drivers reported more than **250** violations, which included 209 vehicle violations and 48 bicycle violations. The fine for failure to stop is **\$419**.
- Between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5 p.m., speed limits in school zones are 20 miles per hour. Speeders will face **tickets that are at least \$214 and as high as \$808 depending on speed**.
- These types of school zone and school bus penalties may NOT be reduced, waived, or suspended by the Judge.
- Washington's pedestrian law states:
 - Pedestrians must obey traffic signals and signs.
 - Pedestrians must use sidewalks when they are available. If sidewalks aren't available, pedestrians must walk on the left side of the roadway facing traffic.
 - Vehicles must stop at intersections to allow pedestrians to cross within a marked or unmarked crosswalk.
 - Every pedestrian crossing a roadway at any point other than within a marked crosswalk or with an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection must yield the right of way to all vehicles upon the roadway.

To reinforce the above laws, Bainbridge Island Police Department is planning to beef-up its patrols.

"These traffic laws exist to keep our children safe," said Chief Matthew Hamner. "I encourage you to do the right thing, slow down and stop for school buses when the lights and paddles are activated. We want everyone to be safe."

“Bainbridge is a tightly-knit community that places much value on education, and an important aspect of educating our students is for them to arrive safely to and from school,” said Bainbridge Island Superintendent Peter Bang-Knudsen. “When you’re out on the road, please remain vigilant and obey the traffic laws.”

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