

County of Santa Clara

Office of the Sheriff

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Laurie Smith
Sheriff

Parents,

Greetings to all of you, I hope everyone had a great summer. Every year I am asked to address a few common traffic issues that occur around our schools at the start of the school year. Those of us that drive to the school in the morning know the frustration of traffic. More than likely you've asked yourself if what you saw or did was legal. Most people don't violate the traffic laws intentionally; it's usually a case of "I didn't know I couldn't do that." So, in order to prevent any costly mistakes, I am providing this list-

In no particular order:

Speeding (25 mph in most school zones) - CVC 22350
Driving through stop signs without stopping - CVC 22450
Disobeying traffic signs (No Left Turn, No Turn on Red, No U-Turn, etc.) - CVC 21461
Driving in the bike lane (sometimes lining up to turn into the school) - CVC 21209
Driving while talking on your cell phone - CVC 23123(a)
Texting, updating Facebook, reading emails, etc- CVC 23123.5(a)
Blocking an intersection (gridlock) - CVC 22526
Stopping or parking * in the red zone CVC 22500
***Parking (leaving your car unattended) vs stopping (remaining in your car)**
Not wearing a seatbelt (driver and passengers) - CVC 27315 & 27360
Jaywalking or crossing outside of crosswalk when available - CVC 21955
Riding a bicycle on the sidewalk* (Cupertino City Ordinance) - CCO 11.08.160
*** Kids 10 and under can ride on the sidewalk, everyone else has to use the bike lane or right side of the roadway**

Regarding bicycles, I would also like to remind parents that any person under the age of 18 HAS to wear a helmet. This includes scooters, skateboards, rollerblades, etc. Basically, if it is person powered, kids have to wear helmets. Everyone who rides a bike also has to be on the right side of the roadway. You can not ride against traffic. If your child rides, skates, scoots or blades to school, please make sure that they are wearing a helmet and are being safe.

Most parents are not performing unsafe driving or pedestrian maneuvers. What I've noticed is that most of the violations happen within 10-15 minutes of the school bell ringing. So if you can get to school a few minutes earlier, you'll probably be able to avoid these traffic issues. Another great way to avoid all of the vehicle traffic is to park several blocks away and walk into the school. The advantage to this is you get a nice parking spot, you have a few extra minutes with your children before the day begins and you avoid all the headache of driving in traffic around the school.

Good luck and stay safe.

Sam Gor – Deputy Sheriff
School Resource Officer