



### **DRIVE SAFELY – SCHOOL IS IN SESSION!!**

School is in session. Several traffic laws apply specifically to school zones, school buses, and children. Violation of these laws is expensive and, often, tragic. Although the fines for these violations vary depending on the jurisdiction where the offense occurs, the maximum fine allowable in Washington for general traffic offenses is currently \$250.00 per offense. **However, violations occurring in school zones or with school buses may be doubled.** In other words, the penalty for violating these laws may be as high as \$500.00!! Make sure you know and follow these rules:

1. **School Zones** – Unless a lower speed limit is listed, it is unlawful to drive faster than 20 mph when passing a marked school or playground crosswalk. The penalty for violation of this law is twice the usual amount for speeding. The penalties for violating this law may not be waived, reduced or suspended. RCW 46.61.4401(1).
2. **School Buses** - Drivers approaching school buses from any direction must stop before reaching the school bus when the bus's stop sign is activated. The approaching driver must remain stopped until the school bus resumes motion or the visual signals are no longer activated. The penalty for violation of this law is twice the mandatory traffic violation fine. The penalties for violating this law may not be waived, reduced or suspended. RCW 46.61.370.
3. **School Bus Drivers May Report Violation** - If a police officer is not present to observe the violation, the school bus driver may file a report about the violation and submit it to the police for further investigation and the issuance of a citation. RCW 46.61.372.
4. **School Patrols** - It is unlawful for a driver to fail to stop his or her vehicle when directed to do so by a school patrol sign or signal displayed by a member of the school patrol or to disregard any other reasonable directions of a member of the school patrol. RCW 46.61.385.

5. **Leaving Children Unattended in Vehicle with Motor Running** – It is unlawful to leave children under the age of 16 in a vehicle on a public road or in a public place while the motor is running. A second violation of this law will result in revocation of the operator's driver's license. RCW 46.61.685.
6. **Transporting Children Under the Age of 13** – Children under the age of 13 must sit in the back seat "where practical." Children under the age of 8, or who are less than 4 feet 9 inches tall, must be transported in an appropriate child seat. All children must wear a seatbelt. RCW 46.61.685.