



Bill Richardson
Governor

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Transportation Secretary

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Press Release

“Back to School” Traffic Safety Reminders

As New Mexico’s children head back to school this week and in the coming weeks, the New Mexico Department of Transportation (NMDOT) wants to remind motorists and pedestrians to observe general traffic laws when in or near a school zone.

General traffic laws:

- No person shall exceed fifteen miles per hour while driving a vehicle on a highway while passing through a school zone (unless otherwise posted) §66-7-301
- A traveling vehicle shall yield, to a pedestrian crossing the roadway within designated walk ways. §66-7-334
- Every pedestrian crossing the roadway at any point other than within a marked crosswalk or within an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection shall yield the right-of-way to all vehicles upon the roadway. §66-7-335
- No pedestrian shall suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle which is so close that is impossible for the driver to yield. §66-7-334
- Whenever any vehicle is stopped at a marked crosswalk or unmarked crosswalk at an intersection to permit a pedestrian to cross the roadway, the driver of another vehicle approaching from the rear shall not overtake and pass such stopped vehicle. §66-7-334
- Crosswalks may be established over highways abutting a school or the grounds adjacent to a school, and all children crossing the highway shall be required to do so within the marked crosswalks. §66-7-336
- Every driver of a vehicle shall exercise due care to avoid colliding with any pedestrian upon any roadway and shall give warning by sounding the horn when necessary and observe proper precaution upon observing any child or any confused or incapacitated person on the roadway. §66-7-337
- The driver of a vehicle upon approaching or overtaking from either direction any school bus which has stopped on the roadway, with special school bus signals in operation, for the purpose of receiving or discharging any school children, shall stop the vehicle at least ten feet before reaching the school bus and shall not proceed until the special school bus signal are turned off, the school bus resumes motion or until signal by the driver to proceed. §66-7-347
- The driver of a vehicle upon a highway with separate roadways need not stop upon meeting or passing a school bus which is on a different roadway or upon a controlled access highway and the school bus is stopped in a loading zone which is a part of or adjacent to such highway and where pedestrians are not permitted to cross the roadway. §66-7-337

Motorists are asked to watch for children when school is underway. When crossing an intersection it is advised to look in both directions. The NMDOT encourages all motorists, and students to practice safe driving and pedestrian habits.

For additional information regarding school zone traffic safety contact Earle Smith, Traffic Engineer, or Manon Arnett, Public Information Officer for NMDOT District Two, at (575) 637-7200.

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