



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Speeding near Panther Lake Elementary gets City emphasis**

The City of Federal Way is trying to get drivers to slow down on the busy street in front of Panther Lake Elementary School. They're hoping that extra flashers and signage – and awareness of the school zone enforcement cameras – will get drivers' attention as the new school year starts.

“We are seeing far too many speed violations in front of Panther Lake Elementary School,” said Brian Wilson, Chief of Police. “It’s a dangerous combination to have speeding cars around kids who are walking and riding their bikes to school.”

An analysis of traffic camera citations for the first part of 2012 revealed that sixty-one percent of the 9,853 school zone camera citations occurred on First Avenue at Panther Lake Elementary School. Panther Lake is one of three schools in the city with school zone traffic cameras.

During the recent summer vacation period when school zone traffic cameras were not operational, the Police and Public Works Departments developed additional awareness tools for the school zone on First Avenue. This month, crews installed six new flashing beacons and additional school zone signage, ready for the September 5 start of the new school year.

The goal is to urge drivers to slow down, and avoid a citation – for kids' sake. “We want to reduce the speeding in front of the school and ultimately, change drivers' awareness and behavior around schools and kids,” said Chief Wilson.

The City utilizes traffic safety cameras only in school zones with high traffic volumes and four or more lanes. As a result only three of the twenty-three schools in Federal Way feature traffic safety cameras. Cameras were first installed at Twin Lakes Elementary and Saghali Middle School in December 2009. The Panther Lake cameras were installed in November of 2010.

The fines for speeding in a school zone are set by state statute. With a posted speed limit of 20 mph, (during school zone times when the yellow warning flashers are activated), speeders can expect a \$210 fine up to 11 mph over the limit and a \$250 fine beyond that speed.

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