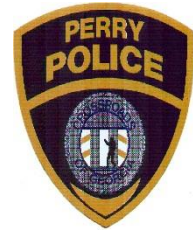




Where Georgia comes together.



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Dear Residents and Visitors of Perry,

There has been considerable discussion regarding the use of photo enforcement for speeding violations in school zones within the City of Perry. I want to provide some background on why these systems were implemented, how they operate, and why the Perry Police Department continues to support their use.

The Georgia General Assembly authorized school zone speed cameras in 2019. Before any cameras could be installed, state law required traffic studies to determine whether excessive speeding was occurring in individual school zones.

In 2019, surveys were conducted at the following locations:

- Park Avenue and Parkway Drive – Perry High School
- Perry Parkway and Macon Road – Perry Middle School
- Danny Carpenter Drive – Mossy Creek Middle School
- Tucker Road – Tucker Elementary School
- Morningside Drive and Kings Chapel Road – Morningside Elementary School
- Georgia Highway 127 and Wingfield Way – Matt Arthur Elementary School

Those studies determined that Parkway Drive, Macon Road, and Wingfield Way did not have a significant speeding problem at that time. Langston Road Elementary and Langston Road Primary were not included in the City's survey because, although the schools are within the City of Perry, Langston Road itself extends beyond the city limits. Matt Arthur Primary School had not yet been constructed.

Although authorized in 2019, Perry did not begin using photo enforcement until August 2022. Cameras at Perry Parkway and Georgia Highway 127 were not activated until 2023.

When the law was originally enacted, photo enforcement could operate beginning one hour before school started until one hour after dismissal. It also allowed enforcement during the

periods between the morning and afternoon school zone hours using the posted school zone speed limit, as well as during summer activities held at schools. The only warning required by law was that advance signage be placed a specified minimum distance before the photo enforcement location. Additionally, every jurisdiction was required to issue warnings during the first 30 calendar days after a camera system became operational.

From the very beginning, the Perry Police Department chose to operate under standards that were more restrictive than state law required.

We chose to:

- Install warning signs and flashing school zone lights at every photo enforcement location.
- Operate photo enforcement only during the posted one-hour morning arrival period and one-hour afternoon dismissal period.
- Require the flashing school zone lights to be operating before photo enforcement was active.
- Issue citations only when a vehicle is traveling 10 mph or more above the posted school zone speed limit.
- Issue warnings during the first 30 days of enforcement at the beginning of every new school year.
- Publicize enforcement each year through social media and traditional media outlets.

Additionally, we chose **not** to operate the cameras during the summer months, even though state law allowed photo enforcement when school-related activities were taking place. Likewise, we did not operate photo enforcement on days when schools were dismissed early, such as noon dismissals, even though the school zone flashing lights remained operational. Our philosophy has always been to use photo enforcement only during the normal school year and only during the times when students are routinely arriving at or leaving school.

Since that time, Georgia has amended the law. The current law now requires flashing lights for school zones using photo enforcement, limits enforcement to specific arrival and dismissal periods, and requires a vehicle to be at least 10 mph over the posted speed limit before a citation can be issued. These are all practices the Perry Police Department voluntarily adopted from the very beginning, years before they became state requirements.

Another change to state law affected where photo enforcement may be used. Under the revised law, school zones located on a four-lane roadway or divided highway are only eligible for photo enforcement if there is a marked pedestrian crosswalk or an assigned school crossing guard on that roadway. As a result, the Perry Parkway school zone at Perry Middle School no longer qualifies for photo enforcement. While Perry Middle School has a bus entrance and a parent drop-off exit onto Perry Parkway, there is no pedestrian crosswalk across Perry Parkway and no crossing guard assigned to that roadway. Therefore, under current Georgia law, photo enforcement is no longer permitted at that location, and the Perry Police Department has complied with this change.

The Results

The results speak for themselves. Below is a comparison of the initial month of photo enforcement at each school zone versus September 2025.

School Zone	Initial Month	Initial Citations	September 2025
Park Avenue – Perry High School	September 2022	101	10
Kings Chapel Road – Morningside Elementary	September 2022	217	72
Morningside Drive – Morningside Elementary	September 2022	90	0
Danny Carpenter Drive – Mossy Creek Middle School	September 2022	251	6
Tucker Road – Tucker Elementary	September 2022	140	3
Perry Parkway – Perry Middle School	October 2023	110	3
Georgia Highway 127 – Matt Arthur Elementary	October 2023	30	2

These numbers clearly demonstrate the impact photo enforcement has had on driver behavior. During the first months of enforcement, these seven school zones generated a combined 939 citations. In September 2025, those same locations generated only 96 citations—a reduction of nearly 90 percent. Several locations recorded only a handful of violations, and Morningside Drive recorded **zero** citations during the month.

That represents a dramatic reduction in speed where our children, parents, school staff, and crossing guards are present each day. Our goal has never been to issue more citations. Our goal has always been to encourage drivers to slow down and create safer school zones. These statistics show that the program is accomplishing exactly that.

It is also important to understand the difference between a photo enforcement citation and a traditional traffic citation issued by an officer.

Every potential photo enforcement violation is reviewed by a certified Perry Police officer before a citation is approved. The officer reviews the images, verifies that the violation meets all legal requirements, confirms the vehicle's identity and license plate information, and ensures the registered vehicle matches the evidence before allowing the system to issue the citation. Citations are **not** generated or issued automatically without officer review and approval.

A school zone photo enforcement citation:

- Does not add points to your Georgia driver's license.
- Does not affect your automobile insurance rates.

- Carries a civil penalty of \$75 for a first violation and up to \$125 for a second or subsequent violation.

By comparison, if an officer stops a driver traveling 40 mph in a 25 mph school zone, the citation carries a substantially higher fine—approximately \$180—along with two points on the driver's driving record, which may affect insurance premiums.

Some have asked why officers cannot simply enforce these areas themselves.

Officer presence absolutely deters speeding, and we continue to assign officers to school zones whenever possible. However, Perry has eight schools with morning arrivals and afternoon dismissals occurring at nearly the same time. Each patrol squad is allocated eight officers, but on most days only six or seven officers are available due to days off, vacations, training, leave, or vacancies. Those officers must not only provide visible traffic enforcement around our schools, but also respond to traffic crashes, domestic disputes, thefts, medical emergencies, disabled vehicles, and every other call for service throughout the city.

Simply put, it is impossible to have an officer continuously stationed at every school zone while still providing the level of police service our community expects.

I understand that no one wants to receive a speeding citation. However, I believe we can all agree that our children, parents, school employees, crossing guards, and visitors deserve to travel to and from school safely.

Photo enforcement is not a perfect system, and no enforcement program ever is. But it has proven to be an effective tool for improving safety in our school zones. The significant reduction in violations demonstrates that drivers are changing their behavior and slowing down—not only during school zone hours, but throughout the areas surrounding our schools.

Despite what is sometimes suggested on social media, this program is not about generating revenue. If it were, declining citation numbers would be viewed as a failure. Instead, we consider the reduction in violations to be evidence that the program is succeeding. Our success is measured not by the number of citations issued, but by the number of drivers who choose to slow down and protect the children and families of our community.

On behalf of the Perry Police Department, thank you for helping us keep our school zones safe. Working together, we can ensure every child, parent, school employee, and visitor has a safer beginning and end to every school day.

Alan K. Everidge
Chief of Police