

Dear City Council,

We together, the crossing guards of Charlottesville City Schools, request the City introduce speed cameras to enforce school zone speed limits. These cameras, legalized for school zone speed enforcement by the Virginia General Assembly in 2020, present the best solution to improve safety for our students moving to and from school.

The division's expansion of walk zones at the beginning of this school year resulted in a dramatic increase of students walking to school. Eleven hundred (1,100) students are not eligible for bus service. This is eight hundred (800) more pupils than previous years.

On a daily basis we witness drivers speeding through our school zones while students walk, bike and scooter to and from school. Speed is a major contributor to traffic and pedestrian deaths. We do not want this fact to be made reality on our streets or with our kids. We feel helpless to stop the reckless, unregulated driving which threatens student safety daily. We love our kids. While on duty and monitoring many variables to ensure student's safe crossing, we have no capacity to capture license plates or vehicle information sufficient for enforcement or accountability. Because the Charlottesville Police Department remains very understaffed, we understand that the possibility of intermittent officer support for traffic enforcement in school zones is not yet a dependable option.

It is our hope that speed cameras in school zones (with [appropriate signage](#)) will raise awareness among drivers and incentivize adherence to traffic laws. We request that the city pilot these cameras in three locations. In these locations we witness consistent speed violations during school hours: Monticello Avenue at Clark Elementary School; Cherry Avenue at Johnson Elementary School; and Cherry Avenue at Buford Middle School.

We understand that some community members may have concerns regarding photo-traffic enforcement. To be clear, our intent is to improve student safety. We ask for cameras operating to enforce speed only in school zones and only during the school zone hours. To mitigate the financial impact on low-income members of our community, we suggest alternatives to cash fines for a first violation, for instance a required traffic safety course.

In implementing these cameras for school zone speed enforcement, Charlottesville would be joining the City of Alexandria, Arlington County, the City of Fairfax, as well as other communities throughout Virginia, Washington, D.C. and Maryland. The [City of Alexandria's page about the cameras](#) offers a helpful overview.

We appreciate the City's existing work this school year toward bike and pedestrian improvements across the City and its support of Safe Routes to Schools. Thank you for considering this additional method for increasing the safety of our students.

Sincerely,

Adrienne Dent - Crossing Guard, on behalf Charlottesville City Schools Crossing Guards
(Janice Ball, Kevin Cox, Ruth Hill, Vizena Howard, Anita Johnson, Robert Jones, Greg Ochenschlager, Shaune Robinson, Jaime Wayne)