



**SANTA CRUZ POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
155 Center Street, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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**DATE/TIME:** August 17, 2017

**LOCATION:** City of Santa Cruz

**TOPIC:** SCPD Welcome & Back to School Safety Tips

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### **INFORMATION:**

#### **Chief Mills Welcomes Students on August 23rd and Back To School Safety Tips**

The Santa Cruz Police Department wants to remind the community that Santa Cruz City Schools is back in session next week. On Wednesday, August 23rd, Chief Andy Mills, as well as commanders, will be out at our local elementary schools greeting the children as they arrive on the first day of school. As part of our commitment to the public's safety the Santa Cruz Police Department will be conducting an education and enforcement campaign aimed at school zones around the City of Santa Cruz.

The SCPD Traffic Unit will be looking for drivers that are using cell phones, speeding in school zones, illegally passing school buses, failing to yield at crosswalks and any other violation that may endanger students on their way to and from school. The focus is on increasing awareness of distracted driving and pedestrian safety. The enforcement will be conducted primarily, but not limited to, when children are on their way to and from school.

"Our number one priority is the safety of our community, including students, parents and school staff," Chief Mills said. "The new school year is a busy time for families and increases traffic congestion on the roadways. It is important that everyone slow down." Follow these safety tips to ensure a safe transition back to school.

#### **Back to School Safety Tips for Motorist**

- Drivers are encouraged to leave earlier than usual to accommodate increased commute time.
- Observe posted speed limits, especially 15 MPH school speed zones
- Watch for crossing guards around most elementary schools who will be stopping traffic so children can safely cross the street.
- When dropping off children, please do so in the designated school drop-off zones.
- Above all, SCPD encourages drivers to remain patient during any travel delays and remember the goal is for everyone to arrive at their destination safely!

#### **Back to School Safety Tips for Pedestrians**

- Never walk while texting. If you need to send a text, move out of the way of others and stop on the sidewalk.
- Always walk on the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk and you have to walk on the road, always walk FACING traffic.
- Cross only at corners or marked crosswalks.
- Stop at the curb or the edge of the road.
- Walk in groups; there is safety in numbers. Teams are more likely to be seen by drivers.

- Before crossing the street, stop and look left, then right, then left again. When vehicles stop, make eye contact with the driver to ensure they know you are there before proceeding.
- If you see a car, wait until it passes. Then, look left, right and left again until traffic is clear and it is safe to cross.

“Our goal has always been and continues to be the safety of your children, pedestrians, and commuters to and from schools at the beginning and end of each day,” said Chief Mills.

**Media Availability/Photo Opportunity:** Please Join Police Chief Mills and SCPD Officers for a meet and greet with the students on the first day of school.

**WHO:** Santa Cruz Police Chief Mills with Students and Families

**WHAT:** Kids and Parents to be greeted by SCPD Chief Mills and Officers on the 1st day of school.

**WHEN:** Wednesday, August 23, 2017, from 7:30 am to 8:30 am

**WHERE:** Bayview Elementary School 1231 Bay St, Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
Delaveaga Elementary School 1145 Morrissey Blvd, Santa Cruz, CA 95065  
Gault Elementary School 1320 Seabright Ave, Santa Cruz, CA 95062  
Westlake Elementary School 1000 High St, Santa Cruz, CA 95060

**Contact:** Santa Cruz Police Media Relations (831) 420-5844 for media inquiries

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**For additional information, contact: Joyce Blaschke**

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Anonymous tips can also be sent to the police department through our Tip Line (831) 420-5995, or from our Website; [www.santacruzpolice.com](http://www.santacruzpolice.com). Tipsters can also submit an anonymous tip via our smartphone app or from an SMS text. Visit our Website for instructions.