

Nevada Advisory Committee on Traffic Safety (NVACTS) 2023 Legislative/Policy Recommendations: Higher Fines in School Zones and Crossing Zones

Nevada Law:

NRS 484B-363 School Zone or School Crossing Zone does not currently address increased fines.

Background:

Most states impose higher fines in school zones if you look at their state laws. Doing a search by state of 25 laws, I only found New York to not have a law specifically to increase fines in school zones. That said, if you look up Nevada, every entry says that fines are increased for speeding in a school zone or school crossing zone, with most quoting double fines. While this could be true, it isn't in the statute quoted, NRS 484B-363, which covers school speed but not increased fines.

Research & Data:

What I did not find was research that backs up increased fines, it seems that either I did a lousy search or it is a common-sense issue that people care about cost and will slow down, or that most states do this, so we will too. I am of the belief that people pay more attention to increased fines than the possibility of hitting a child; we know that most people don't allow themselves to think in terms of crash outcomes, but they do see themselves getting a ticket.

National Trends:

To point out some of the state laws I found; most double or more the fine for speeding in a school zone, where there are differences is when the speed increases over 10 to 15 mph higher than the speed limit. I was shocked at how many states who spell out the fine by the increase in speed, most double 1 to 10 over the posted speed, but less than double for more. Several states make it 1 to 15 over.

As examples: Alabama, Arizona, Colorado Maryland, and Texas all double fines, but for several states who have added safety camera enforcement in school zones the fines are less, like in Maryland the top camera fine in a school zone is \$40. In Washington state, the fine is generally \$237, but is capped much lower if issued through a safety camera. We should be aware this if we pursue cameras in school zones.

There are many different ways states address the speeding in a school zone fine: in Missouri they add \$25 to the general speed by mph over, in Tennessee, speeding in a school zone earns the driver a reckless driving charge, but each entity is allowed to set specific fines and their speed limits, the law only says in every case \$1 fee is added to the ticket to go to the jurisdiction and that if the entity does not set the limit it is 15 for school zones and 25 for crossing zones.

In North Carolina, a standard speeding ticket is \$10 to \$50; but a school zone ticket runs \$250. In Arkansas, all fines are by scale, including school zones, which run \$25 to \$100 for the first offense, \$50 to \$250 for the second and \$250 to \$1,000 for the third. Even in neighboring California, the fines are far less, with 1-15 mph over a \$25 added fine and 16 to 25 over a \$50 fine, both on top of the standard speeding fine of \$50.

I found in many states speeding fines are cheap!

This would make a great research project; but as far as legislation goes, I believe we should pursue adding increased fines for speeding in school zones and school crossing zones to NRS 484B-363. In addition, we should raise the points added to the fine to be two-points higher than the standard speeding ticket for 1 to 10 and 11-20 over the limit and double any points higher than the points for the equal general speed citation.

Options:

- Approve recommendation to increase fines in school zones and school crossing zones.
- Do nothing