



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **Safety Priority as Murfreesboro City Schools Open Full-Day on Election Day**

**MURFREESBORO, Tenn.** –With hundreds of school children, cars, and buses coming and going, the City of Murfreesboro is taking extra precautions to make sure the first full day of school is a safe one. Parents, teachers, schoolchildren, and voters are advised to do their part in keeping school children safe.

Voters are allowed to enter Murfreesboro City School buildings through the designated voting area *only*. For convenience, voters may want to avoid drop-off and pick-up times for school children. Typically, schools get busy with parents picking-up their children twenty to twenty-five minutes prior to the beginning and ending of school, 7:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. or 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. depending on the school's bell time.

"We want the first full-day of school to be as smooth and safe as possible," said Murfreesboro City Schools Director Linda Gilbert. "We ask both voters and parents of school children to use extra caution while driving in school zones so the safety of our children is the top priority while we participate in the civic process."

The Murfreesboro Police Department will have officers stationed at all of the polling places located within a City school to assist parents and voters. These locations included Reeves-Rogers, Mitchell-Neilson, Hobgood, John Pittard, Northfield, Erma Siegel, Cason Lane Academy, Discovery School at Bellwood and Black Fox.

In addition to officers inside the school, traffic officers will be monitoring school zones and strictly enforcing speeding, seatbelt usage and proper use of child restraints. The MPD reminds parents and voters to leave early, be patient, and avoid distractions like mobile phone usage or texting.

"Remember, your primary responsibility is to drive safely, especially in school zones," advised Chief of Police Glenn Chrisman. "We want everyone to have a great and safe start to the school year while providing a safe location for residents to vote on Election Day."

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Murfreesboro Schools open for a half-day August 6. The next day, August 7, is also Election Day, and will be the first full-day of school. Many schools will serve as polling places. The use of public restrooms will be limited.

“The first week of school is always a bit confusing as parents and students learn new drop-off zones, bus procedures and more,” added Director Gilbert. “Having voting precincts open the first full-day will certainly add to the excitement. However, I feel confident that everyone will work together to make sure the first full-day of school and Election Day are successful.”

Here are safety tips from AAA.com/Foundation on actions parents should avoid in school zones:

- Double-parking a vehicle in a school zone.
- Calling a child to cross the street in the middle of the block while waiting in a car.
- Allowing a child to exit the car into traffic rather than on the sidewalk side of the car.
- Stopping a car in a crosswalk, blocking visibility for children and other motorists.
- Driving while texting or talking on a cell phone.
- Illegally passing a loading or unloading school bus.

Here are some safety tips for parents and school children to follow:

- Carpool to reduce the number of cars at the school.
- Accompany small children as he or she crosses the street.
- Drop children off on the school side of the street.
- Follow your school’s traffic pattern for drop-off and pick-up.
- Reduce your speed when you enter a school zone, or where children walk or bike.
- Train your child to look all ways (left, right, behind, and ahead) and to walk cautiously when crossing the street. Stress the importance of always using crosswalks.
- Both adults and children should follow instructions provided by school crossing guards.
- Make sure children wear seat belts or are appropriately secured in a child safety or booster seat when riding a car.

For more information on safety tips in school zones, visit [http://www.asirt.org/Portals/0/ENewsletters2012/10\\_12\\_October2012/Back\\_to\\_School\\_Safety\\_Tips\\_for\\_Motorists.pdf](http://www.asirt.org/Portals/0/ENewsletters2012/10_12_October2012/Back_to_School_Safety_Tips_for_Motorists.pdf).

A Public Service Announcement (PSA) on school zone safety can be viewed at <http://youtu.be/EycNtTiGjaU>.

For City News online, visit [www.Murfreesborotn.gov](http://www.Murfreesborotn.gov).

**Attached Photo caption**

*School Zone Safety.jpg*

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