



September 8, 2022

Dear Mayor Wilson, Members of the Alexandria City Council, and Members of the Traffic and Parking Board,

As detailed in PTAC's April 18, 2022 letter to Mayor Wilson and the Alexandria City Council, one of PTAC's top priorities is to ensure that Alexandria City Public School (ACPS) students, families, and staff can get to and from school safely.

The Alexandria Parent Teacher Association Council (PTAC) voices its support for 1) passing a recommendation that the City Manager reduce speed limits on North Beauregard Street, Braddock Road, and Seminary Road, and 2) the adoption of an ordinance to authorize the use of speed cameras in school zones. Specifically:

- 1) PTAC asks the City Council to recommend that the City Manager take action to reduce excessive vehicle speeds near schools. Multiple studies show that speed kills and speed limits of 15 mph during school hours are appropriate near schools. Collectively, 520 total crashes have occurred on these three corridors since 2015, and 250 people have suffered injuries. Speed is a critical factor in how often crashes occur and how severe they are, and reducing vehicle speeds is a key component of the City's Vision Zero traffic safety program. The City Manager's action will have an immediate, positive impact on student and staff safety at Alexandria City High School's Minnie Howard campus, Francis C. Hammond Middle School, and the three elementary schools along the Beauregard corridor—Ferdinand T. Day, John Adams, and William Ramsey.
- 2) PTAC urges the Traffic and Parking Board and the City Council to adopt an ordinance in the coming months authorizing the use of photo speed monitoring devices in school zones. An Alexandria Police Department pilot in January 2021 on North Beauregard Street—home to three elementary schools—demonstrated that automated speed enforcement cameras are capable of achieving operating objectives at school crossing zones. During the pilot, 65 percent of the vehicles transiting Beauregard were going above the posted speed limit of 35 mph, and the highest recorded speed was 69 mph. The installation and operation of speed monitoring devices at high-risk school crossing zones should continue to be prioritized in future year city budgets.

The March crash involving a nine-year-old student who sustained serious injuries at Jefferson Houston School, and the June crash in neighboring Fairfax County that killed two Oakton High School students and critically injured a third, highlight the importance of photo speed monitoring and reduced speed limits to strengthen pedestrian safety at and near Alexandria's schools.

Such projects are even more critical in light of the recent ACPS guidance encouraging families returning for the 2022-2023 school year to consider alternatives to bus service due to the driver shortage.

PTAC appreciates your support for these and other measures to improve pedestrian safety at and near Alexandria's schools.

Thank you,

Alexandria PTA Council Executive Board 2022-2023

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