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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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KEEP STUDENTS SAFE BY GOING “HANDS FREE”

EGPD and EGUSD Police Services begin an enforcement campaign focusing on drivers using cell phones.

The Elk Grove Police Department and Elk Grove Unified School District Police Services Division will kick off a “hands-free” enforcement campaign on August 17, 2009, to assist students in getting to and from school safely.

The campaign centers on the 2008 legislation enacting California Vehicle Code, Section 23123, prohibiting drivers from using handheld cellular telephones while operating a motor vehicle. Collision statistics indicate that handheld cellular phone use increases the risk of traffic collisions that result in serious injuries and fatalities.

The law allows for motorists 18-years-old and over to use a “hands-free device” while driving. Drivers are allowed to use the speaker function of their phone as long as they are not holding the phone.

Vehicle Code Section 23124 prohibits drivers under the age of 18 from using a cellular phone or hands-free device while operating a motor vehicle. The law allows a driver to use a wireless telephone to make emergency calls to a law enforcement agency, a medical provider, the fire department, or other emergency services.

The base fine for the first offense is \$20 and \$50 for subsequent convictions. With the addition of penalty assessments, the fine can be more than triple the base fine amount. The violation is a reportable offense and will appear on a person’s driving record, but a violation point will not be assigned.

The Elk Grove Police Department and Elk Grove Unified School District thank community members who put down their cell phones while driving and comply with the law by using a “hands-free” device.

Please make the streets safer for not only our community’s youth but for everyone.

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