



Arkansas House Newsletter

August 11, 2023

Flashing Red, Kids Ahead



As we navigate busy streets in our communities, rushing to work or running errands, it's easy to get caught up in the fast pace of modern life. However, one thing demands our utmost attention on Arkansas roadways—a stopped school bus with its flashing lights and extended stop arm.

Every day during the school year, more than 350,000 Arkansas children are depending on school buses to transport them safely to and from school. These buses make multiple stops in every community.

As the 2023-2024 school year is about to begin, we want to remind Arkansans that it is illegal to pass a stopped school bus. The fines, penalties, and punishment for anyone found guilty of illegally passing a stopped school bus were increased dramatically by [Act 2128](#) of 2005, also known as [Isaac's Law](#). The legislation was named in honor of Isaac Brian, an elementary school student in the Bryant School District who was struck and killed when a driver illegally passed his school bus while students were exiting the vehicle.

The law requires drivers to stop on 2-lane and 4-lane highways in both directions, even those with a middle lane. Drivers cannot attempt to pass in any direction until the school bus vehicle has finished receiving or

discharging its passengers and is in motion again.

In the 2021 Regular Session, the General Assembly passed [Act 264](#) to clarify the distance and areas where drivers must stop. It states drivers must come to a complete stop no less than 30 feet from the bus when it stops to load or unload passengers. This 30 feet perimeter would apply to public roads, private or public property open to the general public, and any driveway or parking lot belonging to a public school.

Arkansans should also remember that the use of handheld wireless phones is prohibited in a school zone. In 2019, the General Assembly passed legislation [making the use of a handheld phone in school zones a primary offense](#).

When a school bus comes to a halt and activates its flashing lights and stop arm, it's an indication that children are entering or exiting the bus. This vulnerable moment requires our undivided attention and a momentary pause in our busy lives. [Remember: Flashing Red means Kids Ahead.](#)