

## School Bus Safety

Did you know that there are over 80,000 school bus stop arm violations per day in the United States? Did you know that comes out to over 16 million per year? Do you know the laws when it comes to adhering to the flashing yellow lights, the red flashing lights, and the red flashing stop sign? Did you know the fines for violating school bus yellow lights and red lights range from \$250.00 to as high as \$675.00? Did you know your license is automatically suspended 30 days for these violations?

First of all, I will address the flashing yellow lights. The driver is instructed to start his yellow lights as far as 300 feet and no less than 150 feet before his/her stop. If you are following the bus, you are to slow down. You cannot pass the bus under any circumstances if the yellow lights are flashing, and you're behind the bus. You will eventually come to a complete stop a safe distance from the bus when the flashing red lights come on and the stop sign goes out. Again, under no circumstances are you allowed to pass the bus until all the flashing lights go off and the stop sign goes in. If you are approaching the bus in the oncoming lane and see the flashing yellow lights you are to begin to slow down. If you are too close to the bus in your judgment to make a safe stop, you may go by the bus. We would like for all drivers in the oncoming lanes to be driving cautiously enough so that they can come to a safe stop. But if you are driving in the oncoming lane and see the flashing red lights come on and the stop sign come out, under no circumstances are to go past the bus. You are not allowed to continue traveling until the stop sign goes in. Our drivers are instructed and trained to use good judgment as to when they should put out the stop sign. In other words, they are not going to extend the stop sign when a car is too close to the bus in the oncoming lane. Again, I want to emphasize that **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE YOU ALLOWED TO GO THROUGH A SCHOOL BUS STOP SIGN WHETHER YOU'RE FOLLOWING THE BUS OR APPROACHING THE BUS IN THE ONCOMING LANE.** Violating the stop sign is when children get hurt or even killed! If a child gets killed, then the driver of the other vehicle has a whole lot of different circumstances to deal with. **BEING IN A HURRY IS NO EXCUSE FOR PUTTING THE LIVES OF CHILDREN IN DANGER!**

**I ask you to please use extra caution when you're driving especially between the hours of 7 AM to 8:30 AM and the hours of 3:30 PM to 5:00 PM when our route buses are the road. We all want to know our children are safe on our school buses. Their safety is truly up to all of us not just the drivers of the buses. Thank you very much for your cooperation in this matter. Let's decrease the statistics I mentioned in the first part of the letter.**

Sincerely,

Tom Dickey

Lone Tree School Transportation Director