



Passing a Stopped School Bus Can Cost You Your License — New Kane County Video Reminds Drivers

As thousands of students head back to school, the Kane County Regional Office of Education outlines Illinois school bus safety laws and heavy penalties for drivers.

GENEVA, Ill. — With Kane County students heading back to the classroom, the Kane County Regional Office of Education (ROE) has released a new video reminding drivers of their legal obligations around stopped school buses. [The video](#) is now available and is also on the ROE's social media channels.

Featuring Regional Superintendent of Schools John K. Jonak and Assistant Regional Superintendent Katie Algrim, the video walks motorists through Illinois' school bus stop-arm law, the penalties for violating it, and the danger the area around a stopped bus poses to young children. Filmed in collaboration with Geneva Community Unit School District 304, the video features local students and a bus provided by the district's transportation department.

"A school bus is the safest place for a child on the road, but the moments just outside those doors are the most dangerous," said John K. Jonak, Kane County Regional Superintendent of Schools. "Nearly every driver in Kane County encounters a school bus on their daily commute. Knowing when to stop isn't just about avoiding a steep fine or a license suspension—it's about keeping our kids safe."

What Illinois drivers need to know

- **Yellow lights mean slow down.** When a bus activates its yellow flashing lights, reduce speed and prepare to stop.
- **Red lights and the stop arm mean stop — 20 feet back.** Once the red lights flash and the stop arm extends, motorists must come to a complete stop at least 20 feet from the bus.
- **Two-lane and one-way roads: everyone stops.** Traffic in all directions must come to a stop.
- **Four-lane roads: same-direction traffic stops.** Vehicles traveling in the same direction as the bus must stop.
- **Stay stopped.** Drivers must remain stopped until the lights turn off and the stop arm retracts.
- **The penalties are steep.** Under current Illinois law, a conviction for illegally passing a stopped school bus carries a mandatory minimum \$300 fine and a three-month driver's license suspension. A second or subsequent conviction within five years carries a mandatory minimum \$1,000 fine and a one-year suspension. Court supervision is not available for this offense. A new law takes effect January 1, 2027 for violations caught by stop-arm cameras — fines for first offenses will rise from \$150 to \$300, and from \$500 to \$1,000 for repeat violations.

The ROE encourages Kane County school districts, transportation departments, parent groups, and community organizations to share [the video](#) with their communities during the opening weeks of school.



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About the Kane County Regional Office of Education

The Kane County Regional Office of Education (ROE) is one of 38 educational service agencies in Illinois. Located in Geneva, we serve 9,200 educators and 107,000 students across 524 square miles that span nine school districts across Kane County (U-46, Batavia 101, West Aurora 129, East Aurora 131, District 300, Central 301, Kaneland 302, St. Charles 303, and Geneva 304).

Our mission is to advocate for education, provide leadership, perform regulatory functions, and coordinate state and local services for educators, school districts, and the community.