

Public Awareness Campaign

Flashing Red Kids Ahead Campaign

At the request of Representative James Ratliff, the Division, in partnership with the Department of Education, launched a public awareness campaign during the week prior to the start of school and during the first two weeks of school.

The campaign addresses safety around school buses, especially the issue of illegally passing of school buses by other motorists. The campaign consists of a print media blitz, television spots on the morning and noontime shows, 15 and 30-second radio spots on all Clear Channel radio stations, and alerts on the ADE website as well as the local school district websites. Everett Buick produced, filmed, and donated prime-time television advertising spots for a commercial addressing the dangers of passing a stopped school bus.

Illegal passing of school buses is a serious problem, not only in Arkansas, but throughout the nation. Arkansas school districts annually participate in a one-day illegal passing survey conducted nationally by the National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services.

On May 6, 2013, Arkansas had 2,351 school bus drivers report that 589 motorists illegally passed school buses during that one day.

Districts participating in passing survey	120
Drivers participating in passing survey	2,351
Results of vehicles illegally passing	589
A.M.	220
Mid-day	2
P.M.	367
Occurring from front of bus	445
Occurring from rear of bus	144

The last Arkansas student fatality caused by a driver illegally passing a school bus was in January 2007 in the Watson Chapel School District. In May 2013 a child was hit while exiting a bus in Jacksonville. Arkansas regularly has near-misses.

The Division would like to thank Dr. Kimbrell for his efforts in promoting this public awareness campaign.