



427 citations mailed out to drivers who passed Bibb County school buses



MACON, Georgia (41NBC/WMGT) – Since the first day of school, 427 drivers have been issued a citation for illegally passing a Bibb County School Bus. The stop arm cameras started rolling August 1st and have caught drivers breaking the law.

“It’s for the safety of the kids, nothing else,” said Sergeant Elton Britt with the Bibb County Sheriff’s Office. He spends a lot of his day going over video of drivers illegally passing school buses.

“Unfortunately some people are in a hurry or running late, but they’ve got to understand, the kids are the priority,” said Sgt. Britt.

Over the summer, the Bibb County School District added cameras to 53 school buses. A box with 5 cameras near the stop arm.

“When I hit play, they (the video) all start playing,” said Sgt. Britt. “It shows the vehicle coming, going and right beside the bus.”

The camera company, Bus Patrol, LLC, is the first to go over the video. Once it decides which ones look like a possible violation, the footage is sent to Sgt. Britt for the final say.

“There’s some I’ll look at for 5 minutes and there’s some I’ll look that it’s just so obvious,” said Sgt. Britt. “But still, I watch it from beginning to end.”

But what is Sgt. Britt looking for exactly?

“Anytime that the red light’s out or the stop arm, stop sign is out,” said Sgt. Britt. “If a vehicle passing during that time, it’s a violation.”

If there is a turn lane in the middle of opposite lanes, you have to stop when a bus is stopped.

“In Georgia where there’s a physical barrier, being approximately 4 foot high, they can keep traveling,” said Sgt. Britt. “If it’s only a small median or a grass median, they have to stop when a red light or stop sign come out.”

Sgt. Britt also says if you are at an intersection and there is a bus with it’s stop arm out, you cannot turn either way. You have to wait until the stop arm of the bus is back in.

Once Sgt. Britt determines if there was a violation, drivers could face a citation of \$300 for the first offense, \$750 for the second offense and \$1000 for every offense after that. The solicitor general’s office will mail that citation to the address the license plate is registered under.

Sgt. Britt says if you are in doubt, just stop.

“It’s better safe than sorry,” said Sgt. Britt. “I’d rather see you stop and not need to than need to and not.”

The Bibb County School District shared this statement with 41NBC in response to the cameras capturing violators:

“We appreciate the support of the Bibb County Sheriff’s Office, Office of the Solicitor-General, and Bus Patrol in implementing this initiative to help promote and improve the safety of our students. We’re excited about the success of the initiative so far.”

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