

MINNESOTA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY MINNESOTA STATE PATROL

School bus safety package

The Minnesota State Patrol has put together a package of four proposals to improve school bus safety.

School bus stop arm violations

- A 2025 Minnesota Court of Appeals ruling (State v. Wahn) found that a violation occurs only when the stop arm is fully extended.
- Current language makes it difficult to determine the exact moment a violation occurs.
- The proposal amends the statute to require traffic to stop when red lights on a school bus begin flashing, not when the stop arm is fully extended.
 - This change would improve student safety and provide clear, enforceable standards.

Type III school bus first-aid kits

- Type III buses are currently required to carry a “10 unit” first-aid kit.
 - This requirement is outdated, missing essential supplies and inconsistent with best practices.
- The proposal would require best-practice first-aid kits in all buses.
 - This aligns with national recommended standards and include self-updating statutory language.
 - This would eliminate confusion about whether a bus has the correct first-aid kit.
 - The change would apply only to Type III buses, model year 2027 and newer.

USDOT numbers for school buses

- Minnesota exempts school buses from obtaining USDOT numbers. However, most school buses already have one.
- The Minnesota State Patrol is legislatively mandated to inspect all school buses.
- The proposal would require all school buses to have a USDOT number.
 - This would improve the State Patrol’s ability to inspect school buses.
 - The change would only affect a small amount of buses.
 - There is no cost to obtain a USDOT number.

School bus use for training

- Federal regulations require behind-the-wheel training in the same type of vehicle a commercial driver’s license applicant plans to drive.
- Minnesota statute does not allow behind-the-wheel training in a yellow school bus on public roads.
 - Training is limited to private roads, which can be costly.
 - There is no safety reason for this restriction.
- The proposal would allow behind-the-wheel training in school buses on private roads.
 - Buses would be labeled plainly as “student driver.”
 - Licensed commercial driving schools would be allowed to use buses on public roads for training.



