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News Safety

# Waymo Driverless Vehicles Continue to Illegally Pass School Buses

By **Taylor Ekbatani** January 20, 2026



*Waymo tests its autonomous vehicle software on school buses in December 2025 at Austin ISD in Texas. (Photo courtesy of Austin ISD.)*

**Despite multiple attempts to correct the situation, Waymo’s autonomous vehicles are still illegally passing Austin Independent School District school buses in Texas.**

“Even after the November software update and December software recall Waymo says they conducted,” Austin ISD said in a statement Jan. 14. The school district added the most another violation just occurred two days earlier.

Austin ISD now confirms Waymo vehicles committed a total of 24 violations, as of the middle of January.

“Austin ISD again asks that Waymo cease operations in the mornings and afternoons during school days when our students are using our school buses,” a statement by the district reads. “Austin ISD continues to explore any and all legal recourse available.”



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Despite the most recent update last week, Austin ISD officials have been navigating this situation for months.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration also opened a [preliminary evaluation Oct. 17, after a Waymo vehicle failed to stop](#) and passed a school bus in Atlanta, Georgia in September. *School Transportation News* reached out to Atlanta Public Schools regarding the violations but had yet to hear back at this writing.

Back in Texas, Austin ISD installed BusPatrol camera systems in 2024 on all 519 of the district's general and special education buses. Citations for illegal passing incidents began soon after that. Prior to the BusPatrol partnership, the district saw 10,000 to 12,000 violations a year, said Kris Hafezizadeh, the executive director of transportation and vehicle services. Now, the school district sees a little over 7,000 passes. He cited a decrease in repeat offenders.

Among those violators is Waymo. Hafezizadeh said the autonomous vehicles treat the school bus like a stop sign, some not even stopping before approaching the school bus.

Waymo reported to Austin ISD as of Nov. 5 that software updates were in place to resolve the issue. Hafezizadeh said. However, a [Nov. 20 memo to Waymo](#) by Austin ISD general counsel states that five violations occurred after Waymo's Nov. 5 letter.

"Put simply, Waymo's software updates are clearly not working as intended nor as quickly as required. We cannot allow Waymo to continue endangering our students while it attempts to implement a fix," the memo states. "Accordingly, Austin ISD demands that Waymo immediately cease operation of its automated vehicles during the hours of 5:20 a.m. – 9:30 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m., until more in-depth software updates are completed and Waymo can guarantee its vehicles will comply with the law."

Hafezizadeh said Waymo "disagreed." In early December, Hafezizadeh offered his school

buses and parking lot to further test the software in Waymo vehicles. He noted that Waymo brought two of its cars and he provided seven school buses of different OEMs to conduct tests. He added that his staff complied with any request made by Waymo officials during the four-hour test period.

“The unfortunate part is, after that, they had another two or three violations,” he said.

Waymo did not respond to requests for comment at this writing.

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