



**DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
HEADQUARTERS 28TH MISSION SUPPORT GROUP (AFGSC)
ELLSWORTH AIR FORCE BASE SOUTH DAKOTA**

MEMORANDUM FOR MILITARY FAMILIES USING CONTRACTED SCHOOL BUSES

FROM: 28 MSG/CC

SUBJECT: School Bus Contract Renewal

1. The bus contract for Ellsworth Air Force Base housing residents has been approved for the 2025-2026 school year. Beginning on the 21st of August, school buses will drive through base housing to pick up and return children from the Douglas District School.
2. This packet includes the personal conduct policy memorandum, bus routes and schedules, as well as Frequently Asked Questions. Please review this information with your students as we will rely heavily upon their individual cooperation and adherence to these rules.
3. Our objective is to provide a safe and valuable service for our community and to be responsive to any of your needs or concerns that may arise. As we resume bus services, we will work with you to continuously improve our program. We have made some changes since last year, so please read through everything carefully.
4. Please direct any questions concerning the school bus program operation to our Contract Officer Representative by calling 605-385-2910. For issues involving a child's interactions or the school, please reach out to the School Liaison Program Manager at 28ffs.slo.poc@us.af.mil or call 605-385-5385. You may also submit any concerns through the Interactive Customer Evaluation website (ICE) by using this link: https://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=site&site_id=246. You will select School Bus Services from the list. Both the Contract Officer and School Liaison will receive your inputs from this system and will provide a response.

PAUL I. KOECHER, Colonel, USAF
Commander

3 Attachments:

1. Personal Conduct Policy Memorandum
2. Bus Routes and Schedules
3. Bus Services Frequently Asked Questions



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FROM: 28 MSG/CC

SUBJECT: School Bus Contract Renewal

This policy letter implements the personal conduct code for children and parents using Ellsworth AFB contracted school buses. Authority for this policy comes from DoDM 4500.36-Enclosure 5, section 6., Department of Defense Manual, 7 July 2015, and the 28th Bomb Wing Commander. This guidance is applicable to all school-age students and parents who are authorized to utilize this service.

1. General: The Ellsworth AFB (EAFB) school bus service provides 'one trip to' and 'one trip from' the Douglas School District on each day school is in session. This service is provided to children in kindergarten through 12th grade; Pre-K children are not eligible to ride the bus. Utilizing the EAFB school bus service is a privilege provided under a contract between the U.S. Air Force and Yellowfin's School Bus Services, Inc. EAFB officials have partnered with state and local school administrators for coordination of this activity to ensure the safety of our military dependent students. The EAFB school bus service is an independent activity not affiliated with, funded by, or under the authority of the State of South Dakota or the Douglas School District. It is the responsibility of parents/guardians to ensure each child adheres to proper behavior while riding the school bus. Conduct on the EAFB school bus service is governed as an extension of EAFB itself. Yellowfin's school bus drivers will report all student/parent/guardian conduct violations to the Dependent School Bus Contract Project Manager and Contracting Officer's Representative (COR), 28th Logistics Readiness Squadron.

2. Objective: The purpose of this policy is to ensure safe and secure transportation to and from school is provided for all students authorized to use this service.

3. Guidelines:

3.1. Cameras have been installed on the buses and will be utilized during student transport. These devices can be used as evidence in any disciplinary action arising from the conduct of a student, parent/guardian, or employee while on the bus and are thus intended to protect students and drivers alike. Recordings will not be released to the general public or any individual without written consent and authorization from the 28th Mission Support Group Commander (28 MSG/CC) or designated officials.

3.2. Parents/guardians are responsible for having their children at the authorized bus stops at least five minutes prior to the scheduled arrival time. Bus drivers will not stop for children waiting in their homes or other undesignated locations. We recommend

parents of students in kindergarten through third grade meet their child at the bus stop for at least the first week or two to allow children to become familiar with where to get off, as the drivers will also still be learning students' names and assigned stops. Yellowfin is not responsible for children departing the bus at the incorrect stop.

3.3. The following rules apply to all students riding contracted buses at EAFB:

3.3.1. Students will obey the lawful instructions of the driver.

3.3.2. Students will not cross the street in front of the bus while the bus is in motion.

3.3.3. Students will not cross the street within 150 feet behind the bus at any time.

3.3.4. Students will not stand in traffic lanes while waiting for the bus.

3.3.5. Students will assist the driver in keeping the bus interior clean and orderly and must report any vehicle damage to the driver.

3.3.6. Students of active-duty military personnel are given priority. Parents may request services for additional riders (e.g. visiting friends). However, if the bus is full, the request will be denied.

3.3.7. Students are only permitted to bring one toy or game to school. These items must fit in a backpack or other container. If a toy or personal item is thrown or creates an issue on the bus, the driver will confiscate the toy and return it when the child exits the bus. The school bus service will not be responsible for locating or replacing stolen or lost items such as electronic devices, trading cards, game balls, or other personal property.

3.3.8. Students will not touch the outside of any bus if it is moving.

3.3.9. Children may not bring food or drinks on the bus, with the exception of water or their meal(s) in a closed container.

3.4. In the event of misconduct, the driver will complete a Student Transportation Incident Report for the COR. NOTE: the following conduct applies to students and parents/guardians on the installation, public streets, or on Douglas School District property, and are considered major infractions and strictly prohibited:

3.4.1. Refusing to obey the driver. **First offense:** Warning from driver/COR. **Second offense:** 1 School Day Riding Suspension (SDRS). **Third offense:** 3 SDRS. **Fourth offense:** 5 SDRS, **Five or more offenses:** 10 SDRS.

3.4.2. Carrying dangerous/deadly weapons, illegal drugs, and/or committing actions which prohibit or endanger the safety or health of either the passengers or the driver will result in automatic permanent suspension of riding privileges on EAFB school buses.

3.4.2.1. Per South Dakota Law, Title 13, Chapter 32 §13-32-7, "a dangerous and/or deadly weapon is defined as any firearm, knife, air gun, or device, instrument, material or



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substance, whether animate or inanimate, which is calculated or designed to inflict death or serious bodily harm."

3.4.3. Failure to remain seated while the bus is in motion, blocking the aisle or door, or touching the exterior of the bus while it is in motion. **First offense:** Warning. **Second offense:** 1 SDRS. **Third offense:** 3 SDRS. **Fourth offense:** 5 SDRS. **Five or more offenses:** 10 SDRS.

3.4.4. Inappropriate language or gestures, to include but not limited to obscenities, hateful language, threats, or use of coercion to compel another child to do something inappropriate on or around the school bus. Excessive noise that is disruptive to the passengers and/or driver. **First offense:** Warning. **Second offense:** 1 SDRS. **Third offense:** 3 SDRS. **Fourth offense:** 5 SDRS. **Five or more offenses:** 10 SDRA.

3.4.5. Smoking/vaping, vandalism, or tampering with doors or windows. **First offense:** 5 SDRS. **Second offense:** 10 SDRS. **Third offense:** 15 SDRS. **Fourth offense:** Permanent suspension of riding privileges of the EAFB school buses.

3.4.6. Throwing objects in or out of the bus windows or doors, at the bus, at the driver and/or at passengers. First offense: 1 SDRS. Second offense: 3 SDRS. Third offense: 5 SDRS. Fourth offense: Permanent suspension of riding privileges of EAFB school buses. These penalties may be amended based on the severity of the incident, for example throwing rocks that damage the bus or injure people would be more severe than throwing a book.

3.4.7. Fighting, hitting, slapping, or wrestling. First offense: 1 SDRS. Second offense: 3 SDRS. Third offense: 5 SDRS. Fourth offense: Permanent suspension of riding privileges on EAFB school buses.

3.4.8. Eating, drinking (with the exception of water), spitting, or littering. First offense: Warning from driver/COR. Second offense: 1 SDRS. Third offense: 3 SDRS. Fourth offense: 5 SDRS. Five or more offenses: 10 SDRS.

3.4.9. Language or actions of a sexual nature, exposing private areas, touching others inappropriately, inviting or coercing others to engage in inappropriate touching. **First Offense:** 1 to 3 SDRS. **Second Offense:** 3 to 5 SDRS. **Third Offense:** 5 SDRS to permanent suspension of bus privileges. Penalties will be based on the severity of the incident(s) and age of the alleged offenders. Incidents of this nature will be reported to child protection agencies and law enforcement. This may result in suspension of privileges until an investigation is completed to ensure the protection of all parties involved.

3.4.10. At the discretion of the 28 MSG/CC, any incident or event of misconduct not included in this section may result in punishment ranging from 1 SDRS up to and including permanent suspension of riding privileges on EAFB school buses. Additionally, the 28 MSG/CC will consider the severity of any incident and may adjust the penalty accordingly.



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3.5. Violations of these personal conduct rules could result in suspension of bus privileges. The following steps will be taken upon receipt of an incident report from the bus driver.

3.5.1. The COR will forward incident reports to the 28 MSG/CC once received from the bus driver. The 28 MSG/CC will determine the appropriate penalty for the behavior and advise the COR. The COR will notify the members' First Sergeant of the action, who will then inform the parents and assist the family as needed. The School Liaison Program Manager will be notified as well and will contact the parents/guardians to offer resources and support.

3.5.2. Any disciplinary action, including warnings, SDRS, and temporary and permanent suspensions will be communicated to the parents/guardians in writing and will become effective immediately upon receipt. Parents/guardians wishing to appeal disciplinary actions may do so in writing to the 28 MSG/CC. Under no circumstances will the student or parents/guardians appear in person to appeal the disciplinary action. Full details of the appeal process will be outlined in the disciplinary action letter sent to the parents/guardians.

3.5.3. If the 28 MSG/CC denies an appeal, the parents/guardians of the child may further appeal that decision to the 28th Bomb Wing Commander. The decision of the 28th Bomb Wing Commander is final and not subject to further appeal. Any disciplinary action imposed will remain in effect throughout the appeal process.

3.6. Significant infractions as outlined in paragraph 3.4, may result in immediate removal from the bus until an investigation from the COR is concluded. NOTE: Possession of a weapon, assaults, or issues of a sexual nature will result in immediate notification of the 28th Security Forces Squadron and/or Box Elder Police and the student will be removed from the bus with suspension of riding privileges until the conclusion of the investigation. Misconduct that violates South Dakota or federal law may be offered or transferred to the appropriate civil authorities for action at the discretion of the 28MSG/CC or designated official. Parents/guardians are ultimately responsible for the behavior of their dependent(s) and actions may be taken against them if necessary and appropriate.

3.7. Should parents or guardians wish to raise concerns about the contract bus drivers, conditions on the buses, or bus services in general, they may do so by contacting the COR, 28th Logistics Readiness Squadron, via phone at 605-385-2910. Questions regarding times and dates of the school bus service should be directed to Yellowfin's Bus Service at 913-278-2056; concerns may be sent to yellowfin.ellsworth@bragglines.com. Parents can also request information on resources and support through the School Liaison Program Manager at 28fss.slo.poc@us.af.mil or by calling 605-385-5385. You may also submit any concerns with the bus service or drivers through the Interactive Customer Evaluation website, ICE, by using this link: https://ice.disa.mil/index.cfm?fa=site&site_id=246. Both the Contract Officer and School Liaison will receive your inputs from this system and will provide a response. Any



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concerns about the bus service must be addressed through the options listed above and shall not be addressed to the drivers as it disrupts the route timelines.

3.8. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and will help ensure all students continue to enjoy the privileges of using the EAFB school buses.

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Frequently Asked Questions

1. Who is authorized to use this service?

DoD 4500.36-Enclosure 5, section 6., Department of Defense Manual, authorizes this service for housing residents located on Ellsworth AFB. Children of active-duty military are given priority for this service. Parents may request services for additional riders (e.g., visiting friends). However, if the bus is full, then the request will be denied.

2. How were bus routes/stops determined?

Bus routes and stops were determined utilizing historical data. There are 5 bus routes and 28 bus stops.

3. Is there a policy on behavior?

Yes, there is a policy on behavior. The Personal Conduct Policy, signed by the 28 MSG/CC, dictates in clear terms the requirements and responsibilities for students to retain their bus riding privileges.

4. Are the buses equipped with recording equipment?

Yes, all buses are equipped with audio/video recording equipment. This is for the protection of both the student and the bus driver. Please refer to the Personal Conduct Policy memo.

5. What can I do (as a parent) if my child missed their bus at the nearest bus stop?

There are multiple bus stops throughout Rushmore Heights, Prairie View, and Black Hills Estates for each bus route. Children can catch their bus at any of these stops.

6. Can my child ride any bus?

It is important that parents and children understand the color coding of each bus, presented on the Bus Schedule. Children on the wrong bus may be late for school or end up at the wrong location.

7. What time will my child arrive at school approximately? Will he/she have time to participate in the breakfast program?

Yes, according to the transportation coordinator for the Douglas School District, the buses arrive early enough for children to participate in the breakfast program.



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8. How will my child know which bus to ride home in the afternoon? How will they be marked?

Buses will be labeled with an 8" x 11" color label on two sides of the bus. The Bus Contractor, Yellowfin, is providing color label tabs to attach to kindergarten through third grade children's backpacks.

9. Can my child go to any bus stop in our area that you have labeled, or do they need to go to the nearest one to our house?

Children can catch the bus at any bus stop they choose.

10. Will there be a stop at the Youth Center for kids going there after school?

No, the buses only provide transportation to and from base housing. Contact the Youth Center for information concerning school busing options from the Youth Center.

11. If my child doesn't ride in the morning, can they ride in the afternoon (or vice versa)?

Yes, they can.

12. Do I need to register my child to ride the bus?

Yes, during the first week the Bus Contractor, Yellowfin will hand out registration forms to each child riding the bus. The forms must be completed and returned to the driver the following day.

13. Who do I contact if I have any other questions?

Questions regarding the Ellsworth AFB school bus operations and the policy on conduct of students utilizing the bus should be directed to the Contracting Officer's Representative (COR), 28th Logistics Readiness Squadron. The COR can be reached by calling 605-385-2910.

14. Will my child be required to wear a mask?

Currently, per the new DoD mask mandate policy, masks are not required while riding the bus. Guidance is subject to change.