

Staff Appreciation

May 2-13 marks Hooksett Schools' Staff Appreciation weeks, with Cawley recognized the first week and our elementary schools recognized the second week. The Hooksett School Board Staff Appreciation committee (Amy Tremblay, Jillian Godbout, and Wayne Goertel) endeavored to find the gift that everybody would love - or at least find useful - and designed custom heavy canvas bags with the Hooksett School District logo. Board Members wrote thank you notes to all staff, and Jillian wrapped each gift in a bow and packed them for delivery at the schools.

With heartfelt thanks to all our staff – we appreciate the thoughtful care you give to educate, support, and enrich every student at Hooksett Schools.



Coffee with the Board

The Hooksett School Board concluded its April meeting with a discussion about a policy, “Line and Staff Relations”, which had been previously understood to constrain some interactions between Board Members and staff. We, the current Board, disagreed with that interpretation, and unanimously amended the policy to remove any such ambiguity. It thus seemed a good time to get back together for coffee.

Prior to the pandemic, the School Board held some informal “Coffee with the Board” events with staff and parents, to increase engagement with our stakeholders. They provided really good feedback - for instance, renewed focus on the need for a full-day kindergarten program stemmed from these meetings. Coffee with staff made it to Underhill and Memorial, but was interrupted before making it to Cawley two year ago, so we picked up there on May 11. Alexis Quinlan and I hosted this first round, and we had some really enjoyable conversations with Cawley staff who were able to join us before classes. The Board is working to establish dates for additional events in May and June.



BusWhere School Bus Software - Pilot Implementation Phase

The bus monitoring software project introduced at our April meeting is in a pilot implementation phase. I had the opportunity during April break to install BusWhere tracking devices on three buses serving Hooksett routes per contract with Student Transportation of America. Attentive riders may notice a little black box on the side of the dashboard when they board the bus. BusWhere provided initial training to our school Principals, and we are all patiently working through the process of setting up and adjusting bus routes. The STA folks and our Principals have been great to work with.



Administrators can see the location of every bus with position updates sent every few seconds, which itself is quite useful. But the ability to know which bus is running which route, and to provide estimates of arrival times to specific stops to administrators and parents – that will be truly amazing.

Working to help automate bus route tracking has really conveyed to me the complexity our administrators and STA colleagues have had to undertake to address driver staffing shortages. The route optimization is staggering – for instance, different vehicles service different routes on different days based on driver availability, and certain routes are combined or run back-to-back when drivers are out. The bus situation isn't optimal, but without their hard work it would be much worse! We are cautiously optimistic technology will further help the situation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Wayne".

Wayne Goertel
Hooksett School Board Chair

The mission of the Hooksett School District is to develop a community of learners who are intellectually curious, resourceful, and respectful of self and others. Academic achievement, through constantly improving standards, is the District's highest priority.