

## Hooksett School Board

### Chair's Report

June, 2023



### School Board Tours of Schools

On May 31, School Board Members Alexis Quinlan, Lynn Baker, Jillian Godbout, and I had an opportunity to tour all three district schools. We appreciate our School Principals Ben Loi, Brad Largy, Matt Benson, and Asst. Principal Bill Hinkle showing us around the facilities, both inside and out. They highlighted many areas of success and innovation, gave us dozens of opportunities to observe classrooms and engage with staff throughout the buildings, and answered our many questions.



It was inspiring to see so many students thoughtfully engaged with staff, and using the facilities and resources the community has provided. Several classes were working through lessons on a markerboard, projected desktop, or computer screen with their teachers, while others were doing self-paced lessons on personal computing devices. Classrooms were quite engaging, and impressive student and staff projects lined the hallways! Mrs. Girard's second-grade door decorating contest entry is featured here with Ms. Godbout and Ms. Quinlan. Ms. Baker and I enjoyed reading third-grade astronomy papers. We were sensitive to minimizing classroom



interruptions and worked around some testing schedules that day.

Our yearly Board Retreat is planned for Saturday, June 3 this year (8:30 AM, broadcast on "Hooksett Youtube" like other meetings), which is an opportunity to establish Board goals for the upcoming school year, look more broadly ahead over several years, and reevaluate the year nearing completion. As such, the tours were a timely opportunity to see many of the improvements implemented in the past year such as security improvements at all schools or the Underhill playground renovation. They also gave us a preview of some of the topics we'll need to consider for the upcoming year. Maintenance Director Dean Farmer highlighted several facilities maintenance needs from short to long term, many of which will be covered in a presentation during the retreat.

Technology Director Daniel Roma gave us a vivid example of the work required to maintain computing devices for 1,225 students, over 200 staff, and other shared infrastructure. The Chromebooks used by most students go back and forth to school every day, and sometimes encounter some harsh circumstances. The technology department salvages parts from irreparable devices to fix other devices, and had tables and piles of disassembled equipment for that purpose.

Thanks to everyone who shared their classroom or took the time to visit with us.

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### Hooksett's High School Alternatives

The Hooksett School District (HSD) doesn't have its own High School, so it sends HS students to several remote locations. Our anchor school since 2015-16 is Pinkerton Academy (PA) in Derry, designated Hooksett's "High School of Record". PA is a "private, non-profit corporation" with approximately 3,000 students. The district's current contract with PA makes a commitment to a "minimum financial enrollment" of 63% of eighth graders sent to PA as ninth graders. For example, if there are 150 eighth graders, 63% of that is 95 students; for that class of incoming freshman, Hooksett must pay PA tuition at least equal to its per-student rate (\$15,408 in 2023-24 for regular education) times 95 students, or \$1,463,760. Additional costs of special education and transportation are also HSD's responsibility.

HSD maintains agreements with several other districts as HS alternatives – a contract with Manchester School District, and Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) with Bow, Goffstown, Londonderry, and Pembroke ("MOU schools"). Currently, Londonderry and Manchester accept the tuition rate paid to Pinkerton Academy, while attending the other MOU schools which charge a higher rate must be offset by families paying the difference in rates.

Whereas Pinkerton requires a minimum enrollment, MOU agreements dictate Hooksett School District will be informed of the specific number of available spaces each year in October, which may be less than these constraints:

- Bow: shall not exceed ten (10) Hooksett students per grade level
- Londonderry: shall not exceed forty (40) Hooksett students per grade level
- Pembroke: shall not exceed twenty (20) Hooksett students per grade level
- Goffstown: available spaces determined yearly

The contractual "minimum financial enrollment" at Pinkerton Academy prompted some actions by prior Hooksett School Boards to ensure that minimum was met. Until recently, Hooksett paid a "MOU tuition rate" several hundred dollars below the PA rate, intended to incentivize PA attendance. This lower rate had been accepted by Londonderry, but manifested itself as a larger up-charge for attending the other schools. Another action is embodied in Board policy JCB-R, which simply states requests to attend a designated MOU high school are considered if the 63% PA enrollment contractual requirement is met.

The School Board spent considerable time this year discussing MOUs, as the four current agreements were up for renewal. There were broad discussions about MOU policies for MOU suitability and alternatives for the scenario of fewer than 63% of eighth graders choosing PA, though nothing new has yet been codified. The Board approved MOU renewals last month.

During the year, several advocates of Trinity High School have spoken in public comment about the importance of this education option, and have asked the Hooksett School Board to consider adding Trinity as a MOU school. "Trinity MOU Discussion" will be on the agenda for our meeting on Tuesday, June 6. If you have input for the Board to consider, please email your comments ahead of time to [hsb@sau15.net](mailto:hsb@sau15.net) and consider attending the meeting.

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Finally, it is worth noting the considerable shift in High School enrollment during the past five years. These details are extracted from the enrollment tables in the back of School Board agenda packets, available online.

School	November, 2017		May, 2023	
	Students 9-12	% of total	Students 9-12	% of total
Manchester Central	112	17.1%	15	2.2%
Manchester West	20	3.1%	11	1.6%
Manchester Memorial	1	0.2%	7	1.0%
MST	4	0.6%	2	0.3%
Pinkerton Academy	365	55.8%	453	66.8%
Alvirne	0	0.0%	n/a	n/a
Goffstown	n/a	n/a	1	0.1%
Bow High	23	3.5%	12	1.8%
Londonderry High	79	12.1%	119	17.6%
Pembroke Academy	15	2.3%	16	2.4%
Trinity	16	2.4%	n/a	n/a
Other Private	19	2.9%	42	6.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>654</b>		<b>678</b>	

### Stay in Touch Online

You can find the School Board online at:

<https://hooksettschoolboard.sau15.net>

<https://facebook.com/hooksett.school.board/>

Respectfully submitted,

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.*