

# Hooksett School Board

## Chair's Report

January 2026



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### 2026 School Deliberative Session: Friday, February 6, 6:00p

The Hooksett School District invites you to attend our Deliberative Session at David R. Cawley Middle School, 89 Whitehall Road.

The School District ballot, in brief:

1. Elect school district officers
  - 3 Board Members (3-year term)
  - 1 Moderator (2-year term)
  - 1 Treasurer (2-year term)
  - 1 Clerk (2-year term)
2. Raise & appropriate \$7,250,000 for the school facilities project bond
  - three-fifths vote required
3. School operating budget for 2026-2027
  - Proposed budget: \$45,851,643
  - Default budget: \$45,360,166
4. Teachers contract with Hooksett Education Association for 2026-2027 (3 years) with estimated increases:
  - 2026-2027: \$325,105
  - 2027-2028: \$326,773
  - 2028-2029: \$318,174
5. Raise & appropriate \$150,000 for the Building Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund
  - from available fund balance
6. Raise & appropriate \$100,000 for the Special Education Expendable Trust Fund
7. Raise & appropriate \$150,000 for the Technology Expendable Trust Fund
  - from available fund balance
8. Raise & appropriate \$150,000 for the Curriculum Capital Reserve Fund
  - from available fund balance

The Hooksett Budget Committee's public hearing on the town and school warrants is scheduled for Thursday January 15 at Town Hall at 7:00p. This is the last opportunity to provide feedback to the Budget Committee before they vote on each warrant article to provide their recommendations.

The Deliberative Session is the final opportunity for residents to amend the ballot that will go to voters in March. When Deliberative Sessions have spotty attendance, big changes can be made by relatively few people.

The School Board will publish its Deliberative Session Voters Guide, providing background for the warrant articles, the week of January 19. You can find it online at:

<https://hooksettschoolboard.sau15.net/documents-reports/>

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### Proposed 2026-29 Teachers Contract with HEA

Contract negotiations were concluded between the Hooksett School Board (HSB) and Hooksett Education Association (HEA) on January 12, with HEA membership ratifying the tentative agreement and it subsequently being approved by HSB.

From a School Board perspective, recruiting and retaining talented staff is a crucial factor in operating a high-performing school district. A pressing Board objective for this contract was to continue the work started three years ago to improve the competitiveness of wages for the first ten steps (corresponding to years of experience) of the salary chart. At the time, when comparing Hooksett's contract to all other districts in New Hampshire utilizing data published by the NH Department of Education, we discovered that the bottom salary tier of our contract was in the bottom 25% of bottom tiers state-wide, while our top salary tier was in the top 25% of top tiers state-wide, leaving Hooksett with one of the state's largest pay discrepancies top to bottom. The latest state contract data we analyzed indicated we'd pulled up this bottom tier up to 42%.

Regrettably, our district has seen teaching staff turnover due in part to a lack of competitive salary offerings for staff under ten years of experience in our salary chart. Last year, we lost nine teaching staff members to other employers, and all nine were in the bottom half of our salary scale. This highlights that our compensation is simultaneously competitive for senior staff while not so for junior staff. Without consistent compensation competitiveness across the salary chart, such inequity ultimately leads to an imbalanced and more expensive workforce - as replacement staff tend to land in higher steps than those who departed. The salary charts in this agreement help bolster these lagging bottom steps.

Other highlights from the proposed agreement:

1. Reallocation of one teaching day to a second parent teacher conference day to occur in March
2. Introducing a second health insurance plan option, a high-deductible plan with health savings account (HSA), with district contributions to the HSA of \$2,000 to \$2,500.
3. Improving language for staff course and workshop reimbursements
4. Providing for more granular use of sick and personal leave
5. Capping the number of \$28,000 retirement bonuses in a year at 5, from 6
6. Continued bonuses for certain top-step staff whose steps were consolidated in 2023

You can find the entire proposed agreement online at:

<https://hooksettschoolboard.sau15.net/documents-reports/>

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## Stay in Touch Online

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<https://hooksettschoolboard.sau15.net>

Meeting agendas, minutes, policies, contracts, budget documents, and more!

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

Social media and timely updates

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wayne', written in a cursive style.

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.*