

New Hampshire School Administrative Unit #15

90 Farmer Road

Hooksett, New Hampshire 03106-2125

Telephone (603) 622-3731 Fax (603) 669-4352

Margaret W. Polak
Assistant Superintendent

William J. Rearick
Superintendent of Schools

Amy R. Ransom
Business Administrator

August 26, 2022

Dear Parents,

Last year, the shortage of bus drivers was an issue for the vast majority of school districts in the state. The shortage of drivers placed a great deal of stress on many of our families. As we get ready for the start of school, the bus driver shortage remains an issue. The bus schedules that will be published in the next of couple of days reflect the challenges the district is currently facing. I would like to take this opportunity to explain steps which have been taken to address the shortage of bus drivers.

The shortage of bus drivers has been driven by three factors. First, four drivers decided not to return to their jobs, some no longer wanted to drive a school bus and others left for other employment opportunities. In response, Student Transportation of America (STA) which is the company the district has contracted with to provide bus transportation, has increased their hourly rate for bus drivers from \$18-\$20 an hour to \$26 an hour. STA is currently considering raising the hourly rate even higher in an attempt to attract additional drivers. STA will be bringing in a new management team to run the day to day operations. STA has also employed a software program which is designed to make the bus routes more efficient.

Over the summer, I have been in frequent contact with STA's Regional Vice-President regarding their efforts to secure more bus drivers. During our meetings, I have stressed in no uncertain terms, that STA has to be more efficient in transporting our students to and from school and that they need to try and improve their benefits package in order to recruit more drivers. I have also reached out to other bus companies that service neighboring school districts to see if they could provide additional drivers. Unfortunately, they are also having difficulty hiring new bus drivers and are unable to provide any assistance. If you know of anyone interested in becoming a bus driver, please contact STA at 603-222-2248.

The bus routes for the 2022-23 school year will be posted shortly. Please note that once the bus routes are posted, they are still subject to change as STA hires more bus drivers and as they continue to make the routes more efficient. Your child's principal will notify parents of these changes.

Sincerely,



William J. Rearick

Superintendent of Schools
School Administrative Unit #15