

## **MEET ANDREW RO, SUPERVISOR OF PUPIL TRANSPORTATION**

Perhaps one of the most important and undervalued jobs in the Council Rock School District is that of Supervisor of Pupil Transportation. This job includes the responsibility for safely busing all students who live within CR borders to and from their public or private schools that are located no more than ten miles beyond one of the district's boundaries. With the retirement of Jack Pinero last October, CR had some large shoes to fill in this position. Fortunately, it appears they have found the right fit with Mr. Andrew Ro.

Since the beginning of every school year can bring many headaches to any Transportation Department, Andrew started in CR in August 2015. He had a few months to work alongside of Jack, thus ensuring a smooth transition at the most hectic time of the school year – September.

Andrew grew up in Dayton, Ohio and graduated from The Ohio State University in 2001 with his B.S. in Business Administration. He concentrated on MIS, Marketing and Transportation and Logistics. He completed his MBA online from Keller Management in 2009. His work experience includes 11 years at JB Hunt Transport where he began as an intern in March 2001, and worked his way up to Regional Operations Manager II for the Northeast states. He was responsible for successfully managing and developing over 20 managers and 200 drivers. Andrew improved customer retention through improved communication and collaboration, and was named Operations Manager of the Year in 2011. He also improved the operating margin at 95% of his accounts. His time at JB Hunt also included two and a half years as a Regional Human Resources Manager.

For the past 3 years Andrew worked for Ryder System, Inc. as the Director of Operations II for the Northeast. Among his responsibilities was improving profitability and increasing revenue for a customer portfolio of 35 locations in the Northeast, and also negotiating contracts with vendors, existing customers and new customers. However, with this position came travel – and a lot of it. Andrew was on the road travelling about 80% of his time so he began looking for a position that would keep him closer to his home and family.

Andrew lives in New Hope with his wife. They have a daughter who is in kindergarten. He loves being able to work so close to home. He enjoyed everything about his previous positions except the travel time.

As Supervisor of Transportation, Andrew's main responsibility is creating a transportation solution for the 13,000 students, to and from approximately 80 schools and/or programs. This involves the use of 4 Council Rock vans, 6 wheelchair buses, 50 small buses and 94 large buses. He is excited that CR is one of the largest school districts on the East coast operating a propane bus fleet. The switch to propane buses has eliminated cold start problems, which means less issues during the colder months. He has also received no negative feedback from the bus drivers. Andrew is also tasked with coming up with solutions as problems arise, monitoring vendors and looking at contracts. Nineteen bus monitors, four van drivers, and a transportation coordinator report to Andrew, and he reports to Bob Reinhart, Director of Business Administration.

One of Andrew's short term goals is to fully understand the role transportation plays in the CR district. He understands there will be many changes in the near future with redistricting. Another goal he has is to upgrade the current transportation software, which he feels is not state of the art. He sees some challenges to these goals. Among them are finances and the fact that people are often resistant to change.

Although Andrew worked with wonderful people in his other positions, he was extremely impressed with the people he encountered during the CR interview process. This has been a nice change for him, coming from an industry where the focus was always on profit.

Andrew has quickly learned from the large volume of emails and phone calls he receives that creating a transportation solution for a dynamic district will be very challenging. But it is his goal to "create a transportation system that is both safe and efficient." For him, safety is the number one concern. So it appears that our students will be in good hands with Andrew Ro at the helm of Pupil Transportation.

Citizens would like to thank Mr. Ro for taking time out of his busy day to sit down and talk with us.