

Speed trap finds buses complying

Parent complaints are not confirmed

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WOODBURY — A police officer with a radar gun set up a speed trap Thursday on Flanders Road, but he came back to the office without ticketing a school bus driver.

The news didn't surprise school administrators in Region 14, who have been under attack since last week over problems with the district's bus routes.

Several parents have complained to First Selectman Dick Crane that buses are speeding to finish their routes, so police ran radar on Flanders Road — the primary route between Woodbury and Bethlehem — to monitor their speeds.

"An officer was out there all day, and there were no buses stopped," Crane said.

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A rumor circulated that a bus was pulled over on Route 132 in Bethlehem, where someone spotted a Region 14 administrator, Laidlaw Transit Inc. representative and state police trooper talking on the side of the road near a bus.

"It simply isn't true," Superintendent Robert D. Cronin said. He said business manager Jay Hubelbank and Ellen Smith, Laidlaw interim manager, were in Bethlehem looking at the safety of a bus stop with someone from the state police.

Police were concerned that students were having to cross Route 132.

"We had arranged that (meeting)," Hubelbank said.

Cronin said afternoon dismissal from the schools was better Thursday. He said all buses were out of Bethlehem Elementary School by 3:15 p.m., and gone from Mitchell Elementary School at 4 p.m.

"It continues to improve," he said. "(Hubelbank) has been with the company every day."

Some parents complained their children are still getting home too late.

Pamela Gengenbach of Woodbury said her son's bus arrived at 3:50 p.m. from Bethlehem Elementary School, an hour after school dismisses. Five minutes earlier, another bus was in her neighborhood dropping off children from Mitchell Elementary School, which dismisses 45 minutes after Bethlehem.