

**GILFORD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 30, 2007
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The Gilford School Board held a regular meeting on Monday, July 30, at the Gilford Elementary School Tocci Library. Present were board members Sue Allen, Paul Blandford, Derek Tomlinson, Kurt Webber, and Margo Weeks. Representing Gilmanton were Cindy Hatch and Zannah Richards. Administrators present were Paul DeMinico, Scott Isabelle, Sandy McGonagle, Jim Kemmerer, and Ken Wiswell.

OPENING

School Board Chairperson Sue Allen called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m., led the Pledge of Allegiance, and confirmed posting of the meeting.

Margo Weeks made the motion that the board approve the minutes of the June 4 and June 22, 2007 meetings. Kurt Webber pointed out a correction on Page 5 of the June 4 minutes, noting that veterans or those currently in military service were asked to rise during the graduation ceremony. Derek Tomlinson seconded the motion and it was voted in the affirmative.

REPORTS

Meadows Advisory Committee

Sue Allen noted a posting in a local newspaper and other articles in reference to filling two vacant seats on the committee; one a two-year, the other a one-year term. At present letters of interest must be received by August 1; however if there are insufficient responses, the closing date will be moved. She also noted that a letter of agreement had been sent to Andy Howe regarding mowing of the Meadows fields.

Superintendent Report

Paul DeMinico reported that the acronym BLOB came from Reagan-era Education Secretary William Bennett and stood for Bloated Local Organizational Bureaucrats. It referred to the then-held notion that school leadership and administration were unrelated to student achievement. Dr. DeMinico provided members with information titled "School Leadership that Works," which described a more recent analysis on school leaders that clearly shows strong correlation between school leaders and student achievement. The materials describe measures that school leadership should take to advance the relationship, and many of those measures are in place at Gilford, including strategic planning, focus on curriculum, focus on non-negotiable goals, evaluation, and the like.

Kurt Webber inquired about the term "non-negotiable goals." Paul replied that the phrase is not found in Gilford materials, however it is made clear to the teaching staff that such goals as curriculum goals and student learning goals are "pretty much cut in concrete," and that the teachers embrace them readily.

Ken Wiswell agreed "definitely;" Sandy McGonagle also agreed, pointing out the work done at the elementary school in the past three years especially in regards to curriculum and the different kinds of assessments; Jim Kemmerer also agreed, noting that the teachers understand the clearly-delineated expectations, and that the teachers are beginning to see how the various programs are all beginning to come together.

Scott Isabelle pointed out that the teachers have been part of the process, therefore they have a sense of "ownership" in the goals.

Paul related hearing that Gilford now has a stable administration, which may contribute to the continuing success.

Kurt concurred, and pointed out that Finding 3 of the materials state that superintendent tenure is positively correlated with student achievement. He observed that this finding could be offered when a complaint arises concerning the superintendent's contract. "We were looking to get some stability in the administration, but here's some research that supports that we did the right thing."

CORRESPONDENCE

GHS Graduates to Serve in Armed Forces Newspaper Photo

Paul DeMinico noted that this photo will be a feature in the Annual Report Card that issues in January.

Kurt related that the photo appeared in all three local newspapers. Margo inquired whether it could be a yearly tradition. Sue suggested that seniors who have made that decision could be recognized in the Memorial Day assembly.

Memo from Ed Murdough: Approval Designations

Paul DeMinico related that Gilford Elementary School has received "Approval with Distinction" status, while the Middle and High School have received "Approved" status from the State. This annual process is independent of the more extensive Accreditation Report. Paul noted that all schools require state approval; schools that do not meet all requirements are given conditional or provisional approval. The requirements include the condition of facilities, adequacy of instructional programs, implemented policies, and teacher certification. Paul noted that while Gilford meets the State's minimum standards, "we think we go well beyond the minimum, and wish to demonstrate that with the accreditation self-study."

International Baccalaureate

Paul referred to information in the members' packets. As part of an inquiry as to whether Gilford would be interested in participating in this academic program, Arthur Ponce, an International Baccalaureate (IB) director at a school on Cape Cod, has been invited to address the board next month.

Zannah Richards inquired whether other New Hampshire schools were participating. Paul replied that none are at present; however a school in Bedford is giving it serious consideration. He noted that he will be visiting a school in Springfield, Massachusetts with regard to a Danielsen trainer; coincidentally that school participates in IB and he will confer with staff at that school.

Kurt inquired whether IB would be taking the place of Advanced Placement. Paul replied that it has not yet been determined. It is unlikely that both would be offered simultaneously, as there are cost considerations. A major difference is that IB is a philosophy, while AP is a series of courses. More information will come at next month's meeting. Paul noted that it is the fastest growing program of its kind in the US, and is more used in southern states.

Derek noted that the materials quantify monetary considerations; to adopt the program would require commitments on the part of the district and participants; the endowment group would be interested in hearing more about the program, with a view to possibly contributing to the program.

After some discussion, the consensus was to invite members of the endowment committee to next month's meeting and permit comments or questions from its members.

Zannah Richards inquired as to results of AP testing; Ken Wiswell reported that the results had only just arrived and that the senior class did quite well.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment was offered or taken.

OLD BUSINESS

Buzz-in Entry

Scott Isabelle updated the board as to the progress of this project at the elementary school. Work will commence the week of August 6: there will be electrically operated doors, an intercom system, two cameras, and a card-swipe device. He anticipates that the work will be finished before school starts. No

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additional staffing costs are anticipated. He described a common use of the system wherein the doors are open when busses arrive, when there are faculty and administrators out front; once the students are in the building the doors close and the buzz-in entry system is engaged until the end of the school day.

NEW BUSINESS

Ted Comstock Memo: Mandatory Policy IMAH

Paul DeMinico described this policy as a requirement of Education Rule 310 and new standards. Its focus is on physical activity. He will review the policy with Margo Weeks and bring a draft for the board's review at the next meeting. His initial impression is that the district is already in compliance. He related that in other states recess times have been eliminated to enable the staff to spend that time focusing on the academic core to prepare the students for high-stakes testing. He termed the phenomenon curriculum narrowing or curriculum abandonment. The policy ensures some level of physical activity among the students.

Staff Resignation/Nomination

Paul DeMinico related that the resignation of GES Assistant Principal Todd Dimick would be covered more thoroughly in non-public session. He introduced the school's Technical and Integration Specialist Peter Sawyer, who has agreed to serve as Assistant Principal for the interim period of the coming academic year. He noted that the district is fortunate to have a person of Mr. Sawyer's caliber, who knows the staff and students, who in turn know and respect him. Just this date the administration had interviewed and offered a candidate Mr. Sawyer's current position on the same interim period, which event would be taken up in non-public session. The board welcomed Mr. Sawyer, who thanked the board for its confidence, and underscored his local ties and commitment.

The remainder of this agenda item was moved to non-public session.

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION
RSA 91-A:3 II (a) (b)**

At 6:40 p.m., Margo Weeks made the motion to enter non-public session pursuant to the provisions of RSA 91-A:3 II. Kurt Webber seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous roll call vote.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully Submitted,

**Kurt Webber
School Board Secretary**