

**GILFORD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
MONDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2008
GILFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PAGE 1**

The Gilford School Board held a regular meeting on Monday February 18, 2008 at the Gilford Elementary School Tocci Library. Present were board members Sue Allen, Paul Blandford, Derek Tomlinson, and Kurt Webber. Representing Gilmanton were Cindy Hatch and Zannah Richards. Administrators present were Paul DeMinico, Scott Isabelle, Jim Kemmerer, Sandra McGonagle, and Ken Wiswell.

OPENING

School Board Chairperson Sue Allen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m., led the Pledge of Allegiance, and confirmed posting of the meeting.

Derek Tomlinson made the motion that the board approve the minutes of the January 7, 2008 meeting. Kurt Webber seconded the motion and it was voted in the affirmative.

REPORTS

Gilford Elementary School

Sandy McGonagle added to her written report as follows:

- GES has become a designated professional development school for Plymouth State University, hosting 12 student-teachers and 5 Methods students. These individuals lend a different perspective to the students, while adding some responsibility for the teachers. GES welcomes the opportunity to provide training and mentoring to these aspiring professionals.
- In a continuing outreach to parents, a Parent Night will be held on Tuesday February 19, 2008 for parents of Title I students to introduce some strategies and interactive games they may use with their children. Child care will be provided during the session.
- A series of workshops will be presented by UpStream, called "Parenting During Difficult Circumstances," comprising six sessions to provide support for busy families.
- Last week GES hosted a Mammals Night, drawing approximately 60 parents to learn about mammals.

Gilford Middle School

Jim Kemmerer submitted his report as written.

Gilford High School

Ken Wiswell added to his written report that a successful lockdown drill was conducted on February 15, 2008. He indicated that each time such drills are conducted, a number of areas of improvement surface.

Kurt Webber inquired as to the planned graduation date, given the number of snow days so far this year. Ken replied that the school is currently one day beyond the allowable limit for days missed. Seniors were surveyed this date, and all but a few agreed to attend school on Saturday April 5 to make up for the missed day, in order to retain the June 14 graduation date. He indicated that final exams have been postponed for a week, and that letters would issue this week.

Report on SAU Office Relocation

Paul DeMinico narrated his power point presentation, originally given at the Gilford Municipal Budget Committee meeting on January 3, summarized as follows:

**GILFORD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
MONDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2008
GILFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PAGE 2**

REPORTS

The need for space

- SAU is temporarily housed at Town Hall
- Town offered a 1-year lease, ending June 2008. The town is experiencing its own space issues and needs this area.
- Existing space is inadequate for SAU needs, e.g., student services, curriculum offices, technology offices. Current space is nearly dysfunctional, ventilation limitations causing mold and mildew
- Permanent space for SAU is overdue. Current space has been “temporarily” occupied by SAU for 9 years
- Opportunity for permanent SAU space is at hand

Options for SAU

- Rowe house: ideal location but requires significant renovation, and is now on National Register of Historic Places
- The Meadows: Cannot use existing structures, cost to build new estimated \$400-500,000
- Construct new building or purchase and rehabilitate existing house: cost prohibitive at upwards of \$350,000
- Rent private commercial facilities, e.g. Village West: costly and defeats purpose of locating SAU near or in school
- Use existing space owned by the district most viable option

Board approved option

- GES classrooms at Northwest corner (1959 wing)
- Self-contained, accessible, separate access/egress
- Can house curriculum and student services/ technology
- Facilities are functional and adequate
- Maintenance, custodial, electric and heating included
- Long-term solution as a result of declining enrollment
- Cost to renovate is \$58,587

Paul displayed the results of an enrollment study which indicates that K-4 enrollment has decreased by 12-14 percent, and appears that it will continue to decrease over the next five years at minimum. He acknowledged that while moving to GES may not be the perfect solution, it is the most viable. He recognized that parking is and will remain a problem, and was a major factor when the library was considered. Other questions that arose at the deliberative session and afterwards, and Dr. DeMinico’s responses, included:

- Parking/Traffic: Parking is and will remain a problem, and was a major factor when the library was considered. He noted that SAU staff begin to arrive at 6:30 and leave between 4:00 and 6:00, well outside the hours that students are walking into and out of school.
- Scott Isabelle commented that the library was the first choice of the board and administration, as it is an open and active facility. However, it was not until September that the legal opinion was received, which laid out the difficulty and attendant extra time involved in contacting and receiving concurrence from the heirs of the library’s donor.
- Timeliness: The SAU has been asked to vacate its quarters by June 2008. A new school budget and teacher contract will be up for vote in March 2009, and it would be advisable to have as few other warrants competing for the attention and consideration of the voters.
- Student Safety/Intruders: The proposed space has separate access; those

REPORTS

who enter that portion of the building cannot then gain access to the school proper. Students needing to exit during an emergency will be able to do so through the proposed space.

- Teacher Input: Paul stated that if he had it to do again, he would have involved the teachers sooner, certainly before the issue was printed in the media. He noted that teacher input had not been sought on any of the other articles, such as the boiler or roof, and not because teachers' opinions are not valued. His choice is to involve people when there are reasonable options to choose from; in this case the board did not have options.

Derek Tomlinson interjected that the board itself was surprised that the town declined to offer more than a one-year lease. The compressed time schedule was perhaps a part of the reason that the board did not have the luxury of seeking additional input.

- Impact on Full-Day Kindergarten: Paul noted that he advocated at the deliberative session for full-day kindergarten; however a 2:1 majority of voters declined to support the proposal. He has not given up on the notion, but notes that according to enrollment projections the school may be ready for full-day kindergarten within four to five years. In such an event, the renovations done for the SAU offices could easily be removed and the classrooms restored.
- Class size: Class sizes will not increase, they will remain in compliance with board policy.
- How long are decreased enrollments projected: Paul discounted long-range (10-year) enrollment projections as being inaccurate. He suggested performing another enrollment study in the next three to four years to obtain a more precise projection. A different provider (NHSBA) was used to conduct this survey in large part because the cost was significantly lower. He remarked that a significant change in Gilford's demographics would trigger a new study.
- Involvement of facilities staff: Paul reiterated that teacher input should have been sought. He indicated that Tim Bartlett was involved as soon as the enrollment study was completed: Mr. Bartlett drew the preliminary plans for the proposed move. Paul went on to relate his surprise at the volume and intensity of comments received at and since the deliberative session. He indicated that he had received no indication of any discontent prior to the deliberative session, in any form. After review of Sandy McGonagle's presentation, he could see no negative impact on the quality of education as a result of the proposed move.

Paul Blandford advised the audience that the board has discussed the concerns brought up by the audience. He confirmed that the time element was a significant factor, and the board was assured by Dr. DeMinico and Sandy McGonagle that the proposed space was workable.

Other comments by the audience included:

- The staff did not want to speak out of turn until they had been properly and fully informed. "We didn't have the questions because we didn't have all the information."
- The staff discovered the plan at the beginning of January at a team leader meeting. They addressed their concerns and recommendation to wait one

REPORTS

more year to Sandy McGonagle, which for them was the appropriate step. They did not want to circumvent Sandy and go directly to the Superintendent. They voiced their concerns publicly at the deliberative session.

- If the district has adopted Follow the Child, the needs of the students should be examined, not only the numbers of students. Those who have been with the district for a number of years will confirm that the needs of the students have changed out of proportion to the numbers of students.

Sandy McGonagle used an overhead projection of a plan of the school to assist in her presentation, summarized as follows:

- When Grade 5 joined the Middle School, it was a definite benefit to GES to have the extra space.
- A continuing need for speech services, not only at GES but at the preschool level, has significantly accelerated during the past five to eight years.
- O/T and P/T now occupy what was formerly Kim Watterson's classrooms. A wall was built, and part of the space was used for a book room to house the Literacy Collaborative materials.
- Special Services and Special Ed population was split into k-2 and k-4 to provide small group services and learning labs. The learning lab houses four staff, and is occupied by an average of 10 students at a time.
- One classroom is identified as a studio, which is used for the morning broadcast and also for small group instruction.

Sandy related that she and Assistant Principal Brian Salmon discussed the issue at length, and proposed moving one Grade 4 class into Room 660. Sandy pointed out other possibilities using the overhead plan. She noted that one goal is to keep as many Grade 4 classes in proximity to each other as possible, which would require some creative scheduling and flexibility. Where speech services occur becomes a problem. She described an anticipated sharp increase in new preschool students requiring speech services. Ideally those services would be kept close to the front of the building for easier access, probably Room 616. However this will require three teachers working out of a very small space, again requiring creative scheduling and flexibility.

Sandy outlined that the loss of small instructional areas will have an impact; before Grade 5 moved, those services were conducted in hallways and in the cafeteria. In 2009 when the large Grade 4 population moves from the building to the Middle School, it will be easier to find those small group spaces that are causing present concern. The cafeteria and a conference room can still be utilized; the school's biggest concern is to preserve speech and O/T services which have become an inherent part of the school.

Sandy concluded her presentation by pointing out that GES will lose one teacher next year, likely in Grade 2, because of declining population.

Further audience comment during and following Sandy's presentation included:

- One audience member's child received preschool speech services, the first year in a "closet off of the O/T room." The next year the services moved into a larger space, and the difference in space was noticeable. "More and more children are coming who need such services; I'd hate to see them going back to using the closet."

REPORTS

- The Town owns the Library building, the heirs own the land. The Town will not allow the facility to go unused. "There are certain loopholes, if at least a portion of that building remains a library."
- The proposed new location for the learning lab would have to be to a classroom that is emptied because of the loss of a teacher due to reduced enrollment. However, continued use of that space is predicated on the hope that class sizes continue to decrease.
- All classrooms are being used: there is no empty space.
- The incoming kindergarten population has about 20 percent of its 60 students coded; that percentage seems to keep increasing. "Are we really going to be offering the best services" for these students? Putting three rather loud youngsters in a small room for speech therapy would be counterproductive.
- During the warmer months, it is difficult to breathe in the upstairs classrooms in the old building, yielding a concern about establishing more classes in those spaces.
- According to a parking survey conducted this date, there were seven vacant parking spaces available, including those in a large puddle. Four faculty vehicles were parked in the visitors' lot, yielding a net of three spaces available. The addition of 12 to 15 student teachers adds to the burden.
- Student enrollment projections have been proven wrong in the past, notably those done for additions to the Middle School. Perhaps the fall of 2009 would offer a more realistic sense of class sizes and space requirements.
- Recognizing that there are space problems, would further entreaties by Dr. DeMinico and Scott Isabelle to the town be effective.
- If there are but two weeks before voting to arrive at a creative solution, such attentions should be focused now. Sue replied that the warrant that was discussed at the deliberative session has been printed and will be voted upon in March.
- What happens if the warrant fails? Scott Isabelle replied that in such event "The voters have said 'You cannot spend that money,'" which effectively moves the issue one year away.
- GES does not have empty rooms, it has worked hard to maximize the available space; when Grade 5 moved to the Middle School GES finally gained necessary space and put it to use for small group instruction. These rooms are scheduled hour-by-hour and used 90 percent during the day. To schedule these classes in the cafeteria or in the hallways would be a move backwards.
- With approximately 90 employees and 10 to 20 volunteers per day, parking will be an issue if SAU personnel also plan to park on-site.
- Renovation costs almost always exceed their budget. If the money is taken from the boiler fund, will there still be enough to replace the boilers? The climate in the buildings must be regulated: the upstairs air quality is presently deplorable.
- If the town's efforts to promote commercial properties are successful, that will eventually bring employees and school-age children.
- An inexpensive immediate fix is not always the best long-term solution.

**GILFORD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
MONDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2008
GILFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PAGE 6**

REPORTS

- One audience member's child is a Title I student and has been receiving excellent assistance through that program. Should she be displaced into hallway instruction, it will be utterly embarrassing for her

Sue indicated that the board will consider all suggestions.

Paul Blandford voiced his view that although the plan needs further work, the move can be accomplished. He noted that ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requirements should be considered.

Sue closed the discussion on relocation of the SAU office and thanked attendees for their comments. She noted that the board would take the comments under advisement for further discussion.

Meadows Advisory Committee

Sue Allen reported that two new committee members had their first facility tour during the week of February 11. Their next meeting is February 20, and Sue will bring a report to the next board meeting. Upcoming is a meeting between Paul Fluet and Collis Adams of the Department of Environmental Services.

CORRESPONDENCE

Letter from Education Commissioner re Special Education Determination

Paul DeMinico acknowledged this commendation from the Department of education stating that the district's special education determination is 100 percent, which he characterized as "a real feather in our cap."

Local Government Center/NHSBA Litigation

Paul briefly discussed a request by both agencies to become involved in litigation regarding the passing down of retirement costs to local districts to fully fund the state employees' retirement program. He suggested delaying action pending further research, and cautioned that the litigation may set school boards in opposition to public employees.

Sue commented on correspondence she had received from NHSBA on the matter, and ensured that all board members had received similar correspondence.

Derek Tomlinson stated his view was that NHSBA is recommending that the districts join the litigation.

Paul Blandford suggested adding the issue to the next school board agenda, March 3, 2008.

John Fauci letter to L. Belanger and M. Dubois

Paul acknowledged letters of thanks to L. Belanger, M. Dubois, and to Patty Smith and Kim Valpey.

NHSBA Scholarship Program

Sue Allen informed the board that NHSBA is implementing a scholarship program, focusing on graduating senior students who are children, stepchildren, or grandchildren of New Hampshire school boards members as of March 1, 2008. The scholarships are viewed as recognition of the service of school board members across the state.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No further public comment was offered or taken.

OLD BUSINESS

Policy Review: Records/Directory Information (Second Reading)

Paul DeMinico reviewed that the policy clarifies what the district must do to be in

**GILFORD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
MONDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2008
GILFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PAGE 7**

OLD BUSINESS

compliance and what has been put into practice. Previous practice was not closely aligned with the current legislation.

Derek Tomlinson moved that the board accept the policy as annotated. Kurt Webber seconded the motion.

Brief discussion ensued, prompted by a question Zannah Richards about the apparent difference between this policy and those adopted by post-secondary institutions under FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act).

Kurt voiced his understanding that once a student reaches 18 years of age, he or she can determine who has access to his/her records.

Ken Wiswell related an attorney's reading that if the child is residing in the home, the school is allowed to treat the child as a minor so long as he/she is a full time student.

Derek's motion passed unanimously.

School Calendar 2008-2009 (Final)

Paul DeMinico brought forward the final version of the 2008-2009 school calendar for the board's decision.

Derek Tomlinson moved that the board adopt the calendar as presented; Kurt Webber seconded the motion.

Paul noted that Paul Blandford's suggestion to have the entire Thanksgiving week off was discussed but the leadership team declined to accept it, citing marginal productivity for a Friday in-service day.

Zannah Richards inquired how the calendar aligned with Gilmanton's; Paul replied that it was very close.

Organizational Chart

Paul DeMinico brought forward his second iteration of an organizational chart, incorporating suggestions from the last meeting.

A short discussion ensued about interpretation of notations such as 29.65 employees. Scott commented that the chart was generated as a result of a request by the budget committee, and should therefore track other information presented to that committee. Kurt Webber suggested noting the total number of employees, full-time and part-time. Sue suggested leaving the 29.65 designation, with a clarifying notation of how many full- and part-time teachers made up that 29.65 number.

Paul agreed to return at the next meeting with a revised chart

Feedback on Publishing Teacher Salaries

Paul DeMinico reported that the leadership team has suggested that it does not see any strong rationale to the advancement of learning in the classroom as a result of publishing teacher salaries.

Paul Blandford moved that the board elect not to publish salaries of school district employees. Derek Tomlinson seconded the motion.

Derek voiced his view that anyone can obtain the information by filling out a form at the SAU office; therefore by not publishing the information the board is not hindering its access to the public.

Paul's motion passed unanimously. Sue asked Dr. DeMinico to convey the results of the vote to the Budget Committee in writing.

**GILFORD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
MONDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2008
GILFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PAGE 8**

NEW BUSINESS

Student Activity Account—Gilford High School

Ken Wiswell informed the board that the school wished to close student accounts dating back to 2005. He noted that for those accounts that could be related to a particular graduating class, those few officers who could be found were contacted and had no position.

Scott Isabelle elaborated that the accounts were the result of an auditor's suggestion from when the district separated from SAU 30. The funds must be placed in an account that benefits the students.

Ken suggested that the funds be placed in the Coca-Cola account.

Kurt Webber moved that the board approve Ken's suggestion. Paul Blandford seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Third Party Administration of Tax Sheltered Annuities (TSAs)

Scott Isabelle advised that he and Dr. DeMinico wanted to bring to the board's attention some IRS changes regarding the district's 403(b) status.

Presently the district offers the ability for employees to purchase TSAs through the district. This has been a long-standing (20 year) practice, although not currently in the contract. The district encumbered no cost, and until recently the activity was a pass-through. A participant would authorize the district to take a portion of his/her salary and place it into a TSA. Once the form was completed and passed to the provider, that ended the district's involvement. Very detailed regulations have since been implemented that end districts' role as a pass-through; if the districts do not come into compliance by January of 2009, then all contributions into TSAs become taxable. The employee will have to pay tax on the deducted salary, and the district will have to pay its federal tax portion. A positive outcome is that the district now must enter into contracts with providers: if the providers want access to participants, they must comply with the district's written plan.

At a recent conference, Scott noted that only 10 districts in the state are considering continuing the practice; many were unsure and others were simply discontinuing the practice. A third party administrator, Gatekeeper, has offered to administer the program for one year at a cost of \$2590, which would allow the district to come into compliance by 2009. It could then make better informed decisions about whether or how to continue. Scott stressed that it is critical to become in compliance by 2009 to avoid significant consequences.

Sue Allen inquired from what part of the budget the \$2590 would come. Scott replied that a reduction in worker's compensation costs due to decreased claims has resulted in some leftover funds in the default budget.

Paul Blandford inquired if the district could discontinue the practice once it comes into compliance. Scott replied that it could, however doing so could raise a question of past practice, even though a significant change has arisen. He indicated that such conversations could occur in teacher contract negotiations. "We need to do this to protect what we've done so far."

Kurt Webber inquired how many participants are presently involved. Scott replied approximately 60.

Kurt moved that the board approve Scott's suggestion to authorize \$2590 to enter into a one-year contract with third party administrator Gatekeeper. Paul Blandford seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Sue asked that the issue be brought back to the board for the September meeting, to allow for a decision within a 60-day cancellation notice period. Scott replied

**GILFORD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
MONDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2008
GILFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PAGE 9**

NEW BUSINESS

that it should be part of the whole budget process.

Scott also mentioned that another part of the new IRS regulations allow a teacher to select 20 or 26 pay periods, but cannot change that selection within a year's time.

Title IV Grant on Safe/Drug-Free Schools/ Title V

Paul DeMinico brought forward two grants for the board's approval: a Title IV grant entitled "Rx/OTC Drug Abuse Awareness Campaign" in the amount \$5,244.00; the other a Title V grant entitled "Homework Club" in the amount \$1527.30.

Derek Tomlinson moved that the board accept the grant to create awareness for abuse of prescription drugs in the amount of \$5244.00. Kurt Webber seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Derek Tomlinson then moved that the board accept the grant to support a homework club in the amount of \$1527.30. Kurt Webber seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

NH Charitable Trust Grant

Paul DeMinico brought forward two grants totaling \$15,000 from the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation to help support the Literacy Collaborative. He noted that the program promotes training teachers at the Middle and High Schools to implement reading strategies across all disciplines.

Kurt Webber moved that the board accept the New Hampshire charitable Foundation grant in the amount of \$15,000. Derek Tomlinson seconded the motion. Zannah Richards inquired whether \$15,000 was the total cost of the program. Paul replied that it is a matching grant.

The motion passed unanimously.

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

At 8:22 p.m., Kurt Webber made the motion to enter non-public session pursuant to the provisions of RSA 91-A:3 II. Paul Blandford seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous roll call vote. However, the appellant Ms. Karen Bobotas declined to have this portion of her appeal held in non-public session. By motion duly offered, seconded and passed, the board agreed to exit non-public session immediately.

**PUBLIC SESSION
NEW BUSINESS**

Paul DeMinico framed the issue as an appeal to the board to grant a waiver of its attendance policy to student Tom Bobotas, previous procedures having been followed and exhausted. The student is engaged in an extracurricular Alpine skiing competition, and seeks to be permitted to miss days of school in excess of policy.

Ms. Bobotas outlined her son's academic achievements as a "B" average student, and described his accomplishments and commercial support in ski racing, as well as the training and travel schedule that his endeavors entail. She delineated the steps previously taken to gain permission to miss an extra number of days of school, including an extra 10 days (over the policy's 8) in a trimester granted by Mr. Wiswell. Dr. DeMinico informed her during her appeal to his office that she would have to bring the matter before the board to obtain a waiver of the policy if her son was to miss further days of school. She indicated that her family had discussed the suggestion that Tom take the entire second trimester off, but agreed that such an interruption would not be in Tom's best interests.

Paul DeMinico introduced a letter from Tom's Math teacher, Mr. Dumais, who

**GILFORD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
MONDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2008
GILFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PAGE 10**

NEW BUSINESS

supported the waiver, particularly since Tom now has a math tutor and is up to date on his homework assignments. Mr. Dumais indicated that this is a special situation meriting a waiver from the board.

Ken Wiswell remarked that such a waiver is effectively venturing into uncharted territory regarding the attendance policy. He noted that there was a valid rationale for setting limits at 8 absences per semester. However there should always be room for an exception when the criteria so justify, which is why he made the decision to grant an extra 10 days based on Tom's academic standing and the nature of his absences. The negative aspect of missing school is that participation in a class is more than doing the work: students are expected to contribute to the class, and there is ample good discussion that occurs which does not appear on a homework sheet or on a test paper. He concluded that he has "no disagreement with the young man that Tom is," but felt uncomfortable approving an extension past the original 10-day grant.

Cindy Hatch asked on how many other occasions had the board been asked to reconsider the policy. Ken replied that such requests are frequent; however they usually pertain to a medical issue or some other family trauma, whereas this is the first of this magnitude engendered by an elective activity.

Cindy asked whether teacher input is sought.

Ken replied that upon a student's submission of a vacation request, a form is sent to teachers asking that the teachers help the administration to inform the parents as to the effects of the student missing school.

The members discussed teacher comments on the form generated by this student's request.

Sue described the process for Ms. Bobotas, advising that questions will be asked of her by the board, which would then deliberate in private.

Kurt Webber voiced his difficulty understanding why accommodations could not be made for a student when the dates of the absences are known well in advance. Ken elaborated that in some courses, particularly humanities courses, there are things that take place in class that are not recorded, such as discussions, question-and-answer sessions, comments on reading, comments between the teacher and students, and between the students themselves. "That's where a lot of education takes place. There is no substitute for the actual experience of being in the classroom when education is going on." He recognized that Tom has done a good job in keeping up with the work, but there are other parts of the experience that are valuable, and it is those that the attendance policy attempts to address.

Cindy Hatch asked how classroom participation is weighed in a student's total grade. Ken replied that it varies, but 10 to 20 percent would be the norm.

Zannah Richards, noting that tutoring has been instituted for math, inquired whether tutoring had occurred at other times during Tom's involvement with the activity.

Ms. Bobotas replied that tutoring had been implemented immediately upon the math teacher's comment that Tom had been seen struggling with a test.

Kurt Webber commented that, with the shift to a competency-based model, he would have difficulty withholding credit from a student who is demonstrating competency in a class, yet lacks the requisite "seat time."

Derek Tomlinson remarked that the board should recognize Tom's achievements. "What Tommy's done is pretty amazing." He opined that if a student may be prohibited from continuing in an extracurricular activity such as sports if he/she lacks the requisite grade point average, to deny credit for work completed due to

NEW BUSINESS

**GILFORD SCHOOL BOARD MEETING
MONDAY FEBRUARY 18, 2008
GILFORD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
PAGE 11**

achievements outside of the academic arena would seem to be a double-standard. Ms. Bobotas recalled that while her other son Chris was absent for a time, other students took notes for him, which he found invaluable. She suggested that other students would be willing to do the same for Tom. "We're willing to work with the district; we just want to see this happen for Tom."

Before Ms. Bobotas left, Sue asked Dr. DeMinico to share his recommendation for the board.

Paul said that he considered Tom's academic record, the learning that occurred inside and outside the classroom, the support he has received from his family, the time and effort he has spent on maintaining his grades, and concluded that "I can't come up with a good enough reason to say 'Don't grant the waiver.'" He suggested that the board grant the waiver for this year, so long as the support and grades remain the same. He suggested the board could entertain a similar notion for next year.

Ms. Bobotas assured the board that if the grades were to decline, he would not be allowed to continue his ski racing.

Sue Allen remarked that she had, throughout Ms. Bobotas's presentation, heard that school comes first.

Kurt Webber suggested investigating Virtual High School for next year as a way to alleviate some of the difficulties brought about by Tom's activities.

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION
RSA 93-A:3 II**

At 8:51 p.m. Paul Blandford moved that the board enter non-public session under the provisions of RSA 93-A: 3 II. Kurt Webber seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous roll call vote.

At 9:08 p.m., Kurt Webber moved that the board come out of non-public session. Derek Tomlinson seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous roll call vote.

**PUBLIC SESSION
NEW BUSINESS**

Kurt Webber moved that the board approve the waiver to the school's attendance policy, providing that Tom Bobotas maintains his grades, so that Tom can receive class credit. Derek Tomlinson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously, Ms. Bobotas thanked the board, and asked when to approach again for next year. Ken Wiswell advised she should begin as soon as she has scheduling information. Sue Allen asked Ms. Bobotas to understand that Mr. Wiswell has to follow school policy, and often is caught between parents and the board's policy.

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION
RSA 93-A:3 II**

At 9:10 Kurt Webber moved that the board again enter non-public session pursuant to the provisions of RSA 91-A:3 (c) II. Paul Blandford seconded the motion, which passed by unanimous roll call vote.

ADJOURNMENT

Respectfully Submitted,

**Kurt Webber
School Board Secretary**