

Gorham Randolph Shelburne Cooperative Construction Renovation Update

Final renovations and construction work on the Gorham Middle High School's new science, family and consumer science, and technology based pre-engineering classrooms have been completed. GMHS Principal Keith Parent says, "Sarah Tremblay, GRS Student Council Representative, reports that our students are now using the spaces, and they are very excited with the upgraded areas. "

Small items that need to be completed from a "punch list" are being worked on, after students leave school each day. A problem in the heating system for the gym and the new science wing was rectified and everything is working well at this time. Parent adds, "The students and staff are to be commended for dealing with the "chill zone" while the heating issue was corrected."

Phase II has begun with the demolition within the Ann Lary wing of the shop area, music room, and bathrooms. New concrete has been poured in several areas, leveling the entire wing. Tests on materials have taken place and masonry work has begun. The upgrades will encompass a new larger cafeteria, ADA compliant bathrooms, a seminar room, a smaller shop area, and renovation of the music and resource rooms. These spaces will all receive upgraded energy efficient lights, windows, air handling units, new electrical wiring, and doors. Classes have been moved to different areas of the building, and the current cafeteria will continue to be used for food preparation and serving, while Phase II construction is underway.

SAU 20 Superintendent Paul Bousquet says, "The problems with the GMHS facilities were cited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges Accreditation. When the Phase II is completed, we look forward to the NEASC reviewing the status of our accreditation. Principal Parent and I are optimistic that the GMHS will finally be taken off probation."

"The administration and School Board are aware of the economic situation in the valley and we're keeping a close watch on the Phase II budget", says SAU 20 Business Administrator, Pauline Plourde. "The budget for Phases I and II is tight. We will continue to keep firm control to ensure that the project comes in at or even below the 5.3 million dollar bond."

"If surplus funds are available at the completion of Phase II, the Board may be able to accomplish more upgrades", comments Bousquet. "Pointing and sealing exterior brickwork, or replacing windows at both the Edward Fenn and Gorham Middle High School could be done. The more that can be accomplished at this time with the available funds, the better off we will be regarding our buildings now and in the future."

If anyone would like to tour the renovated science wing prior to the GRS Cooperative School District Meeting to be held on Thursday, March 5, 2009 at 7:00p.m. in the Gorham Middle High School Alumni Gym. Tours will begin at 6:00p.m. and conclude at 6:45p.m.

Further updates will be forthcoming so that the citizens of the cooperative will be informed of the project's progress. If you have any questions or comments, please contact the SAU20 office at 466-3632.