

**Press Release
For Immediate Release
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**Banwell Architects Hired for GRS Cooperative School District
Building and Educational Analysis**

The GRS Cooperative Building Committee has finished interviewing firms, concluding the first phase of the rebirth of the GRS schools in Gorham. “The Committee has recommended Banwell Architects of Lebanon, NH to the School Board who unanimously accepted our recommendation,” says a member of the Committee. “This will be money well spent, knowing ahead of time what the challenges are and having options in hand for solving them will save the taxpayers later on.” An agreement has been negotiated to hire Banwell to finish the remaining building studies at the GMHS and the Ed Fenn, along with a comprehensive educational analysis for the entire K-12 program.

“In approximately 8 to 10 weeks, we’ll have a report to share with the voters,” says the Committee. “Then we will have a good benchmark of what we have, what we need, and the start towards solid suggestions on how to get there. We’ll be holding public forums to report this information and solicit community input, as to how we should proceed based on the data being gathered.” The Committee chose Banwell based on their outstanding experience and knowledge of schools, and their ties to local subcontractors already familiar with the district’s schools. “They are NH based, and for this phase of the project we felt it is important to have services provided by a firm that is familiar with the NH school building codes and educational standards,” cites a Committee member.

This is only a piece of the work that lies ahead. In the coming months, The Committee will be sending out a request for proposal (RFP) to hire the principle architects for the project. “We are not contracted with Banwell for anything other than this specific phase. We will definitely entertain a bid from them for the main body of the project, but in the interest of what is best for our schools and the taxpayers, we need to keep all of our options open. This includes making a definitive determination whether the current buildings should be renovated, rebuilt on site, or built new off site. The Banwell analysis will provide our community with the data they need, to assist the Building Committee in the determining the direction in which we should go. We want to have all the resources lined up so that when we get a consensus from the voters, we can get the next phase of the project going. We’ve been charged to do the people’s work, and we don’t want to waste a moment of time, but continue to diligently watch the bottom line to protect our tax dollars,” says a Committee member.

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