

By Chris LaFortune on March 1, 2009 11:30 AM



Steven Smith and Carrie Shere practice dancing during Roosevelt Middle School's final social dance class for seventh grade students Feb. 23.



## An evening of middle school dance

Photos by STACIA TIMONERE,  
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Dressed in their finest, Roosevelt Middle School's seventh grade was ready to dance.

Lined along both sides of the school's south gym, the boys faced the girls. On cue, then boys stepped forward as one, asking the girls if they'd like to dance.

The girls, also as one, accepted.

And so they came together, to practice the fox trot, the salsa, a few other dances. A few girls, no partners across from them, held their arms out to ghost partners and practiced alone.

Feb. 23 was the last of a series of dance lessons offered to the Roosevelt seventh grade. It's an annual event, a chance to teach students various dances and show them proper etiquette, parent Patty Henek said.

About 80 students signed up to take part in the classes, Henek said, a little more than half the seventh grade class.

Last week's final dance was a refresher on all the students had learned over the course of four weeks, followed by some line dancing at the end.

"It takes them out of their comfort zone, having to approach somebody they're not familiar with," Henek said. "Ultimately, it's a good learning experience."

Class also offers a chance to spend more time with friends, seventh grader Elena Lucci said.

"I learned the dances well," she said. "I got to spend a lot more time with friends. I got to learn how to ask people politely."

Seventh grader Aaron Geldner said his parents often take him to formal events, so learning the various dances would prove valuable.

"At my bar mitzvah, I felt clueless on the slow dances," he said.