

Cumby ISD considers moving sixth grade to jr. high

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Cumby Independent School District is considering moving sixth grade to the secondary campus and is looking for stakeholders' input on the matter.

The district introduced the proposal to parents during a special meeting held in conjunction with Thursday night's open house. School officials said that the change would simply move all sixth grade classes to the building where junior high students hold classes.

The major concern expressed so far has been having sixth graders on the campus with all the older students. The sixth graders would move to the part of the secondary campus where seventh and eighth graders attend class.

The proposal was raised, according to Cumby ISD Superintendent Shelly Slaughter, as a means to offer sixth graders more opportunities which would be available to them if they were part of a middle school or secondary campus. One offering is curriculum available for junior high but not necessarily suitable for elementary students based on maturity levels.

A survey has been posted on the main page of the school website, www.cumbyisd.net. All "stakeholders" are encouraged to take the survey and voice their opinion. This can include parents, community members, students, faculty and staff.

The survey has five items: identify which stakeholder the survey-taker represents — elementary student or teacher, junior high parent/teacher/student or other; whether sixth should remain at elementary or become part of junior high; explain their viewpoint; express benefits of moving the sixth graders; express thoughts, concerns or questions related to the subject. Names are not required.

"We are in the infant stages of evaluating a move. We will look at all pros and cons and do what's best for the kids," said Slaughter.

District trustees will discuss the item at their March 20 board meeting, but no action will be taken regarding the proposed move of sixth grade to junior high at that time.

Administrators plan to schedule another community meeting after the March 20 board meeting but before the April 17 board meeting to get the information out to more parents and community members and gain more input. Slaughter said administrators hope to have more information available at that meeting regarding logistics of the move if one is approved.

Utilizing the data from the survey and community feedback, district officials will then decide whether to greenlight the move of sixth grade to junior high next year or put a kibosh on the proposal.

Also Thursday, school officials hosted a meeting for eighth grade parents to help familiarize them with options available for them in the coming year. Additional meetings are planned to allow more eighth graders' parents to become more familiar with the topic.