

More Sixth Graders Headed For KMS

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The plan for moving some sixth graders into Kodiak Middle School next year is starting to come together, and it now appears to include moving more students to the school. KMXT's Casey Kelly has more.

At Monday night's school board work session, district Director of School and Student Services Ron Fried (Freed) shared the results of a survey the district conducted of about 100 fifth grade parents at North Star, East and Main Elementary Schools. The survey, he said, showed stronger than anticipated interest in having sixth graders at the middle school.

Based on the results, Fried said the district is now considering putting five sixth grade classrooms at the middle school. That would mean no sixth graders at Main, East and North Star, and two classes at Peterson, one fewer than are there currently. Fried said he thinks it can be done without causing overcrowding at the middle school.

Middle school Principal Steve Doerkson (Dirk-son) is working with Fried to make sure the transition goes as smoothly as possible. He said the sixth graders would have their own hallway, and would rarely mix with seventh and eighth graders.

The district still views moving the sixth graders to the middle school as a temporary fix to the problem of overcrowding at the town elementary schools. North Star has been cited as being in particular need of relief. School Board member Peggy Tuttle, whose children attend North Star, wondered what was being done to address the situation in the long term.

Assistant Superintendent Stewart McDonald answered that the district is planning a facilities study--similar to the recently completed Kodiak High School review--that would allow it to make better use of the spaces in its existing buildings. McDonald said the review probably should have happened a decade ago.

The elementary school facilities study will start this summer, McDonald said, and will be carried out by the district's operations and maintenance staff.

Casey Kelly for KMXT