Sixth Graders Transition Easily To KMS

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Casey Kelly/KMXT

The transition of sixth graders to Kodiak Middle School this year, after several years at town elementary schools, is going smoothly. KMXT’s Casey Kelly has this report.

District officials updated the school board on the first few weeks of having sixth graders at the middle school during Monday night’s work session. KMS Principal Steve Doerksen says so far things have gone according to plan.

(Doerksen 1 :15s “…to have them with us.”)

Doerksen says there are currently 143 sixth grade students attending KMS, and they occupy their own separate wing of the school.

(Doerksen 2 :19s “…with the other grade levels.”)

Overcrowding at the town’s four elementary schools caused the district to move sixth graders to the middle school, which has been a sixth through eighth grade building at various points in the past. The only elementary school to keep sixth grade students this year is Peterson Elementary, where Beth Cole is in her first year as principal.

Cole says the transition at Peterson has been a little bit more complicated. The school currently has only 30 sixth grade students—too many for one classroom, too few for two. But Cole says she and her staff brainstormed ways to incorporate the block schedule used at the middle school into their instruction of sixth graders, while combining some fifth and sixth grade classrooms.

(Cole 1 :20s “…working

remarkably well.”)

The schedule calls for sixth graders to do their core classes, such as language arts and math in the morning. Then in the afternoon they have time for music and physical education. Cole says they’re also planning to incorporate an elective period, where the students could take foreign language, technology or art classes.

(Cole 2 :20s “…this model provides that.”)

The district surveyed parents of incoming sixth graders prior to the school year and found overwhelming support for moving the sixth grade classes to the middle school.

I’m Casey Kelly.

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