



Arlington

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Regular or Special Board Meeting, Include Date



Sixth Grade Placement Exploration in AISD

Meeting #1: January 15, 2026

Today's Agenda



- Introduction of Work
- Principal Panel Q&A
- Considerations & Priorities

Sixth Grade Exploration

Project Goal:

Garner stakeholder feedback, study current research, and evaluate the **Student Experience** in a way that allows for the committee to come to **consensus** and make a **recommendation** to the Board by June of 2026 whether sixth grade should move to junior high or remain in elementary school for the 2027-28 school year.

ARLINGTON ISD 2025-2026 PRIORITIES





Arlington
INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

VALUES and BELIEFS

EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES

We believe we should strive, on a daily basis, to **create exceptional learning experiences for our students.**

INCLUSIVE CULTURE

We value our diversity and believe that our students and staff deserve an inclusive culture **where they feel valued, supported, and challenged to grow.**

THRIVING STAFF

We believe that a thriving staff **continuously learns and strives for excellence** in order to positively impact our students.

STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

We believe that strong partnerships with families and the community **provide a foundation for student success.**

MAXIMIZED RESOURCES

We believe that district talent and financial resources must be maximized to **promote student learning** while also maintaining effective fiscal management.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

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What started this conversation?

Students: Spring 2025 surveys show some 6th grade students feel less belonging and more anxiety than older peers, showing a potential misalignment with them at the elementary school.

Parents: Parent surveys highlight a need for smoother transitions and a safer, more developmentally appropriate 6th-grade experience.

Staff: Elementary teacher surveys show concerns with current placement and suggest moving 6th graders to junior high could reduce behavior issues and improve learning.

Principals: We'll find out tonight



Committee Makeup

Equitable Representation

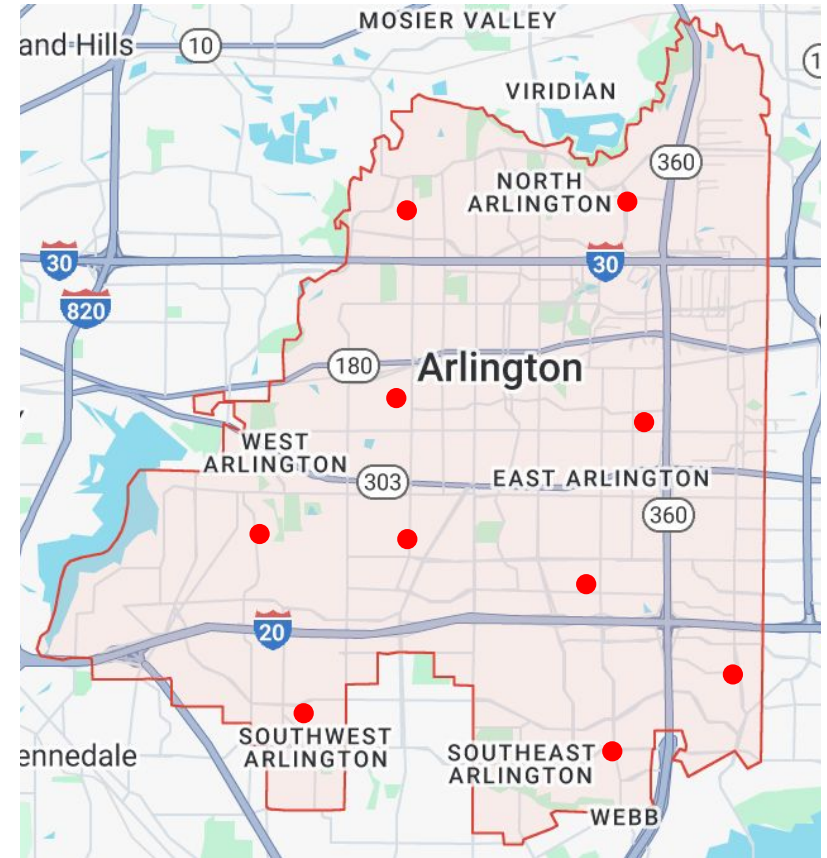
- All 10 Junior High Schools have either a parent, teacher, or principal representation
- One Elementary from each Junior High Feeder Pattern is represented by a parent, teacher, or principal

Central Administration

- OSL, Fine Arts, Athletics, C&I, Research & Accountability, Advanced Academics, World Languages

Student Perspective

- Student Panels



Meeting Dates

Date	Meeting	Focus	Location
Jan 15	Meeting #1	Introduction - Level Setting	@ Central
Feb 12	Meeting #2	7th Graders whose 6th Grade experience has been at the junior high level	@ Gunn
March 4	Meeting #3	7th Graders whose 6th Grade experience has been at the elementary level	@ Young
April 15	Meeting #4	7th Graders whose 6th Grade experience has been at the elementary level	@ Workman
May 13	Meeting #5	Recommendation Discussion	TBD
May 28	Meeting #6	If Necessary	TBD
June 4	Board Recommendation/Update		

January				
M	T	W	T	F
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9
12	13	14	15	16
19	20	21	22	23
26	27	28	29	30

February				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27

March				
M	T	W	T	F
2	3	4	5	6
9	10	11	12	13
16	17	18	19	20
23	24	25	26	27
30	31			

April				
M	T	W	T	F
		1	2	3
6	7	8	9	10
13	14	15	16	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29	30	

May				
M	T	W	T	F
				1
4	5	6	7	8
11	12	13	14	15
18	19	20	21	22
25	26	27	28	29

June				
M	T	W	T	F
1	2	3	4	5
8	9	10	11	12
15	16	17	18	19
22	23	24	25	26
29	30			

Board Meetings	No School (Students)	6th Grade Committee Meetings
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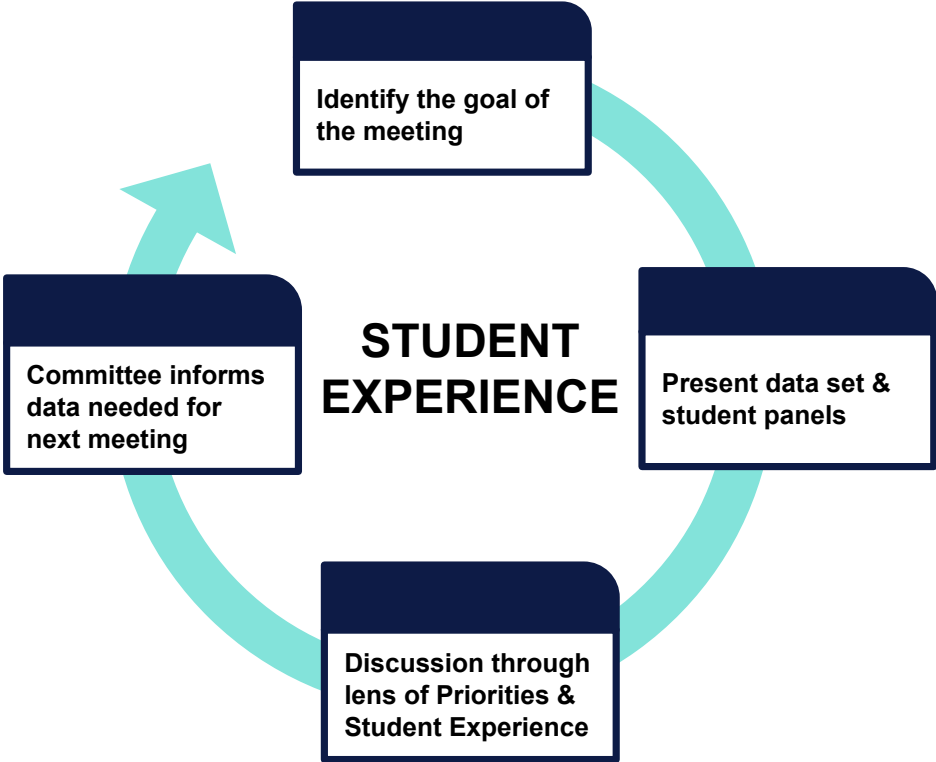
Meeting Formats

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ARLINGTON ISD 2025-2026 PRIORITIES

- ACADEMIC GROWTH**
Ensure positive, engaging experiences for every student that promote academic growth and ignite a passion for learning.
- CULTURE**
Establish an inclusive culture of respect, support and continuous improvement for all students, staff and our district.
- SAFETY & DISCIPLINE**
Create safe and productive learning environments in which every student and staff member can thrive.
- MARKETING & ENGAGEMENT**
Innovate facilities and community connections as essential partners in student learning.
- TALENT & RESOURCES**
Maximize our resources and invest in priority strategic district-wide initiatives to ensure fiscal responsibility.



Let's Ask Some Principals

Elementary Principals



Bianca Gholston
Atherton Elementary



Mark Basham
Butler Elementary

Junior High Principals



Amber Price
Ousley Junior High



Codi Van Duzee
Boles Junior High

Principal Panel Questions

- As students enter sixth/seventh grade, what do they need most developmentally to be successful?
- What structures or supports matter most for students at this age to feel known, supported, and successful?
- What type of school culture and expectations best support growth and accountability for sixth/seventh graders?
- What are the key advantages and challenges of keeping sixth grade in elementary school?
- What are the key advantages and challenges of moving sixth grade to junior high?
- Based on our discussion, where is sixth grade best served, elementary or junior high, and why? Name whether your perspective reflects a student-centered ideal, current operational realities, or both.

A quick read and reflect



Unlocking Middle Grade Achievement

The Impact of Developmental Responsiveness, Structure & Environment Over Grade Span Configuration

Prepared by the

Office of Research, Evaluation and Analysis | AISD Department of Research and Accountability

Based on:

- Our Values & Beliefs
- Our District Priorities
- What you heard from principals

What factors should be considered when determining where sixth grade is placed within our system?

What Factors Should We Consider?



As a table condense your list (one sticky note for each factor) and group into one of our District Priorities

ARLINGTON ISD 2025-2026 PRIORITIES



Share Out & Prioritize

- Take sticky notes to the corresponding poster chart
- At your poster chart make one list
- Let's share out
- Let's prioritize!!!



Homework

Send to Shahveer (sdhalla@aisd.net)
by January 30th:

- Your Answer
- Any revisions, suggestions, or edits of questions

Shahveer will send back the final list of student questions by February 6 for an opportunity for any last minute suggestions.

Answer the following question:

What should the 6th grade experience in AISD include?

Student Panel Questions (Draft)

1. When sixth grade felt hardest for you (at a junior high or elementary school), what was usually going on in class? What helped, and what made it tougher?
2. Did moving between teachers or staying with one teacher work better for you in sixth grade? Why?
3. How easy was it to feel like you belonged in sixth grade (at a junior high or elementary school)? What helped or made it harder?
4. How safe did you usually feel during the school day in sixth grade (at a junior high or elementary school)?
5. When students broke rules or had behavior issues in sixth grade, how did adults usually handle it? Did it feel fair?
6. When something was hard in sixth grade, who did you go to for help? Was it easy to get support?
7. How connected did your family feel to your sixth-grade school? What worked well, and what didn't?
8. If you could design sixth grade, would you put it with younger kids or older kids? Why? What would need to be in place to make that work?

Discussion Questions

- What themes arose after this session?
- What questions do you have?
- What data would be helpful?

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For Next Time February 12 @ Gunn

ARLINGTON ISD 2025-2026 PRIORITIES



Identify the goal of the meeting

Committee informs data needed for next meeting

STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Present data set & student panels

Discussion through lens of Priorities & Student Experience



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