



Arlington

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

Regular or Special Board Meeting, Include Date



Sixth Grade Placement Exploration in AISD

Meeting #3: March 4, 2026

Today's Agenda



- Review of previous work & where we are heading
- Student Panel Q&A
- Curriculum and Instruction, Advanced Academics, Social & Emotional Learning
- Discussion

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

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 families.

SAFETY & DISCIPLINE
Create safe and productive learning environments in which every student and staff member can thrive.

MARKETING & ENGAGEMENT
Involve families and community stakeholders as valued partners in student learning.

TALENT & RESOURCES
Maximize our resources and people to promote a thriving district while maintaining sound fiscal management.

Arington
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.**

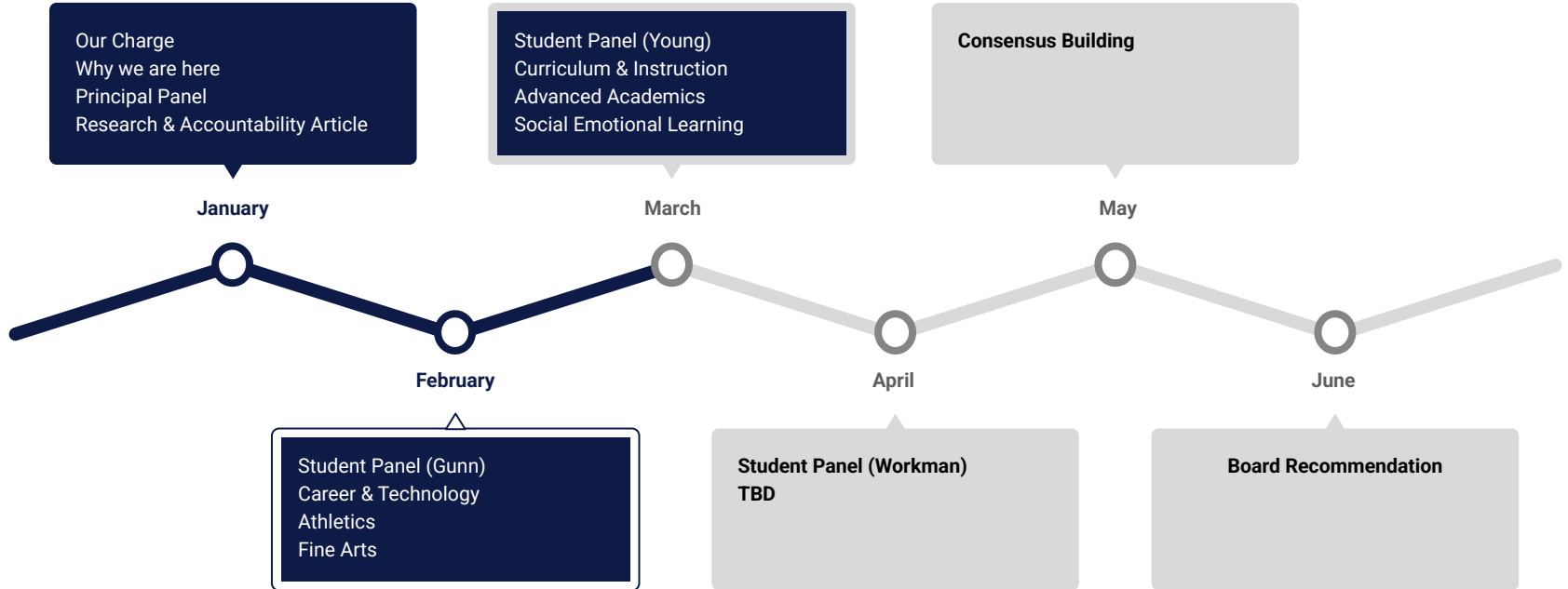
THRIVING STAFF
We believe that a thriving staff **continuously learns and strives for excellence** in order to positively impact our students.

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
We believe that our learning environments must be **safe, productive spaces** that are well designed and maintained.

Where we've been and where we are going



Student Panel

How did the placement of 7th Grade in Junior High affect the student experience?



What did we hear to answer:



How did the placement of 7th Grade in Junior High affect the student experience?

Student Experience

- Curriculum & Instruction
- Advanced Academic
- Social & Emotional Learning



Curriculum & Instruction



	6th Grade Stays in Elementary	6th Grade Joins Junior High
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students have less teachers, less class transitions/bells• Scaffolds and adult supports typically are more readily embedded in Elementary	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students learn from teachers that more likely teach only a single subject and are certified for specific subjects rather than as generalist.• Students are likely to be in a science classroom rather than visit the STEM lab.• More choices for electives and advanced coursework; easier transition into high school.• Increases coherence for Middle School Science STAAR (assessed in Grade 8).
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Limited additional extracurricular activities• A large span of age ranges (from 4 to 12 year olds on one campus)• Limits the years building connections and culture in JH	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students do not participate in recess.• Students may find it difficult to transition to multiple classes - assignments, hallway passing periods, various teachers, larger setting, etc.

Advanced Academics

	6th Grade Stays in Elementary	6th Grade Joins Junior High
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One more year of differentiated GT services ● Opportunity to mentor younger students ● Community and comfort of belonging 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Access to more advanced classes—Alg 1 and beyond ● More choices for electives ● Teachers are 4-8 or HS credentialed & have experience/knowledge with HS readiness ● Jump start on college and career readiness—CCMR ● Parents exposed to secondary pathway earlier
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Challenge to staff advanced math ● Not offering advanced science, English, and SS although more are ready for it ● GT students work well with older students ● Larger pond to explore ● Won't be able to join AVID until 7th grade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Academic range of 6th to 9th grade in course offerings might be a staffing and scheduling challenge ● Teachers possibly have more course preps ● Some students able to complete advanced work are sometime not ready socially—asynchronous development. Need a plan.

Social Emotional Learning



	6th Grade Stays in Elementary	6th Grade Joins Junior High
Pros	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Stability and familiarity with remaining with the same rotation of teachers/classmates.● Leadership skills are cultivated early, helping to build self-confidence and strengthen students' sense of responsibility and voice.● Behavioral consequences are geared towards teaching skills/character development/etc.● More opportunities to explicitly teach SEL curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Broader Social Circle - Supports sixth-grade students' transition by increasing their sense of belonging and building confidence.● Students Exploratory Opportunities that Foster Social & Emotional Growth.● Building Resilience: Managing multiple teachers and new responsibilities and Boost student confidence and self-efficacy.
Cons	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Developmental Misalignment/Stages of Development More mature physically, emotionally, and cognitively.● Sixth grade students are transitioning from Erikson's Industry vs. Inferiority to Identity vs. Role Confusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Lack of maturity makes the transition into a more independent setting more difficult.● Feeling intimidated or overwhelmed due to interactions with unfamiliar peers, older peers, and new social dynamics.

Questions for our Directors?



- Curriculum & Instruction
- Advanced Academic
- Social & Emotional Learning

What did we hear to answer:



Based on what was shared from C&I, Advanced Academics, and Counseling how would the placement of 6th Grade affect the student experience?

Reflection

In your groups:

What came up today that you think we need to add to our consideration charts?



For Next Time April 15 @ Workman

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What data do you need to see?

Who do you need to hear from?

Consensus Building is coming!!!

If you haven't already emailed Dhalla your thoughts on what 6th grade experience, please do so. sdhalla@aisd.net