



DIGGING INTO Transformation

MIDDLE SCHOOL TRANSFORMATION PROCESS

Mike Jasso | October 26, 2023

RICHARDSON ISD'S NORTH STAR GOAL

Every student, teacher, and leader will meet or exceed their
academic growth goals.



1

Team and Process

RICHARDSON ISD'S NORTH STAR GOAL

Every student, teacher, and leader will meet or exceed their academic growth goals.



Middle School Transformation Team

Human Resources

Professional
Paraprofessional

Teaching & Learning

Core Subjects
Multilingual Education
CTE
AVID
Advanced Learning

Strategy & Engagement

Engagement
Communications

Administrative Services

Student Services
Athletics
Fine Arts
Counseling Services
Special Education

Operations

Student Information
Services
Transportation
Facilities
Planning, Design &
Construction

Campus and Central Administration

Susan Burt
Forest Meadow Junior High

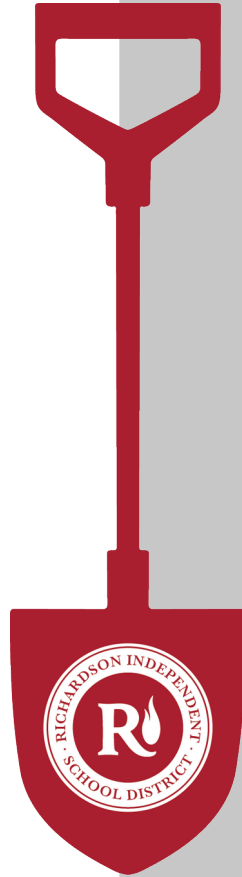
Nick Rustin
Lake Highlands Junior High

Jennie Bates
Area Supt.- LHLC



Purpose of Transformation Team

1. Facilitate the transformation of junior high schools to the middle school model to realize the recommendations of the Grade Configuration Committee from 2019-20 and approved by the board.
2. Continue research of effective middle school model.
3. Make recommendations to the Superintendent.



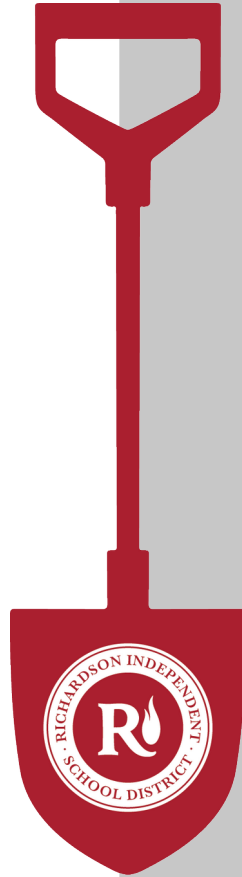
Middle School Transformation Process

Committee Meetings

Sub-Committee Meetings

Research:

Cohort Districts;
LHJH & FMJH teams
visit Area Middle
Schools



2

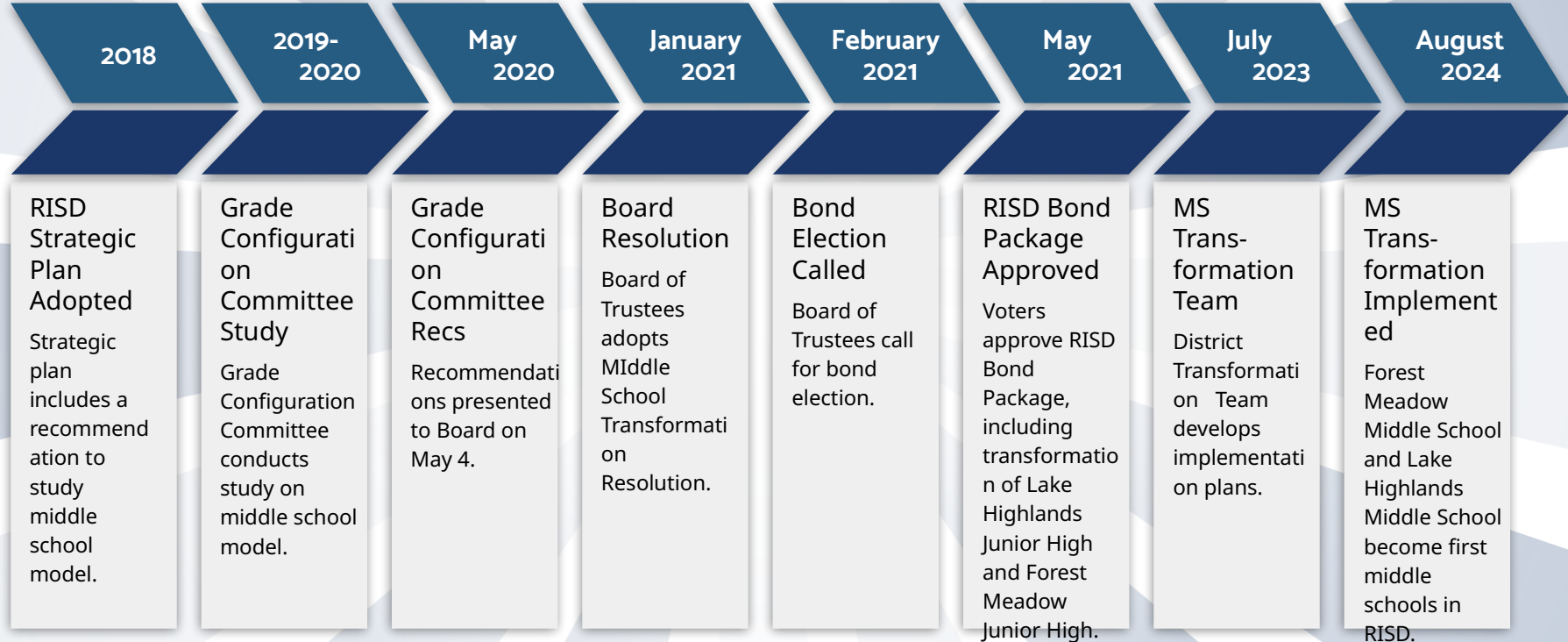
History & Context

RICHARDSON ISD'S NORTH STAR GOAL

Every student, teacher, and leader will meet or exceed their academic growth goals.

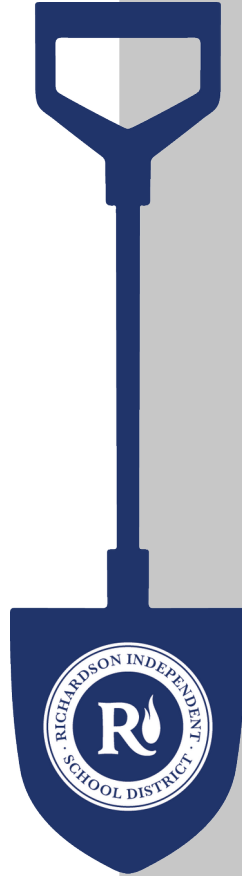


RISD Middle School Transformation Timeline



What were the Grade Configuration Committee's Areas of Study?

- District enrollment numbers at campuses
- Current facility capacity information
- Student academic performance
- Academic performance and curriculum
- Student wellness considerations
- Athletics & Fine Arts
- Facilities

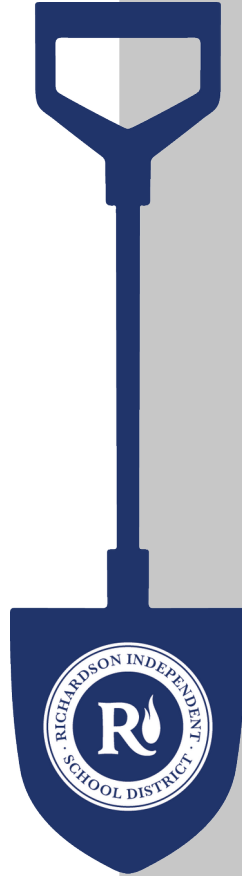


What best practices and research support a Middle School Model?

- Developmentally appropriate for 6th graders to attend school with 7th and 8th grades
- State curriculum/Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills - Bundled 6-8
- Over 95% of districts statewide have 6-8 middle school model
- Culture & Community - Opportunity and access for ALL students
- Strategic Plan and North Star Goal - Individual Growth

Source: Association of Middle Level Education." The Successful Middle School , This We Believe

<https://www.amle.org/amle-research-summaries/>



What are the Grade Level Configurations in Other Districts?

DISTRICT	GRADES
Allen ISD	K-6
Arlington ISD	Variety
Carroll/Southlake ISD	5-6
Dallas ISD	Variety
Denton ISD	6-8
Duncanville ISD	6-8
Desoto ISD	6-8
Frisco ISD	6-8
Garland ISD	6-8
Grand Prairie ISD	6-8

DISTRICT	GRADES
Grapevine-Colleyville ISD	6-8
HEB ISD	K-6
Houston ISD	6-8
Irving ISD	6-8
Lancaster ISD	6
Lewisville ISD	6-8
Mesquite ISD	6-8
Plano ISD	6-8
Rockwall ISD	Process of 6-8
San Antonio	Variety



Source: Grade Configuration Committee: May 4, 2020 Board Presentation

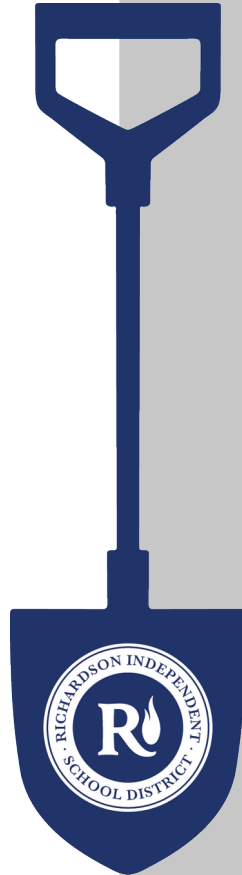
Findings and Recommendations

Academic Performance and Curriculum

Currently 95% of districts statewide have 6-8 middle school model

- Stronger alignment of TEKS structure
 - **TEKS Aligned K-5, 6-8, 9-12**
- Supports Advanced Learning Opportunities
- PLC: strengthen 6-8 alignment
 - Vertical & Horizontal Conversations and Supports
- Additional opportunities for Pre-K expansion

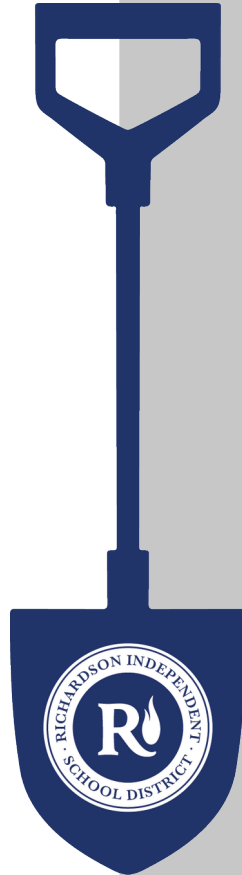
Source: Grade Configuration Committee: May 4, 2020 Board Presentation



Findings and Recommendations

Student Wellness and Supports

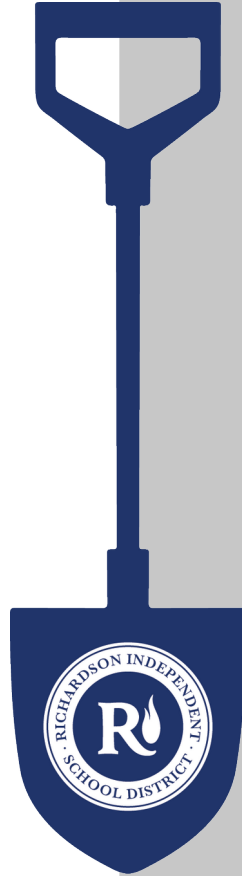
- Developmentally appropriate for 6th graders to be with 7th & 8th graders.
- Developmental differences between pre-K to 6th grade.
- Increases opportunities to develop interests, which is also developmentally appropriate.
- Data shows 6th-8th grade together does not negatively impact an already difficult developmental time in a student's life.
- More time to impact students positively to prevent drop-outs and encourage positive decision-making.



Findings and Recommendations

Athletics and Fine Arts

- Equity and access for all.
- Increased opportunities and choices.
- Provides opportunity and foundation for success.



Findings and Recommendations

Facilities

- Approaching 90% capacity at some campuses.
- Opens classroom space for potential pre-K expansion at more schools.
- Facilities support the best academic interest for all students.
- Opportunity to enhance all junior high campuses.
- Minimum of five years for any implementation of new recommended model.



Summary of Benefits of the 6-8 Middle School Model

The 6-8 model is in the best interest of ALL students:

- Support of our North Star Goal - Every student, teacher, and leader will meet or exceed their academic growth goals.
- Aligns RISD with the majority of state and current TEKS bundles.
- Expands content and curriculum opportunities for students.
- Gives an additional year to support student success with transition to high school.
- Supports the district's goals for equity and equal access for all.

Summary of Benefits

Academic Performance and Curriculum

Alignment to state curriculum and structure (TEKS) - 95% of Texas districts statewide employ a 6-8 middle school model.

Better support advanced learning opportunities.

Educator best practices and collaboration (PLCs) - strengthens 6-8 alignment.

Student Wellness and Support

Developmentally appropriate for 6th graders to attend school with 7th and 8th grades.

More opportunities to develop academic and extracurricular interests - also developmentally appropriate.

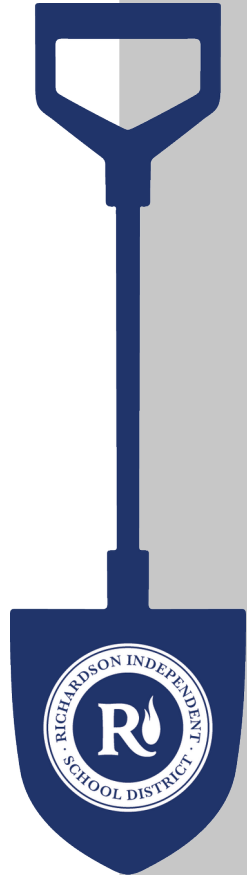
Additional early prevention programming for substance abuse, bullying, and suicide prevention.

Athletic and Fine Arts

Equity, opportunity and access for all students.

Increased opportunities and choices.

Opportunities and foundational instruction that leads to success in 7th and 8th grades.



3

Academic Programming and Curriculum

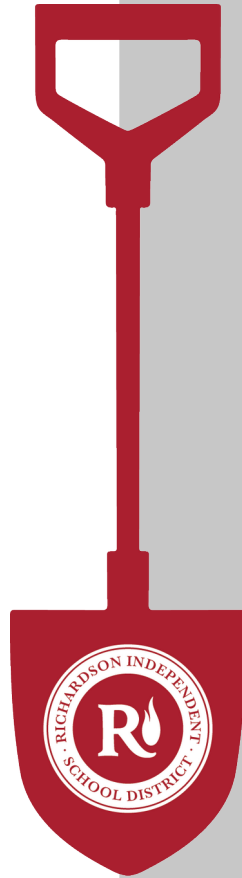
RICHARDSON ISD'S NORTH STAR GOAL

Every student, teacher, and leader will meet or exceed their academic growth goals.



What are the Academic Planning Considerations when transitioning to the Middle School Model?

- Planning emphasis on academic and classroom area grouping for 6th grade core courses
- Advanced 6th grade course choices in core content classes.
- Double Block RLA & Math (4/8 class periods)
- Single Block Science & Social Studies (2/8 class periods)



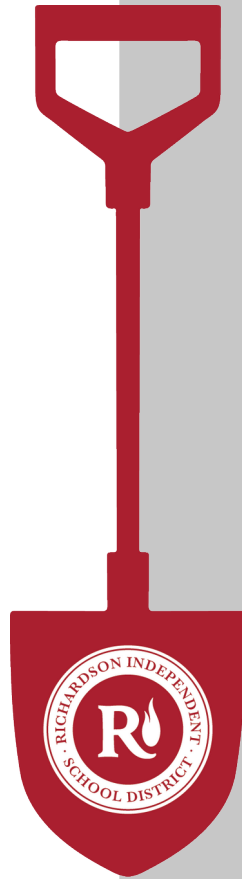
What Choices and Academic Electives will 6th grade students have ?

1) Required Choice (1/8 class period)

- Physical Education (also offered in summer to free up another elective choice)
- Pre Athletics

2) Choice - Second Elective (1/8 class period):

- Career & STEM Exploration (full year – two semesters)
- Discovering Languages and Cultures (full year – 9 weeks each:
Spanish/Japanese/French/Latin)
- Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID)
- Fine Arts



4

Athletics & Fine Arts

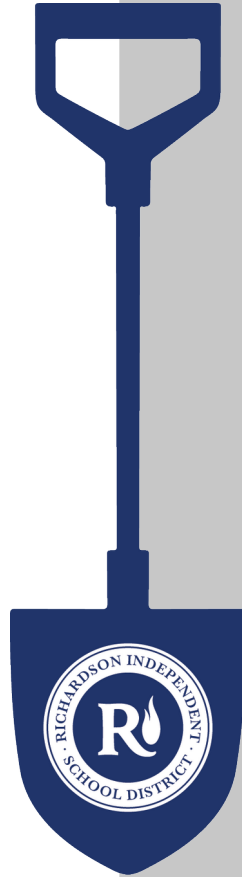
RICHARDSON ISD'S NORTH STAR GOAL

Every student, teacher, and leader will meet or exceed their academic growth goals.



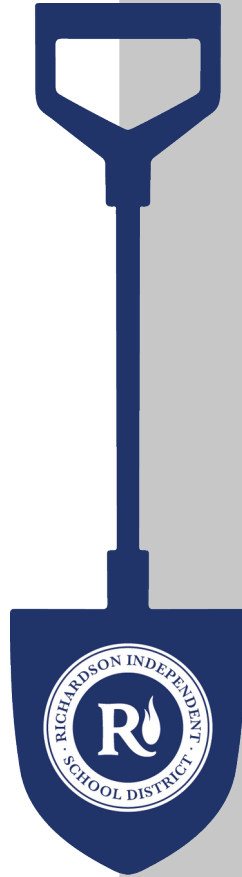
What will Athletics look like for 6th grade students at Middle School?

- Pre-athletics is a class choice that takes place during the school day
- The class is a great opportunity to help prepare students for successful participation in the middle school athletic program that begins in 7th grade
- Pre-athletics will provide a preview of upcoming UIL sports in which students will be eligible to participate as 7th graders, and focus on fundamental skills and conditioning
- The UIL (state governing body that oversees athletics) does not permit school-organized athletic competitions in 6th grade
- 6th grade students not interested in Pre-athletics can instead take P.E.



What will Fine Arts look like for 6th grade students at Middle School?

- 6th grade students may choose one of the following Fine Arts offerings:
 - Band
 - Art
 - Choir
 - Orchestra
- Starting in 7th grade, students can choose to participate in theatre.
- Benefits:
 - Secondary staff will no longer travel to elementary campuses
 - Retain staff
 - More options (currently we only provide band or orchestra in 6th grade)
 - Ability to provide more focused, homogenous classes, which will accelerate learning and allow students to achieve at a higher level
 - Helps reduce facility issues at elementary school campuses with specials instruction



5

Student Wellness and Supports

RICHARDSON ISD'S NORTH STAR GOAL

Every student, teacher, and leader will meet or exceed their academic growth goals.



What additional student services will be in place to support 6th grade?

- Assist middle schools to establish family engagement initiatives that encourage participation and involvement in school-wide activities.
- Participate in incoming student (both 6th and 7th) and family campus information sessions to help ensure students are familiar with campus layout, safety measures, school routines, and other protocols that help maintain a safe and orderly campus environment.
- Work with campus leadership teams on techniques to build and maintain a strong school culture and climate that leads to positive student outcomes and mitigates recurring discipline referrals.



How will Counseling Services support the Middle School Transition?

- Course selection process for current 2023-24 5th graders in FMMS and LHMS learning communities - March 2024.
- Uniform course cards for both campuses.
- Current 5th and 6th grade LHLC guidance lessons focused on transitioning to middle school.
- Tours of the building
- New student “camp”
- Parent information sessions
- Beginning of the year counseling check-ins for 7th/8th grade to help with transitions
- Additional student program for FMMS and LHMS:
 - Offers leadership opportunities for students.
 - Evidence-based peer-to-peer prevention and intervention program focusing on the prevention of suicide, bullying and substance use.



What does Special Student Services look like at a Middle School?

- Continuum of special education services will be offered at each new middle school. *(One exception: districtwide enrollment numbers in ALC program remains very low. Middle school students qualifying for these services will continued to be accommodated at single location outside of LHLC.)*
- Services include **speech, resource and inclusion, and self-contained programs**
- This approach will allow most students receiving special education services to remain in the same feeder pattern as their non-disabled peers for K-12.



How will we communicate and engage our community during this transition?

- Branding and messaging to support
Every Child. Every Day. The Middle School Way
- Targeted LHLC parent messaging and quarterly updates during the 2023-24 school year:
 - Campus website
 - District website
 - Campus newsletters
- Schools to hold *Incoming Parent & Student Meetings* in the spring.
- Ribbon cutting ceremonies and community tours of new/renovated middle schools



6

Other Considerations

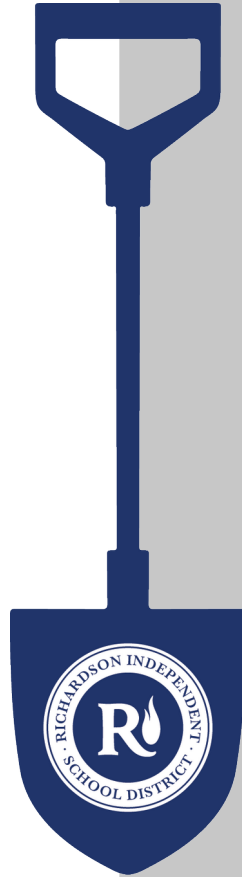
RICHARDSON ISD'S NORTH STAR GOAL

Every student, teacher, and leader will meet or exceed their academic growth goals.



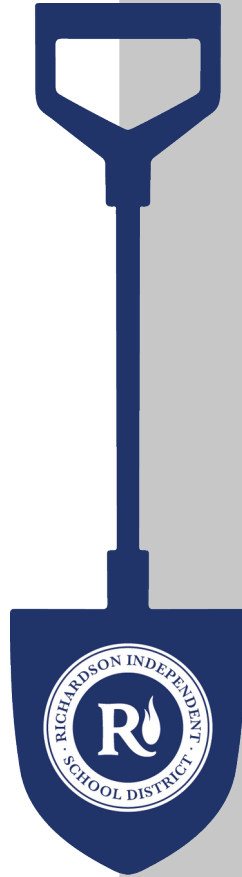
Other Planning Considerations

- Human Resources/staffing impact
- Safety & Security protocols will follow existing junior high model
- Student transfer requests to/from a middle school as part of overall district transfer guidelines and considerations
- Student transportation
- School name changes on signage, maps, collateral, online footprints



Next Steps

- Middle School Transition Committee continues work to finalize details.
- Targeted communications will begin to current 5th and 6th grade families in LHLC.
- Human Resources will begin working with admin and staff potentially impacted by move (fall semester).
- Counseling staff will conduct course selection process with current 5th and 6th graders in LHLC (spring semester).
- LHJH & FMJH will communicate informational meeting dates for incoming families (spring semester).
- Ribbon cuttings and community open houses (summer 2024) to tour new/renovated middle schools.



Questions?



**DIGGING
INTO
Transformation**

RICHARDSON ISD'S NORTH STAR GOAL

Every student, teacher, and leader will meet or exceed their academic growth goals.

