

In the zone

A sparse room of parents listen intently as Superintendent Paul Norton fields questions over the effect of a new elementary school and how new students will be added. The meeting took place on Jan. 21 at Nash Elementary School.

The Bond issue of 2014 included the approval to build a new elementary school to alleviate overpopulation at current ones. The new school is to be located on Gibson Lane and is set to open in Aug. 2016.

“I think [these meetings] will give people a voice to where they can say this is what I think,” Norton said. “There is no requirement by the state of Texas of how you set an attendance zone. It is truly one of the things where we get to make our own decision.”

The proposed attendance zone for the school will include people who live north of I-30. The new school is the only elementary north of I-30 with the exception of Morris elementary school. Morris, however, has placement tests whereas the new school will be open enrollment.

Executive Director of Quality Assurance Nanette Power is in charge of overseeing the production of the new school and hopes that it will help the problem with overpopulation that the district has faced for many years.

“Our elementary school population has been growing for the last five years, and our class sizes have gotten bigger than what we are satisfied with,” Power said. “We have established a timeline involving staffing, hiring a principal and support staff, [obtaining a] curriculum, ordering all the furniture and equipment and admitting students in order to complete the project.”

Angie Griffin from Queen City has been hired as the new principal, and job openings for new teachers will begin in Feb. with interviews in March.

Students who would like to transfer from an existing TISD elementary school will be able to do so starting April 1. However, admittance will be on a first come, first serve basis. Beverly Stuckey who has grandchildren attending Dunbar elementary school is worried that this policy will cause some to be left out.

“I do not particular like the new zone because it is not where my grandkids go to school, and of course, I would want them to go to the new school,” Stuckey said. “But I understand that, and we will have to put an application in April 1. We will probably be the first in line, so we can get those applications because I am sure every parent wants their kid to go to the new school.”

The next meeting will be held Jan. 28 at 6 p.m. at Spring Lake Park Elementary School.

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