

Clinton's new court

Middle school shows off gym

Officials pleased with new facility

BY ZACH JAMES

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CLINTON — The time when Clinton Middle School students played at different schools has now passed.

Clinton played its first game in the new middle school gym Tuesday against Bettendorf, and school officials are pleased with how the facility.

The River Queens "A" and "B" teams lost to Bettendorf in their first games of the season, but the focus was on the new facility.

"I think that what we did is try to validate today is that we do have a facility that has adequate amount of seating, and we're pleased with this being the facility that our girls and boys will play on later this school year," Clinton Middle School Principal Dan Boyd said.

The gym has nine basketball hoops (three on each end of the gym) for basketball camps or practices.

Clinton's newest athletic facility is a larger version of the high school's auxiliary gym. The gym has dark gray walls that appear to make the lighting darker than it seems.

Boyd doesn't see many concerns with the gym now that it's part of



This is a panoramic view of the new Clinton Middle School gymnasium. Clinton's seventh-graders are playing against Bettendorf.

the new school, and officials have been able to proactively make modifications to the court that will accommodate the new basketball courts to hold simultaneous basketball games.

"We still are looking forward to making adjustments to the lines on the floor once we go through the basketball seasons this year," Boyd said.

Spectator safety was also at question, but Boyd had those doubts erased by a fellow Clinton school board member.

"This is an adequate space," Boyd said. "We checked with Gregg Obren, who also is an official that has been to a lot of different gyms, and he validated that the space is a great space for us, and the floors we have are bigger than the ones at Washington or Lyons." The new school, located at 1350 14th St. NW, has one gym that can accommodate having two sporting events - volleyball and basketball, for example - and has seating enough for about 2,000 people.

"I think it's going to meet the needs of having middle school athletic events here," Boyd said.

Students got to see first-hand what their new school looked like last week, and the approval rating was nearly unanimous.

"One of the kids made the comment that it was like 'Extreme Makeover,' " Boyd said. "Others have said it's beautiful, and I think they're excited to come in here." Clinton High Athletic Director Gary Lueders stopped by to check out the new gym.

"It's a huge, huge improvement," Lueders said. "This will do nothing but benefit the kids from Clinton, and I'm happy we're in here and the girls took advantage of it (tonight). It's a unique setting where we can play two games at the same time." *Zach James can be contacted at zachjames@clintonherald.com.*