

# Urbandale Viewpoint

## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

As I reflect on our 2014-15 school year, I'm struck by the range of emotions we all have likely experienced. There has been a great deal to celebrate and also events that have shaken our school district and community at-large.

Our community faced the tragic loss of two middle school students—a loss so profound for families, friends, classmates, and teachers that mere words cannot adequately express the impact. The closest I can begin to come is to say that it rocked us to our core and has forever changed our lives. We continue to build a deeper understanding of the complex emotions of our children by listening to what's in their hearts, empathizing with what it's like to be in their shoes, and providing guidance to help them navigate through the difficult periods of their lives. Our ultimate aim as human beings is to create connection by feeling seen, heard, and valued. May this fundamental need for connection continue to bring us together in hope and healing.

One significant positive for the district was the passage of the PPEL (Physical Plant and Equipment Levy). Tremendous support on the part of the community (80% approval) will allow

"If we start now, working together to achieve a more meaningful learning experience, I believe we'll be on a path for cultivating true joy in education."

- Dr. Doug Stilwell

us to improve and update our elementary facilities and do likewise for several of our activities facilities. The passage of the PPEL is much appreciated and sets the stage for 10 years of facility improvements.

What I am most proud of was seeing the data for a second consecutive year demonstrating improved student proficiency results (cont'd)



**URBANDALE**  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE (CONT'D)

on the Iowa Tests. As a district, reading, math, and science scores were the highest we have experienced in the past 17 years in Urbandale and are a result of our work to transform the district to better meet the needs of students so that we may work toward our vision of "Bringing learning to life for everyone!" While it has taken five years of work to see these improved results, I believe we can say with certainty that our focus on systemic improvement "works!"

It is bittersweet for me to be retiring as superintendent of the Urbandale Community School District. The transformational work we have done in Urbandale and the results we are seeing have been the highlight of my 35 years in public education. I believe the district is positioned to "soar to new heights" with these improved results and I am a little sad not to be directly involved in that work any longer. That said, I hope to have more flexibility to be a grandparent and enjoy watching our two granddaughters grow up. I also look forward to "un-retiring" in August to begin my work as an assistant professor in the educational leadership department at Drake University where I will have the opportunity to influence up and coming school leaders.

Urbandale has been a great place for me the past 10 years. My five years as superintendent has afforded me the opportunity to put into practice beliefs and processes to impact every student in the district. It has been a very rewarding experience for me. Thank you for your trust in the district, the direction we are headed, and me.

Finally, I believe the district will be in very good hands under the leadership of incoming superintendent, Mr. Steve Bass. He is a strong educator and leader, as well as a well-respected individual of high character. My best wishes to Steve and the entire district in "bringing learning to life for everyone!"

It has been an honor,  
Doug Stilwell

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**DISTRICT MISSION:** *Teaching all—Reaching all*

**DISTRICT VISION:** *Urbandale will be a school district that brings learning to life for everyone.*

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### Educational Equity Statement

No student enrolled in the Urbandale Community School District shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination in the District's programs on the basis of race, color, creed, sex, religion, marital status (for program), ethnic background, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, age (for employment) or socio-economic background (for program). The policy of the District shall be to provide educational programs and opportunities for students as needed on the basis of individual interests, values, abilities and potential. If you have questions please contact the district office at 11152 Aurora Ave, Urbandale, IA or call 515.457.5000. The district's Equity Coordinators are Dr. Keri Schlueter, Coordinator of Student Services; Mark Lane, Director of Human Resources; and Crista Carlile, Director of Teaching and Learning.

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# REGISTER NOW FOR 2015-16 SCHOOL YEAR

**Online student** registration for the 2015-2016 school year in the Urbandale Community School District has begun! If you have a student(s) that will be returning to Urbandale Schools for the 2015-2016 school year, you should have received an email or a letter with your student's "Snap Code" and instructions to register online. If you have not received an email or letter, please contact the Registrar today to request this information as you will need it in order to register your student(s). (Please note: if you have an Urbandale High School student(s), schedules cannot be picked up until registration has been completed.)

If you have a student(s) that is new to the school district, and have not already registered your student(s), please contact the Registrar today to find out the documents you will need in order to register your student(s).

## UCSD Student Data Manager & Registrar:

Sandy Schultz

11152 Aurora Avenue

Urbandale, IA 50322

[schultzs@urbandaleschools.com](mailto:schultzs@urbandaleschools.com)

515-457-5011

## CABIN FEVER DAY 2015

**Utilizing feedback** loops has allowed UCSD to continually improve our full day of professional learning for teachers called "Cabin Fever Day." This year's event featured a keynote from Dr. Stilwell, a student showcase by the UHS band and vocal departments, and an impressive 70 learning sessions facilitated by staff members, business leaders, and education visionaries from across the state. This day is a true testament to the amazing capacity of our Urbandale educators. View the video to learn more!



# DISTRICT AWARDED TLC GRANT

**On December 19, 2014**, the Urbandale Community School District received an early holiday gift: Teacher Leadership and Compensation (TLC) funding was awarded to our district as the result of a competitive grant process involving districts from across the state. As a result of sustained and determined work of a dedicated group of UCSD teachers and administrators, we are proud to say that our plan received the seventh highest score out of 200 plans submitted by school districts throughout the state.

TLC funding is designed to provide additional leadership opportunities for career teachers. In Urbandale, there are three tiers of teacher leadership positions which have been created as a result of this funding. Beginning in 2015-2016, three Facilitators of Curriculum and Professional Learning, seven Instructional Coaches, and up to 60 Model Teachers will work to ensure the continued improvement of learning in all UCSD classrooms.

- **Facilitators of Curriculum and Professional Learning** will work as part of the Teaching and Learning department to provide leadership in curriculum, instruction, and assessment, as well as lead professional learning for teachers. The following UCSD staff will be transitioning to this new role in August: Michelle Cole, Steve Mefford, and Lindie Truitt.
- **Instructional Coaches** will work closely with UCSD building leadership teams to provide classroom teachers with high quality feedback regarding instruction and lead professional learning. The following UCSD staff will be transitioning to this new role in August: Olga Barnes, Angie Lorenz, Kori Maggart, Lance McConnell, Jill Miller, Katie Sevald, and Cynthia Wohlford.
- **Model Teachers** will serve as building leadership team members and will exemplify high quality instruction. These individuals will remain in the classroom as full time teachers, but will open their doors to colleagues to help improve instruction and assessment practices throughout the system.

The resources provided by the TLC funding will enable UCSD to expand our work in continual improvement and alignment of our system. Collectively the three tiers of teacher leaders, created as a result of the TLC funding, will make up the Urbandale Continuous Improvement Leadership Team (UCILT)—the UCSD district-level leadership team. At individual schools, these individuals will make up building leadership teams, which work to set school improvement goals, design and lead professional learning, and analyze data. Alignment of the work at district, building, and classroom levels will ensure each member of UCSD is working toward high-quality student learning goals with a keen focus on bringing learning to life for everyone.

# URBANDALE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

The **Urbandale** Education Foundation cordially invites you to the **2nd Annual Brad Peyton Memorial Golf Tournament on Monday, June 29, 2015, at Hyperion Field Club**. We had a fantastic turnout last year with over 140 golfers, 35 sponsors, and 25 volunteers. Funds raised have gone toward supporting Urbandale Community School District educator grants as well as establishing a new scholarship program: the Brad Peyton Memorial Fruit of the Spirit Scholarship. The tournament is in honor of Brad Peyton who was an instrumental civic leader, J-Hawk coach, father, husband, and a dear friend to many; he passed away in 2013 after a short battle with pancreatic cancer. The Urbandale Education Foundation would like to thank our sponsors for their generous support: Gold Sponsors—Plaza Printers and Dee Zee, Inc.; Bronze Sponsors—J&K Automotive, Minor Wreck Express, Bob and Gayle Johnson of Urbandale, Steve and Rose Ann Schuler of Urbandale, and over two dozen hole sponsors (thus far!). **Register online and/or reserve your sponsorship today, visit: [UrbandaleEducationFoundation.com](http://UrbandaleEducationFoundation.com)** We look forward to welcoming you while we carry forth Brad's legacy in supporting Urbandale schools.



## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT ON THE RISE

**On April 2, 2015**, Governor Terry Branstad, Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence (IRPE) Executive Council and the Iowa Quality Center honored the UCSD with the notable Bronze Leadership Award at the Governor's Celebration of Excellence Conference. The IRPE is Iowa's National Baldrige



based process designed to recognize role-model organizations in education, manufacturing, nonprofit, healthcare and business that complete a rigorous organizational assessment leading to sustainability and maintaining a future focus on performance excellence.

Creating a systems approach for improvement in Urbandale means there is greater continuity between all grade levels. Beginning in kindergarten, teachers are having conversations with students about all aspects of their learning

and guiding students with the use of Quality tools to better understand their learning and growth. Students have greater input, ownership, feedback and voice in their learning which continues throughout high school. More involved and inspired students, results in greater student achievement and success as the district is closely tracking a two-year trend in improved Iowa Assessment scores.

# ADVENTURETIME FAMILY SERVICES

## 2015 Summer Program Information

- Adventuretime will be offering eleven weeks of summer programming for preschool through fifth-grade students. The summer program will begin on Monday, June 1, 2015, and end on Friday, August 14, 2015. There will be no programming offered on July 2nd and 3rd.
- The summer program will be located at Olmsted Elementary.
- The hours of operation are from 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Enrollment is limited due to staff-student ratio guidelines and space availability.
- Preschool students who register for the 2015 summer program must have attended 3-year-old or 4-year-old preschool through Adventuretime during the 2014-2015 school year.
- Summer registration began on March 23, 2015 and ended on May 4, 2015. Although the summer registration deadline of May 4 has passed, there is limited space available during some of the programming weeks throughout the summer. If you are still interested in registering for summer programming, contact the Adventuretime office at (515) 457-5855.
- A \$40 per child registration fee will be due when you register. Please note: registrations received after May 5th will be assessed a \$25.00 late fee per child. The summer registration process will play a key role in determining facility and programming needs for the 2015 summer program.

## 2015-2016 Preschool Information

- Three and Four-Year Old Preschool Pre-Registration for the 2015-2016 school year began 2/12/15.
- All families were notified by 4/29/15, as to whether or not their child received a spot in a classroom.
- If you pre-registered online, and have not received a phone call from Adventuretime, please contact the Adventuretime office (515) 457-5855.
- All students who did not receive a spot will be put on a waiting list and notified if a spot opens up.

## 2015-2016 K-5th Grade Before/After School Information

- **Online registration** for before and after school care for the 2015-2016 school year began 5/05/15.
- You may sign your child up for before school care, after school care, or both before and after school care based on your family's needs.
- If you receive free/reduced lunch or have another funding source contact the Adventuretime office at (515) 457-5855 before registering.
- Preschool before/after school programming is included in the community preschool registration process. You **do not** need to register for before/after school care again.

[Click here](#) for additional information regarding summer programming, preschool, or before and after programming.

# NOTABLE SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENTS

## Jensen Elementary



### Mad About Science Night

Students and families enjoyed a night full of science experiments. With special presentations from the Science Center of Iowa, Polk County Conservation and the UHS Hyperstream Club!

### Welcome Urbandale Police Officers

Officer Peterson and Officer Vandevanter visited Jensen. Several students visited with the officers and were able to ask questions and check out the police cruiser.



### J-Hawks on the Run

Third, fourth, and fifth-grade girls at Jensen have created a running club. The girls meet twice a week after school. Each time they meet, they do a short lesson on making healthy choices, self-esteem, and self-respect. The girls work on building self-awareness while learning to be assertive, but not aggressive. The girls are training for a 5K!





# NOTABLE SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENTS (CONT'D)

## Karen Acres Elementary

Students have been cutting down on food waste by placing unopened items served at breakfast and lunch into a bin that is then set out the following morning for students to take on their way to their classrooms. The items serve as healthy mid-morning snacks! Apples, bananas, cherry tomatoes, orange juice, milk and crackers are just a few of the items that have been redistributed.



Students in the fourth grade proposed a school-wide fundraiser to raise money to support polar bear conservation efforts. Students in the fourth grade class along with a few third graders worked during recesses and after school to sew stuffed polar bears and design pins to be sold to students at Karen Acres. Free-will donations from community members and families also helped to reach our total of \$343 dollars which will be donated to the World Wildlife Fund.

Students in grades K – 5 participated in their advisory groups, called "Cougar Dens," by doing a special service project of their choice. Students met in their Cougar Dens in order to plan the project on April 17th. Projects were completed on the afternoon of May 13th. Some of the past projects have included making cards for nursing home residents, cleaning up trash on the school grounds, planting flowers or pulling weeds, holding a food drive for the Urbandale Food Pantry and writing positive messages with sidewalk chalk in front of the school.



# NOTABLE SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENTS (CONT'D)

## Olmsted Elementary

On January 20th, Olmsted kindergarteners began collecting cans of food to donate to the food pantry. Our goal was 100 cans in celebration of the 100th day of school. Also, the children dressed up like they think they will look when they turn 100 years old!



Olmsted Elementary participated in a week long Kindness Challenge. Students were challenged to do as many acts of kindness as possible.



Olmsted students read more than 30,000 minutes during our annual Read-A-Thon fundraiser and gathered about \$4,300 worth of pledges!



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# NOTABLE SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENTS (CONT'D)

## Rolling Green Elementary

Rolling Green had 17 UHS students who provided 34 tutoring sessions per week for 45 minutes after the school day. Parents and students loved the academic gains and also enjoyed the practice with their older "study buddies."



Fourth-grade students were 100 % proficient in science with 45% in the advanced category of Iowa Assessments. Fourth grade was also 93% proficient in math with 51% in the advanced category. Matched cohorts from fourth and fifth grades increased in advanced category by 30% in reading.



The Watch D.O.G.S. (Dads Of Great Students) Program at Rolling Green really took off this year! We often had one Watchdog per week. There is a bulletin board in the front hallway that has pictures of each Watchdog and their children as they worked at school that day.



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# NOTABLE SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENTS (CONT'D)

## Valerius Elementary



In April, Valerius staff and students were Flying Eagles! Teachers, Associates, Office Staff, and the Principal joined students in their quest for fitness and fun. We had a blast as we ran, jogged, and walked during lunch recess.

Our amazing kindergarteners dazzled families with their first musical performance on April 15th. They demonstrated their movement and vocal warm ups and performed Oh My, No More Pie!, My ship Sailed from China, There was a Little Turtle, Sea Animals, The Crabfish, and many more. Great musicianship, kindergarten!



Multicultural Lunch Festivities: Thank you to more than twenty Valerius families and community members for bringing lunch for staff to celebrate cultural diversity. We had foods from Bosnia, Mexico, Bangladesh, China, Morocco, Pakistan, India, Egypt, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Laos. It was a wonderful (and delicious) way to learn about the students at Valerius. Our multicultural lunch celebration was facilitated by ELL Teacher, Halyna Vogeler. Pictured are staff members Julie Augspurger, Janessa Guardiola and Jam Duany.

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## NOTABLE SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENTS (CONT'D)

### Webster Elementary

On the evening of March 26th, Webster held a family science night, "Discover & Explore." Families of Webster were invited to come and enjoy a free dinner, an exciting program presented by the Science Center of Iowa, "BOOM!", a chance to peruse our new National Geographic science curriculum, and a variety of fun, hands-on science experiments were offered throughout the building. Families were greeted by mad scientists with bubbling potions and sent on their way with a map of the activities, copies of experiments to try at home, and a bag to collect "take home" items from the different experiment stations. Some of the experiments families participated in were Design and Test a Parachute, Test Your Dominant Side, Crime Scene Investigation, and Roller Coaster Madness. The halls of Webster were lined with fun science quizzes for all to try and different areas of the building were decorated like the Solar System and a rain forest.



Webster was very excited and proud to learn that we have been nominated for the National Blue Ribbon School Award for exemplary high student performance over the past five years. This award, given by the U.S. Department of Education, uses standards of excellence evidenced by student achievement measures and research-based indicators of school quality to honor schools based on their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. Schools that have been nominated for this award will be notified in September if they are awarded this fine honor.

Students at Webster participated in an annual "Pay It Forward" event in order to give back to the community. "Buddy" classes (K-5) joined together to make fleece tie blankets for Joppa Outreach Homeless Shelter. Over 40 blankets were donated to the shelter. The students also made cards to be given to those receiving the blankets.



# NOTABLE SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENTS (CONT'D)

## Urbandale Middle School

To further our mission of creating a safe and supportive environment and building strong relationships, as a building, the staff at UMS participated in a positive locker note activity. When students arrived at school on Tuesday, May 12th, they were greeted by a positive note taped to the outside of their locker. Last year's locker activity was a huge success—some students even brought their positive notes back to school this year to hang in their locker. This activity was once again sponsored by #BRAVE (Be Real And Voice Everything), a subcommittee of ARC (Achieving Responsible Climate).



Congratulations to our 8th Grade Drake Relays Champions in the 4x100. New school record of 52.96! Kerry Hampe, Ashley Pearson, Dee Dee Pryor, Hope Johnson and Kali Dixon (alt).



Volunteering. Giving back to the community. These are words that were taken into action with Mrs. Johnson's 8th grade EXCEL project-based enrichment class at UMS. The class focused on what it looks and feels like to give of themselves within their own community of UMS. All volunteered throughout the month of April, within classrooms such as 6th and 7th grade Science, Language Arts, Social Studies, Music, (specifically guitar), and Life Skills. Other areas that 8th grade students truly enjoyed and assisted with were Food Service, Guidance office and the Media Center. Several 8th grade students had the opportunity to work as a mentor to the younger students. The results were overwhelmingly positive not only by the 8th grade students but by the teachers and staff who took them in. They truly made a difference and positively impacted the culture and climate of UMS. The remainder of this EXCEL class will be focusing on how to make a difference within the Urbandale community and globally.



# NOTABLE SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENTS (CONT'D)

## Urbandale High School

Of over 1.5 million entrants, UHS senior, Nathan Torstenson, has earned the prestigious honor of being named a 2015 National Merit® Scholarship Finalist. In order to become a finalist, Torstenson achieved high scores on the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®) as well as the actual SAT, possessed an exemplary academic record, was involved in activities and leadership roles, developed a compelling essay submission and completed a number of other highly competitive requirements.



Following a rigorous audition process, four Urbandale High School seniors: Jonathan Temple, Katie Twedt, Michaela Gyure and Michael Madison were selected by the Iowa High School Music Association to open session two of the Boys State Basketball Tournament by singing The Star-Spangled Banner on March 9, 2015, at Wells Fargo Arena Iowa Events Center. The students have been singing together for the past two years and have achieved numerous accomplishments including selection to the 2013 and 2014 Iowa All-State Chorus.

A team from the Urbandale HyperStream Club took third place in the Robotics Venue during the annual IT Olympics on April 25, 2015, at Hilton Coliseum in Ames. The two-day Robotics Competition began with a full day of robot battles where each robot attempted to push its competition off a circular mat. The second day was dedicated to real-time challenges where students built and programmed a robot to perform specified tasks. Team Terrabyte's (photo: Blaine Price, Riley Stuart, John Clapham, Ben Trunnel, and Chandler Greer) third place finish marks the Urbandale HyperStream Club's highest achievement to date as it continues to grow in membership and competition level. A second robotics team, Nye's Guys Finish First, placed in the top 10 of all robotics teams in the division—a truly outstanding accomplishment.



# NOTABLE SCHOOL ACHIEVEMENTS (CONT'D)

## Metro West Learning Academy

On April 17, 2015, morning and afternoon sessions participated in the Urbandale Yard Clean-Up Day (photo: Rebecca Burg, Mandi Ashbaugh, Devin Harris, Nicole Helmts). It was a day full of giving back by lending a hand to our Urbandale neighbors. Hard work and encouragement were the most effective tools of the day as students and teachers helped one another in order to reach our goals. We may have had sore muscles the next day, but we were all smiles when we thought of everything we accomplished together!



Expanding our understanding of the world is a key component to our seven-week CultureALL presentations. CultureALL sent one ambassador per week to share customs, traditions and celebrations about their culture. Students who attended all presentations, and developed a report about one of their own family traditions, were given the opportunity to earn points toward a partial/full credit. This picture was taken during a presentation given by an African Ambassador about African weddings. Students Ian Njuhi and Boup Reat are dressed in traditional African clothing that is worn during these ceremonies. Learning about cultures outside of our own has been a great way to broaden our horizons.



In March 2015, Government students enjoyed a visit to the Iowa State Capitol during a social studies field trip with Mr. Covington. Senator Jeff Danielson provided a brief presentation on civics. (Photo: Chris Covington, Social Studies Teacher; Brendon Henderson; Tim Dwight, former University of Iowa football player; Rebecca Burg; Deja Crain; and Senator Danielson) This was the first time many of the students had visited the Capitol building; thus, it was incredibly interesting to learn first-hand the many important functions of our government.





# ACTIVITIES ACHIEVEMENTS

## BASKETBALL

- Urbandale crowned CIC Champions – Boys Basketball
- Brody Egger named 2nd Team All State – Boys Basketball



## BOWLING

- Alec Reseland – 2015 State Bowling Tournament

## CROSS COUNTRY

- Urbandale Cross Country Coach Dan Davis was named the Character Counts! Coach of the Year

## JAYWALKERS

- The Urbandale Jaywalkers placed 8th at the UDA National Dance Competition in Kick

## SPEECH COMPETITION

- Sean Howard was nominated for All-State Speech
- Urbandale qualified for the State Speech Competition in 11 events

## SWIMMING

- Stjepan Fiolic placed 3rd in the 50 Freestyle, 4th in the 100 Freestyle, 7th in the 200 Freestyle, and was a member of the 4th place 400 Freestyle Relay Team at the State Swim Meet
- Ben Kramer placed 18th at the State Swim Meet in the 200 Freestyle and was on the 4th place 400 Freestyle Relay Team



## TENNIS

- Urbandale Boys Tennis Coach, Alan Reed, was notified he will be inducted into the Iowa Tennis Hall of Fame

## WRESTLING

- Jake Heinrich – 2015 State Wrestling Tournament – 5th Place
- Zeljko Caculovic – 2015 State Wrestling Tournament – 7th Place

# Honoring Our Retirees

## **Brad Bjorkgren**

Business Education Teacher  
Urbandale High School  
32 years in education at Urbandale

## **Ronda Fey**

Speech Teacher  
Urbandale High School  
21 years at Urbandale;  
23 total years in education

## **Billie Jo Fielder**

Kindergarten Teacher  
Karen Acres Elementary  
17 years as a teacher at Urbandale

## **Katherine Howsare**

Teacher Librarian  
Urbandale High School  
20 years at Urbandale;  
41 total years in education

## **Doug Stilwell**

Superintendent of Schools  
10 years in Urbandale;  
35 total years in education

## DEPARTMENT NEWS (QUICK VIEW)

**Activities:** For up to date information on all activities to include summer sports and schedules for all activities for 2015-2016, visit: [j-hawks.com](http://j-hawks.com) daily throughout the summer.

**Business Services:** The Business Services Team is working hard in preparation to generate contracts and letters of assignments to staff as soon as master contracts and salaries are approved; managing district financial structure.

**Communications:** Ongoing development and distribution of district news articles and press releases; managing UCSD and UEF websites; developing Urbandale Viewpoint; 2nd Annual Brad Peyton Memorial Golf Tournament, June 29, 2015, at Hyperion Field Club, [Urbandale Education Foundation](#).

**Community Education:** As school winds down, Urbandale Community Education will continue to offer great programming throughout the summer. Check out information on summer opportunities and the Summer Camp Series at: [UrbandaleCommunityEd.com](http://UrbandaleCommunityEd.com) and be sure to check out Urbandale Community Theatre's performance of *Carousel* in July.

**Curriculum:** Work continues around identifying essential standards for student learning, and creating common definitions for student proficiency with respect to these standards. This work is the basis for Professional Learning Community work among teachers in and across buildings, as well as for creating high-quality assessments to measure students' progress toward mastering standards.

**Guidance:** In the wake of our tragic loss of two middle school students, the guidance program in conjunction with the at risk program and drop out prevention program is completing a comprehensive review of our suicide prevention programming with updates/improvements to be implemented for 2015-16 school year.

**Human Resources:** The UCSD HR Department is right in the middle of our busiest time of year. Managing the transitions and changes caused by retirements, resignations, reassignments, voluntary transfers, external job postings, screening, interviewing and hiring is critical to ensuring our students are supported by engaged staff. Over the past three years we have typically welcomed at least 50 new certified and classified staff members to start a new school year. So, we are also busy planning and scheduling onboarding and orientation activities for our future employees.

**Information Systems:** The Information Systems group has been meeting with teachers, administrators, and the Technology Steering Committee to determine what technologies to purchase and upgrade over the summer of 2015. Deploying the purchases we make as a result of the data we gather—as well as a variety of server and network projects—will keep us busy throughout the summer.

## DEPARTMENT NEWS (QUICK VIEW CONT'D)

**Maintenance & Construction:** Building and Grounds is spooling up for another busy summer. Custodians will be team cleaning buildings; help to ensure their success by having as little clutter left in rooms and on walls as possible. Maintenance will be concentrating on preventative maintenance of all HVAC equipment—over 400 pieces of equipment throughout the district. It is also anticipated that construction will begin at Karen Acres Elementary this summer.

**Nutrition Services:** Nutrition Services has grown and done a lot of training during the 2014-2015 school year with three new management team members and 13 new general workers. We successfully served our regular meal to an average of 2400 students every day, 35 of those students being special diet plans, and served many, many ala carte items. We had eight employees complete the Serv-Safe Class. We are participating and doing studies in both the Balridge Program and Orange Belt.

**Quality & Continual Improvement:** During the second semester of the 2014-2015 school year, UCSD has continued to improve our processes and gather feedback to be used in our learning cycles. In January, UCSD hosted a Community Needs Assessment Forum designed to capture the voice of UCSD stakeholders. Parents, community members, representative from higher education, and workforce representatives from all departments of UCSD worked in small groups to provide feedback on various aspects of UCSD's work to improve learning for our students. This feedback is being used by the district School Improvement Advisory Committee (SIAC) to prioritize needs for the future and revise the district exit outcomes.

During the second semester, many UCSD teams of teachers and administrators have been called upon to provide learning opportunities for others outside our organization. Teams have presented our approach to teaching and learning at the Jim Shipley and Associates National Principal's Forum, the Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence Celebration, the Heartland Superintendent's Network and a presentation and tour for Wells Fargo employees interested in understanding UCSD's approach to continual improvement. It is an honor to have our hard work recognized by those outside the district.

**Special Education:** The Special Education Program has just finished a new strategic plan aligned to the district's 2015-16 goals and is beginning the implementation of that work.

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## DEPARTMENT NEWS (QUICKVIEW CONT'D)

**Student Services:** March 1 is the open enrollment deadline each year. To date, we have approved 82 new applications for students to attend Urbandale Schools next fall. The ELL and At-risk departments have been reviewing services provided and their success to determine changes that may be made to better meet student needs and state guidelines for these programs in the coming year. The most extensive review took place with the ELP (Extended Learning Program, formerly TAG) department. They did a program review this year and had a new handbook approved at the board meeting last month. The ELP teachers and coordinator, Mrs. Taylor, completed comprehensive research and collaborated with students and parents to make changes to the program.

**Teacher on Special Assignment:** As Teacher on Special Assignment, I've been working with our literacy teachers K-12 and social studies teachers 6-12 on determining our essential standards from the core, defining what proficiency looks like for these standards, and how we will commonly assess for student learning. This work is intended to create a better understanding of what we are teaching and how we'll know if students have successfully learned the material. The next steps are to dig in and think about what to do if students don't understand the material yet, and what to do for students who already know the material. This process assists the alignment of the curriculum to instruction and assessment using the guiding questions of the Professional Learning Community process to drive our work.

## CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN UCSD

The employees in any school organization represent the most important resource for providing a quality educational program to the students it serves. It is the goal of the Urbandale Human Resources Department to recruit, select, and support the very best available candidates; promote employee/employer relations; and develop a culture in which optimum staff performance and satisfaction are encouraged and created.

If you are interested in working for Urbandale Schools in custodial and maintenance, food service, or as an associate, please [click here for employment information](#). Positions for the 2015-2016 school year will be posted throughout the summer.



**DISTRICT MISSION:** *Teaching all—Reaching all*

**DISTRICT VISION:** *Urbandale will be a school district that brings learning to life for everyone.*

# DATES TO REMEMBER

**Remember Late-Start  
Wednesdays!**

## **District-wide Dates:**

May 18	Dr. Doug Stilwell Retirement Reception, UHS Commons, 6:30 p.m.; Board Meeting, 7:00 p.m.
May 19	Last full day of class for Seniors
May 20	Senior Awards Program, UHS PAC, 9:00 a.m.
May 25	No School (Memorial Day)
May 26	UHS Commencement, Knapp Center Drake University, 7:00 p.m.
May 28	Last day of school for students
May 29	Teacher In-Service Day
May 29 - June 12	Rolling Green Intersession
June 1	Adventuretime Family Services Summer Program begins
June 1	Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
June 15	Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
June 29	2015 Brad Peyton Memorial Golf Tournament presented by the Urbandale Education Foundation; Hyperion Field Club
July 2 & 3	No Adventuretime programming
July 4	Urbandale 4th of July Parade and Celebration
July 13	Board Meeting, 5:30 p.m.
July 28 & 29	Rolling Green New Teacher In-Service
July 30 & 31	Rolling Green Teacher In-Service
August 3	First day of class for Rolling Green students 2015-16
August 14	Adventuretime Summer Program ends
August 14 & 17	New Teacher In-Service
August 18 - 21	Teacher In-Service
August 24	First day of class 2015-16



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