

# Purposeful Learning

Urbandale is revolutionizing learning by redesigning classrooms into student-centered systems, while focusing teachers' roles on the continual improvement of those systems. By incorporating Quality/Continual Improvement (Q/CI) strategies, students gain skills essential for attaining the level of motivation and excellence to compete and thrive in an increasingly competitive global workforce.

**Urbandale's vision is to “be a district that brings learning to life for everyone.”**  
**The mission is to “teach all and to reach all.”**

## Visit the Showcase!

The Quality/Continual Improvement Showcase is a celebration of our collective learning and ongoing pursuit of relevant, meaningful, and inspired learning environments. We invite you to listen to Urbandale students, parents, teachers, principals, and the superintendent share thoughts on Q/CI. You'll gain insight into how incorporating Q/CI tools have helped ignite a renewed passion for learning throughout the district.

[Showcase.UrbandaleSchools.com](http://Showcase.UrbandaleSchools.com)



## UCSD Dashboard View

### Vision

Urbandale will be a school district that brings learning to life for everyone.

### Mission

Teaching All — Reaching All

### Student Enrollment

Over 3,900 students from K-12th grade, Over 50 languages spoken  
92 countries represented

### Team Members

Nearly 300 teachers (50% hold a master's degree or higher)  
Over 650 employees

### Operations

Over 434,000 meals served per year, Buses transport over 1,200 students

### 6 Elementary Schools (grades K – 5)

Jensen Elementary, Karen Acres Elementary,  
Olmsted Elementary, Rolling Green Elementary, Valerius Elementary,  
Webster Elementary

The district offers a comprehensive preschool program.

### 1 Middle School (grades 6 – 8) & 1 High School (grades 9 – 12)

Urbandale Middle School, Urbandale High School

### Board of Directors 2013-2014

Adam Obrecht - President, Kyle Kruidenier - Vice President,  
Aaron Applegate, Graham Giles, Christopher Gunnare,  
Cate Newberg, Mark Wierson

### Superintendent

Dr. Doug Stilwell  
stilwelld@urbandaleschools.com  
(515) 457-5002



Urbandale Administrative Office  
11152 Aurora Avenue  
Urbandale, IA 50322  
(515) 457-5000  
[www.UrbandaleSchools.com](http://www.UrbandaleSchools.com)



*“By taking steps toward a more inspired and meaningful learning experience, I believe we are on a path for cultivating true joy in education.”*



Dr. Doug Stilwell  
Superintendent, Urbandale Schools



**Urbandale Community School District**

# Quality/Continual Improvement



## Urbandale: The District

The Urbandale Community School District is embarking on a process of transforming education by moving away from old paradigms that have outgrown their effectiveness and moving toward those that create joy in learning, teaching, and leading.



## Empowering Students

Urbandale teachers act as “facilitators of learning” and give students greater ownership and voice in the process. Teachers encourage continual improvement, guiding students to develop skills that are essential for success in college, business, and life.



## Role of the Community

Transforming education throughout the entire district can only be accomplished with the collaboration of every person in the district: board members, administrators, teachers, staff, students, and parents. Community support ensures the Urbandale approach will thrive.

## Traditional Approach



**Time is rigid; quality is flexible.**

**Teacher’s role is to share information.**  
“Did I teach the information?”

**Due Dates & Grades**

Students submit work by a set date and receive a grade.

**Teacher-Centered**

Teachers may incorporate new methods for instruction, but most are still based on what works best for teaching not learning.

**Teacher-led Conferences**

Teachers meet with parents to share information and analysis of how their child is doing based on test scores.

**Classrooms**

Students sit in class for the explicit purpose of receiving information.

**Extrinsic Motivation**

Continually providing extrinsic motivators, albeit with the best of intentions, that encourage students just enough to pass a test or earn an A, but doesn’t motivate them past that point.

**Joy in education is diminished over time.**

Results from multiple education studies indicate a consistent and steady decline in student enthusiasm and enjoyment; beginning after Kindergarten.

## Urbandale Approach



**Quality is rigid; time is flexible.**

**Teacher’s role is to facilitate learning.**  
“Did students learn the information?”

**Target Dates & Continual Learning**

Students learn objectives based on readiness levels.

**Student-Centered**

Teachers continually request feedback from students in order to adapt their teaching methods to better connect with students.

**Student-involved Conferences**

Students are involved in the conference with their teacher and parents in order to share their learning.

**Meeting Rooms**

Students collaborate with the explicit purpose of learning information.

**Intrinsic Motivation**

Incorporating methods for effective instruction that are purposeful, encourage students to reach mastery, and provide autonomy within a set of parameters, create pathways for intrinsic motivation.

**Bringing learning to life — cultivating joy in education.**

Urbandale continues to discover ways to make learning more relevant for students. With Quality/Continual Improvement as the foundation, Urbandale is bringing learning to life for everyone.

*“I believe having students actively engaged in their learning and having a voice in how they learn are fundamental for their success.”*

Kathryn Bunce, Biology Teacher, Urbandale High School

*“It’s a lot more than just school. We learn leadership skills.”*

Urbandale High School Student

