



**For Immediate Release**

## **An Urbandale High School Teacher's Quest To Transform Education**

*Urbandale High School Biology Teacher, Katie Bunce, creates a learning environment that more fully engages, challenges, and motivates students*

**URBANDALE, Iowa – November 13, 2012** – The [Urbandale Community School District](#) is embarking on a process of transforming education throughout the district; and it all begins one classroom at a time. [Katie Bunce](#), Biology Teacher at Urbandale High School, believes passionately about helping her students learn and succeed. By implementing innovative quality tools and tactics that create a learning environment that more fully engages, challenges, and motivates students, Bunce is taking transformation from theory into practice.

In collaboration with the vision and support of Dr. Doug Stilwell, Superintendent, Urbandale Community School District, Bunce has transformed her classroom from homework, due dates, and grades, to quests, target dates, and learning with a sense of purpose. Bunce displays a “Quest Board” so students can see all assignments for each unit. Students know what is expected to be learned from each quest and if they turn in a quest that doesn’t fully demonstrate learning, students are asked to revise the quest until it meets established learning requirements.

At the end of every unit, Bunce requests that students complete online surveys to assess the degree to which they have learned the material. When reviewing the data, if Bunce sees a trend for less understanding on a certain topic, she will re-teach that topic in a new way that strives for greater understanding. Bunce also asks students how they wish to receive class notes, based on their response, she adjusts her teaching style to better connect with students.

“One of the most profound professional insights I gained was when I asked myself what my personal aim and purpose were for teaching,” said Bunce. “My personal mission is to help students learn and for them to understand that I am on their team and rooting for them. I believe having students actively engaged in their learning and having a voice in how they learn are fundamental for their success.” Bunce’s personal mission aligns well with the Urbandale vision of being a district that brings learning to life for everyone.

The traditional emphasis in education on time being rigid and quality being flexible no longer applies in Urbandale. Now, time is becoming more flexible and quality is more rigid as Bunce encourages students to learn and develop quality work at their own pace. Bunce begins with the assumption of competence for all her students, and that same belief and confidence she has in her students has been returned to her ten-fold.

**About Urbandale Community School District**

The Urbandale Community School District includes portions of Des Moines and Urbandale, Iowa. The district serves approximately 3,800 students in six elementary schools, one middle school and one comprehensive high school. The Urbandale district supports an increasingly diverse student population where 42 different languages are spoken. Urbandale prepares students for becoming life-long learners and is a school district that brings learning to life for everyone. For more information, visit: [www.urbandaleschools.com](http://www.urbandaleschools.com)

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