

Urbandale CSD Celebrates Exceptional Literacy Proficiency Results From Statewide Initiative

Urbandale CSD ranks in the top 7% of all 334 school districts in the state of Iowa for students in grades K–3 meeting or exceeding proficiency benchmarks and is 1 of only 4, 4A districts to crack the top 10%

URBANDALE, Iowa – September 6, 2017 – As Urbandale High School students and staff prepare to welcome alumni and community supporters during a week-long celebration for [Homecoming 2017](#), the [Urbandale Community School District](#) (Urbandale CSD) has yet another reason to celebrate—exceptional results from the state of Iowa early literacy assessments in support of Iowa’s Early Literacy Law aimed at ensuring all students are proficient readers by the time they leave third grade. Urbandale CSD ranks in the top 7% of all 334 school districts in the state of Iowa for kindergarten through third-grade students meeting or exceeding proficiency benchmarks this past spring. Of all school districts in the state, Urbandale is one of only four, 4A school districts to crack the top 10%. In addition, of the 1,131 students tested in the spring of 2017, 82.7% of Urbandale students met the proficiency benchmarks; this amounts to a 5% growth in the percent of students proficient from fall to spring.

“In looking at the data Urbandale has much to celebrate,” said Urbandale CSD Director of Teaching and Learning Crista Carlile. “These results are the direct result of the hard work and dedication of students, families and educators in all levels of our system. Their collaboration, willingness to continually learn and improve, and meet the needs of every one of our students are why Urbandale continues to be such an outstanding district.”



In 2014, a law went into effect in Iowa to focus efforts on helping students become proficient readers by the end of third grade. Iowa Administrative Code 281.62, often referred to as the Early Literacy Law, spelled out actions all school districts must take to collect and act on important data regarding students’ abilities to read. Reading fluently and accurately is a critical life skill. Fluency, the ability to read text quickly and with expression, and accuracy, the ability to decode words correctly, are critical elements of being able to make meaning of what is read. Students first learn to read, then read to learn. If students do

not learn to read fluently and accurately, then understanding what they are reading becomes a lifelong struggle.

With the adoption of the Early Literacy Law, Urbandale CSD began administering the FAST (Formative Assessment System for Teachers) assessments in fluency, accuracy and early literacy composite skills. Teachers and leaders have worked diligently to dig deeper into what the results of FAST assessments mean for their instruction. In collaborative teams, teachers have analyzed results and identified ways to make instruction targeted specifically to the literacy skills students need to master. In addition, teachers at each school have put in place processes to monitor the progress of struggling students weekly in order to determine the effectiveness of instruction. In this way, adjustments to instruction can be made quickly depending on the learning and progress of the student.

Urbandale CSD congratulates students for their dedication to learning and continually improving each and every day. The district extends a sincere thank you to families, teachers and administrators whose extraordinary dedication to helping students achieve success and develop a love for reading is certainly evident in the most recent statewide results. To learn more about how Urbandale is transforming education, visit: UrbandaleSchools.com and follow on Twitter [@UrbandaleSchool](https://twitter.com/UrbandaleSchool).

About Urbandale Community School District

The Urbandale Community School District includes portions of Des Moines and Urbandale, Iowa. The District serves over 3,900 students in six elementary schools, one middle school and one comprehensive high school. The Urbandale District supports an increasingly diverse student population where 47 languages are spoken. Building on the existing foundation of excellence in education, Urbandale is transforming education throughout the District. By implementing innovative [Quality/Continual Improvement](#) strategies that create learning environments that more fully engage, challenge and motivate students, Urbandale is taking transformation from theory into practice. Urbandale prepares students for becoming lifelong learners and is a school district that brings learning to life for everyone. To learn more, visit: UrbandaleSchools.com and follow on Twitter [@UrbandaleSchool](https://twitter.com/UrbandaleSchool).

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