

Urbandale CSD School Bond Special Election Will Build Opportunities For All Students

The Urbandale Community School District encourages all district residents to learn more about the 2018 Bond Referendum in order to vote in the upcoming School Bond Special Election on February 6, 2018

URBANDALE, Iowa – December 8, 2017 – Throughout the 2016–17 school year, [Urbandale Community School District](#) (Urbandale CSD) students, parents, teachers, staff and community members participated in numerous facility planning meetings in order to gain a better understanding of how district facilities are performing in terms of educational adequacy, life-cycle costs and cost/benefit analysis. This data, in combination with feedback received through online surveys and meetings, provided the Citizens Leadership Committee, made up of district parents, teachers, administrators, board members and community members, a 360-degree view of district facilities. The Citizens Leadership Committee incorporated stakeholder feedback in order to develop a comprehensive facility plan recommendation that was approved by the Urbandale CSD School Board. District residents will have an opportunity to vote on this facility plan recommendation during a School Bond Special Election on Tuesday, February 6, 2018. The \$59M [Bond Referendum](#) would provide funds to build two new elementary schools, build an addition to Webster Elementary or Urbandale High School (UHS) as needed for enrollment growth and accelerate the timeline for building a new high school fitness center.



The Urbandale community has a history of supporting excellence in education through passage of the 2004 and 2007 bond referendums which ensured 21st century learning environments at Webster Elementary, Urbandale Middle School and Urbandale High School. The 2018 bond referendum will ensure equity throughout all Urbandale CSD schools, optimize school resources, enhance technology and security and provides greater 21st century spaces and learning opportunities for all students.

Specifically, passage of the bond referendum would provide funds to build, furnish and equip two new four-section elementary schools on the current Olmsted Elementary and Valerius Elementary sites. Jensen, Olmsted, Rolling Green and Valerius Elementary schools would be retired. Year-round school would eventually move to Karen Acres Elementary and preschool would be located at all four elementary schools. In addition, the bond referendum would accelerate the timeline for building a new fitness center at UHS. Since the 1960s, UHS has converted storage spaces to support fitness needs; no dedicated fitness facilities exist at the high school.

“As four of our elementary schools have greatly exceeded their life cycles and we are at point where we would need to invest large amounts of money to maintain them, the time is right to build these

new schools,” said Superintendent Steve Bass. “We also recognize that all students deserve to learn in a 21st century learning environment. I am further excited to know that we can set students up for success for the next 50 to 60 years at a very reasonable tax rate.”

Ultimately, the 2018 bond referendum is about one thing—building opportunities for all students. Through the facility planning process, the district learned that over time it will cost more to maintain six elementary schools than to build two new. Operational efficiencies of four elementary schools will support repurposing \$1.8M annually. Repurposing \$1.8M annually will provide resources for enhanced 21st century programming and technology at the elementary, middle and high school levels while reducing class sizes at the middle school and high school. Both of the new elementary schools will be equipped with 21st century safety and security features including secure entrances for the continued safety and security of all students and staff. All of this can be accomplished while keeping tax rates low. Two elementary schools and UHS fitness center can be built in six to eight years with a minimal tax increase of \$0.25 per thousand of taxable valuation.

The district is hosting two community forums to share information about the 2018 bond referendum. The first took place on December 4, 2017, and the second will take place on January 23, 2018, at 6:30 p.m. at the UHS Media Center. In addition to the two community forums, Superintendent Steve Bass is attending [school meetings, events, activities and community organization meetings](#) throughout November, December, January and the beginning of February to help make sure all questions are answered in order for district residents to make an informed decision on election day.

District residents may vote early by absentee ballot or at the polls on Tuesday, February 6, 2018. To learn more about the 2018 bond referendum, visit: UrbandaleSchools.com/vote and view this [PDF](#).

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 [@UrbandaleCSD](https://twitter.com/UrbandaleCSD).

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