

Urbandale High School Band Mentors Future Members: Achieving Steady Growth And Success

The Urbandale Instrumental Music Program has seen a steady increase in student enrollment due in part to its dedication to helping students lead, mentor and build connections across grade levels.

URBANDALE, Iowa – October 27, 2014 – For over five years, the [Urbandale Community School District \(UCSD\)](#) has been on a quest to transform education in order to increase engagement, improve achievement, encourage collaboration and ignite a renewed passion for learning throughout the district. On October 10, 2014, this quest could be seen in full effect with 442 [Urbandale High School \(UHS\)](#) and [Urbandale Middle School \(UMS\)](#) band members performing together during the pregame ceremony and throughout the first half of the varsity football game at Frerichs Field. [UHS Band](#) students welcomed sixth through eighth-grade middle school band members to share in an evening that focused on one common aim: performing to inspire.

The confluence of UHS and UMS Bands help support sixth through eighth-grade band students as they adjust to middle school and eventually make the transition to high school. Throughout the year, UMS Band members are invited to UHS to participate in numerous activities and events. High school band members are given the opportunity to enhance their leadership and mentorship skills, while middle school band members begin to feel more comfortable with a high school environment and a greater sense of self-confidence. Students realize that it takes time, dedication and an understanding of how to collaborate in order to deliver award-winning performances. Collaboration, critical thinking and leadership skills are all key components of 21st century learning.



UHS and UMS Bands perform during the October 10, 2014 varsity football game at Frerichs Field.
Photo courtesy of Diane Schmidt

“High School students have the opportunity to share their enthusiasm with sixth through eighth-grade band students at the Middle School Band Night in October. Then again in January, the high school

students partner with seventh and eighth-grade band students in the annual Urbandale Band Summit to dig deeper into technique on each instrument and prepare a collaboration concert in the evening,” said Myron Peterson, Director of Urbandale Bands at Urbandale High School.

For nearly a decade, Urbandale’s fifth through twelfth-grade Instrumental Music Program has enjoyed a steady increase in student enrollment. The program has seen an increase of 34%, or 147 students, since the 2005-2006 school year. In total, the program supports 577 students making it one of the largest student activities in the district. Urbandale’s Instrumental Music staff contributes the steady increase in enrollment to rapport-building concerts where younger band students have an opportunity to participate in a concert with band members that are a grade older.

“Having an opportunity to meet and work with high school band students and directors, helps the younger students discover that being part of a great program like this is something they’d like to continue,” said Daphne Monson, Seventh and Eighth-Grade Instrumental Music Instructor at Urbandale Middle School.

The [Urbandale Instrumental Music Program](#) offers a breadth of opportunities for students looking to grow their musical talents. High school students may participate in the marching band, wind symphony, wind ensemble, symphonic band, jazz bands, solo and honor bands. Middle school students may participate in grade-level concert bands, jazz band, and a variety of solo and small groups. No matter what path students choose to take, success is likely as the Urbandale J-Hawk Marching Band received their 31th consecutive Division-I rating at the Iowa High School Music Association’s state-wide marching contest on October 18, 2014. The UCSD congratulates the Urbandale J-Hawk Marching Band on yet another outstanding and well-deserved achievement.

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 50 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: www.urbandaleschools.com

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