

Urbandale Schools Announce The Physical Plant And Equipment Levy Special Election

The Urbandale Community School District is asking all district residents to vote early by absentee ballot or at the polls in the upcoming PPEL Special Election on Tuesday, February 3, 2015

URBANDALE, Iowa – January 8, 2015 – Following a two-year, comprehensive strategic planning process, the [Urbandale Community School District](#) (UCSD) is pleased to announce the upcoming [Physical Plant and Equipment Levy \(PPEL\) Special Election](#) that will be held Tuesday, February 3, 2015. The PPEL is a voter-approved levy that serves as one of the primary revenue sources for funding school infrastructure and equipment repairs, purchases and improvements. The Urbandale PPEL plan incorporates feedback from parents, staff and community members, and addresses high-priority items throughout the district. The Board of Directors will match the PPEL with a bond refinance which will keep the facilities property tax flat. The PPEL is projected to provide \$10.7 million to \$14.5 million over its 10-year span. When added to existing funds, the district will be able to undertake a significant remodel of elementary buildings and the updating of facilities for use by district activities and community organizations.

“Two years of extensive research and planning have gone into creating the proposed PPEL plan to ensure it addresses the needs of our students, teachers, families, and community,” said Chris Gunnare, President of the Board of Directors. “The district has a history of being consistent with its tax rate and is able to keep the facilities property tax level when paired with a bond refinance.”

For over five years, the UCSD has been focusing on transforming education in order to increase engagement, improve achievement and ignite a renewed passion for learning throughout the district. Redesigning classroom spaces that better support collaboration, innovation and participation of all students is directly related to the district’s vision of bringing learning to life for everyone. With a high school graduation rate above 98%, in combination with the highest achievement scores the district has seen for over a decade, this positive shift in education is delivering results.

“As we implement proven and effective methods for transforming education, we must also consider the physical structures in which this education is taking place,” said Dr. Doug Stilwell, Superintendent, Urbandale Community School District. “Structuring buildings to maximize safety, security and convenience, redesigning classrooms to facilitate high levels of collaboration and learning, and ensuring our facilities are being maintained and improved while keeping in mind future growth are all key aspects of the PPEL plan.”

PPEL funds would enable the district to: improve safety and security of elementary buildings by adding more comprehensive security features, remodel elementary buildings to relocate main offices and increase classroom space for consistency across all K-5 schools, build gymnasiums at two elementary schools to support more educational and youth activities throughout the community, bring kindergarten back to neighborhood schools (supporting the preferences of 76% of parents), enhance the Performing Arts Center (PAC) with an acoustical “sound cloud” to improve sound quality, build a practice track at Urbandale Middle School to provide greater services for both educational

and community purposes, build a fitness center at UHS and expand the UHS locker room to increase space for greater opportunities to train with teams, improve the UHS baseball field lighting, repair the surface and field drainage for both UHS softball and baseball fields and build a maintenance facility to more efficiently manage district supplies and equipment.

UCSD facilities support over 3,900 students throughout the school year in addition to over 13,000 youth participating in school and community-sponsored activities. The district has seen steady growth in enrollment and youth activities throughout the community—both of which place an ever-increasing demand on existing facilities. District facilities include five elementary schools that were built in the 1950/60s, Webster Elementary that was built in 2006, Urbandale High School (UHS) that was rebuilt in 2008 and Urbandale Middle School that was remodeled in 2011.

Currently, the district has a Board-approved PPEL in the amount of \$0.33 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. Voters in the UCSD will be given the opportunity to vote on the proposed PPEL of \$1.34 per \$1,000 of assessed valuation. The Board of Directors will match the PPEL with a bond refinance which will keep the facilities property tax flat. District residents may vote early by absentee ballot or at the polls on Tuesday, February 3, 2015. Learn more about the PPEL Special Election by visiting: www.UrbandaleSchools.com/PPEL

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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