



For Immediate Release

## **Urbandale Schools Presenting At The Governor's Celebration Of Excellence Conference**

*The Urbandale Community School District will receive an award and present at the Governor's Celebration of Excellence Conference sponsored by the Iowa Quality Center*

**URBANDALE, Iowa – March 24, 2014** – The Urbandale Community School District will receive a 2013 Iowa Recognition for Performance Excellence (IRPE) Award and has been invited to present at the [Governor's Celebration of Excellence Conference](#) on Wednesday, April 2, 2014 at the Meadows Conference Center in Altoona. The IRPE is Iowa's National Baldrige-based process designed to recognize role model organizations in education, manufacturing, nonprofit, healthcare and business for sustainability and maintaining a future focus on performance excellence. The conference kicks off with an opening address from Governor Terry Branstad and a keynote address from Gary Meyer, President and CEO, Schneck Medical. In addition to receiving the Tier 3 Leadership Level recognition award, Superintendent Dr. Doug Stilwell will give a presentation entitled, "Best Efforts are not Enough: The Importance of and Necessity for Systems Leadership" which will examine the meaning behind Dr. Deming's statement, "We are being ruined by best efforts," and the significant implications it has for leaders of systems.

"The manner in which a system is structured—including its beliefs, processes, and procedures—is responsible for 95% of the behaviors in the system," said Dr. Doug Stilwell, Superintendent, Urbandale Community School District. "Despite giving their best efforts, people will generally see very little improvement if they work in a poorly designed or archaic system. Educators today face greater challenges and are working harder than ever before. However, until we transform this 150 year old system of education in order to better prepare students for a future yet to unfold, our results will not improve."

The IRPE is one of 39 state award programs aligned with the National Baldrige Performance Excellence Program. Applicants for the 2013 IRPE process receive feedback from board of examiner teams made up of 58 trained volunteers across the state of Iowa. Examiners look for systematic processes and results in the areas of leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, workforce focus, operations focus, measurement analysis and knowledge management, and results.

"As a first year applicant for the IRPE process, we are thrilled with the high level of feedback provided to us," said Denise Wood, Coordinator of Quality and Continual Improvement, Urbandale Community School District. "The feedback report is guiding UCSD to work for tighter alignment through all sub-systems of our organization by deploying our strategic plan "Transformation to Excellence: Our Moral Imperative 2013-2018". In particular, UCSD is deploying initiatives in the strategic plan and creating a new system for performance management to better track our results and respond to the changing needs of our customers. Participation in the IRPE process has been highly beneficial for our continual improvement."

Urbandale's expertise in transforming education through the integration of systems thinking is becoming increasingly visible on a national scale as members of the district receive frequent invitations to present at distinguished conferences. Recent presentations include the 2011 and 2012 Deming Fall Conference at Purdue and Iowa State Universities respectively, the IRPE Conference in 2012, the 2013 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference for Middle Level Education in Minneapolis and the 2013 National Education Conference in Milwaukee. To learn more about how Urbandale is transforming education, visit:

<http://Showcase.UrbandaleSchools.com>

### **About Iowa Quality Center**

Formed in 1993, the Woods Quality Center began as a shared vision of a total quality environment for the entire community, including business and industry, schools, government, nonprofit organizations, labor unions, and the service and retail industries. In 2001 the name was changed to the Iowa Quality Center (IQC) as a result of a new state-wide focus. Today, IQC has over 180 member organizations with more than 48,000 individual members representing government, manufacturing, business, education, labor, retail, service, and healthcare organizations. While the IQC staff is based in Marion, its networking groups, consultation, and membership activities take place throughout the state. For more information, visit: [www.iowaqc.org](http://www.iowaqc.org)

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### **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](http://www.urbandaleschools.com)

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