

December 16, 2015

Dear UCSD Parents and Families:

The Urbandale Community School District values the use of data as a way to monitor progress and growth. Knowing where we are and where we want to go is a key part of continual improvement. Our school district regularly uses data from all parts of our system to tell us how our students are progressing, how effectively and efficiently our system is operating, and how to adjust our work to provide the highest quality educational experiences for your children.

In response to a 2013 legislative requirement (House File 215), the state of Iowa has developed a new web-based tool to provide a snapshot of each Iowa public school's performance on certain educational measures, such as student attendance and proficiency rates. This additional source of information, the Iowa School Report Card, synthesizes publically available data. The goal of the Iowa School Report Card is to present certain education data in a way that makes it easier for the public to find and understand. You can locate our schools' results, as well as more information about the Iowa School Report Card, on the following website: <http://reports.educateiowa.gov/schoolreportcard> (Read the paragraph, then click on *more* prior to writing "Urbandale" in the box.)

The Iowa School Report Card provides a score for each school on nine different measures and then assigns an overall rating to each school based upon those measures. The attached guide provides an explanation of the nine measures. The UCSD schools' ratings are as follows:

Jensen Elementary School	Commendable
Karen Acres Elementary School	Commendable
Olmsted Elementary School	Commendable
Rolling Green Elementary School	Commendable
Valerius Elementary School	Commendable
Webster Elementary School	High Performing
Urbandale Middle School	Commendable
Urbandale High School	Acceptable

While we believe this information can add to conversations in our community about how we are preparing students for success, these measures are based on limited data. As we know from other accountability initiatives such as the federal No Child Left Behind Act, schools are much more than labels. The Iowa School Report Card helps to present certain educational data in a user-friendly format, but labels and ratings do not tell the whole story.

While I encourage you to explore the information provided in the Iowa School Report Card, I also urge you to get to know the schools behind the labels. The continual improvement work in which UCSD has been engaged for the last several years has resulted in significant improvements in our educational system. We're as proud of our students for demonstrating academic growth resulting in the district's highest achievement levels in 17 years as we are for the multitude of un-measurable achievements that take place every day—perhaps a sentiment best conveyed in this well-known quotation: "not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts." We appreciate the opportunity to partner with you and your students while we continually strive to advance our mission to teach all and reach all.

Thank you for your support and for all you do for our schools.

Sincerely,

Steve Bass

Superintendent

Urbandale Community School District