



United Community School District

www.unitedcomets.org

1284 U Avenue • Boone, IA • 50036

January 2020



Pam Dodge
Superintendent

This summer The United Community School District will realize the benefits of years of strategic planning. With the upgrades to the transportation facility behind us, we are excited to move into the next phase of upgrading, repairing, and improving our facility. Our district's facility committee and school board have been focused over the last several years on the best way to thoughtfully provide instructional spaces while meeting all Iowa code requirements. Working together, our school district has developed a strategic plan based on student and community needs.

In May, we will kick off the next phase of our infrastructure improvement plan. This will include upgrading the HVAC systems, creating larger classrooms for preschool, kindergarten and first grades, making improvements to the school media center, adding restrooms, as well

as adding windows to many of our classrooms. No taxes will be raised related to this project because we plan to use Secure an Advanced Vision for Education (SAVE) and Physical Plant and Equipment Levy (PPEL) dollars for these projects. We look forward to sharing more information soon regarding an upcoming vote on March 2, 2021 about the choices United district patrons have in directing the district's SAVE dollars for these projects.

Enclosed with this communication, you will find district-level data, which clarifies United's strong overall financial position. To ensure a robust dialogue between the district and the community, we will also host public meetings on January 20, 2021 and February 17, 2021. These meetings will provide an opportunity for the community to tour the facility (while observing social distancing guidelines) and hear directly from the school board and me about the project. This is a great opportunity for the community to further learn about the work happening at UC and also a time to ask questions. Both events will take place in the school gym at 6:00pm.

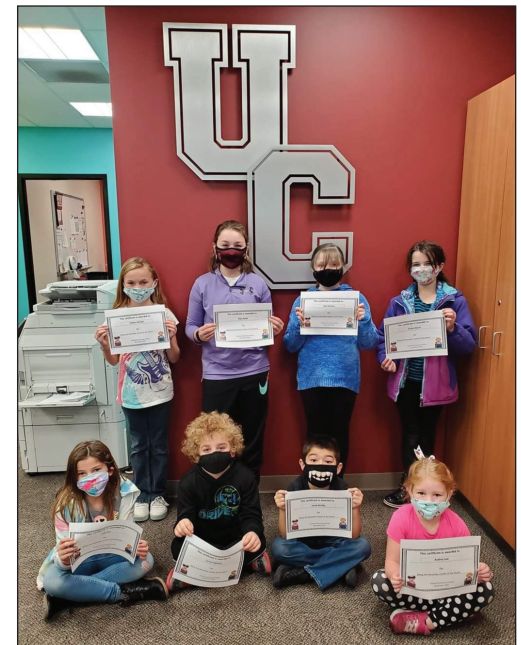
On an instructional note, we feel fortunate that our school-based mitigation efforts are working and students have been able to remain in school. Thank you for your help because these efforts would not have been possible without the support of our community and families. We recognize this is a difficult time both personally and professionally for many and we appreciate your help. Despite our challenges, our district's goal remains the same: to provide a safe and productive environment for all students to continue learning. We are grateful for our partnership with each of you as we support that ongoing effort.

Our teachers, staff, administrative team, and school board are committed to doing everything we can to keep our schools safe and open. If you have questions related to future facility planning, school finances, or anything related to our instructional program, please contact myself or any member of our leadership team. Happy New Year and I look forward to working together to ensure 2021 is a successful year for Comet students and families.

Sincerely,
Pam Dodge, Superintendent
pdodge@united.k12.ia.us

HOME OF THE COMETS

Our mission is to ensure that all students achieve the skills necessary to succeed in life. This will be accomplished by providing a student-centered educational community.



Students leading the way by demonstrating the Comet Code! "We are Respectful, We are Responsible, We are Safe, We are United, Be Your Best!" Monthly, teachers nominate students to be selected as the Comet Captains. We celebrated these captains in December.

94% Fall Parent Teacher Conference Attendance Data

United teachers and families are a team! This fall, 94% of our families attended conferences.



Dates to Remember

December 22nd	1:10 Dismissal – Childcare open until 6:00 p.m.
December 23rd - January 1st	NO SCHOOL – WINTER BREAK – CHILDCARE CLOSED
January 4th	SCHOOL RESUMES FOR ALL STUDENTS – 8:00 a.m.
January 4th	2020-21 Online Preschool Enrollment Sign Up begins
January 6th	1:10 Dismissal – Professional Development
January 7th	PTO Meeting – 6:30 p.m. - Media Center
January 14th	United School Board Meeting – 6:00 p.m. - Media Center
January 18th	No School - Professional Development - Childcare open 6:45a.m. – 6:00p.m.
January 21st	2020-21 Virtual Zoom Preschool Parent Information/Registration Night – 6:30 p.m.
January 26th	2020-21 Virtual Zoom Kindergarten Parent Information/Registration Night – 6:30 p.m.
February 3rd	1:10 Dismissal – Professional Development
February 4th	PTO Meeting – 6:30 p.m. South Media Center
February 11th	United School Board Meeting – 6:00 p.m. - South Media Center
February 12th	Valentine's Day – Classroom Parties – 2:30 p.m.
February 15th	No School Professional Development - Childcare open 6:45 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
February 22nd	End of 2nd Trimester

Visit our Web Page www.unitedcomets.org to check out more events, news and other happenings at United Community!

Our district newsletter will be available electronically on the school webpage www.unitedcomets.org. Moving forward, our newsletters will be electronically provided to all United Community Families via our school messaging system. If you do not have a student in our school district and would like to continue to receive newsletters, email Karla Keigley kkeigley@united.k12.ia.us to ensure we have you on our mailing list. If you prefer a hard copy mailed to your home, we will have a few printed each month and will ensure one is mailed to you. Please contact Karla at (515-432-5319) and she can continue to have you on our mailing list.

United Community School District 2020-21 School Calendar

Calendar Summary	
1st Trimester	54
2nd Trimester	63
3rd Trimester	61
Instructional Days	178
P/T Conf. Comp. Days	1
Prof Development Days	8
Total Staff Contact Days	187
Total Instructional Hrs.	1157

Calendar Legend	
New Teacher Orientation	
School Starts	
Teacher In-Service	
Trimester End	
Parent/Teacher Conf.	
No School &/or Holiday	

Holidays	
Labor Day	Sept. 7
Columbus Day	Oct. 14
Veterans Day	Nov. 11
Thanksgiving	Nov. 26
Christmas Day	Dec. 25
New Years Day	Jan. 1
Martin Luther King Day	Jan. 18
Presidents Day	Feb. 15
Easter	Apr. 4
Memorial Day	May 31

Regular Start/End Times	
School Begins	8:00 am
School Ends	3:10 pm

Wednesday Early Release Time	
1 st Wednesday	1:10 pm

August 2020						
M	T	W	Th	F	S	S
10	11	12	13	14		
17	18	19	20	21	4	
24	25	26	27	28	5	
31					6	
September 2020						
	1	2	3	4	10	
7	8	9	10	11	14	
14	15	16	17	18	19	
21	22	23	24	25	24	
28	29	30			27	
October 2020						
			1	2	29	
5	6	7	8	9	33	
12	13	14	15	16	38	
19	20	21	22	23	43	
26	27	28	29	30	48	
November 2020						
2	3	4	5	6	53	
9	10	11	12	13	58	
16	17	18	19	20	63	
23	24	25	26	27	66	
30					67	
December 2020						
	1	2	3	4	71	
7	8	9	10	11	76	
14	15	16	17	18	81	
21	22	23	24	25	83	
28	29	30	31		83	
January 2021						
				1	83	
4	5	6	7	8	88	
11	12	13	14	15	93	
18	19	20	21	22	97	
25	26	27	28	29	102	
February 2021						
1	2	3	4	5	107	
8	9	10	11	12	112	
15	16	17	18	19	116	
22	23	24	25	26	121	
March 2021						
1	2	3	4	5	126	
8	9	10	11	12	130	
15	16	17	18	19	130	
22	23	24	25	26	135	
29	30	31			138	
April 2021						
			1	2	139	
5	6	7	8	9	144	
12	13	14	15	16	149	
19	20	21	22	23	154	
26	27	28	29	30	159	
May 2021						
3	4	5	6	7	164	
10	11	12	13	14	169	
17	18	19	20	21	174	
24	25	26	27	28	178	
31						
June 2021						
	1	2	3	4		
7	8	9	10	11		

1st Wednesday of Month – 2 Hour Early Release

Date	Events
Aug 14 & 17	New Teacher Orientation
Aug 18-21	Teacher In-service Workshop
Aug 24	First Day of School K-6
Aug 31	First Day of School Preschool
Sept 2	2 Hr. Early Dismissal
Sept 7	No School (Labor Day)
Oct 5	No School – Prof. Development
Oct 7	2 Hr. Early Dismissal
Nov 4	2 Hr. Early Dismissal
Nov 9	End of 1 st Trimester (54 days)
Nov 12	Parent/Teacher Conferences (4:30-8:00 pm)
Nov 17	2 Hr. Early Dismissal Parent-Teacher Conferences (2:00-4:30 pm & 5:00-8:00 pm)
Nov 25	No School (Teacher Comp Day)
Nov 26-27	No School (Thanksgiving Holiday)
Dec 2	2 Hr. Early Dismissal
Dec 22	Early Release (2 Hr. Early Release)
Dec 23-Jan 1	No School - Winter Break
Jan 6	2 Hr. Early Dismissal
Jan 18	No School – Teacher Quality Day (Martin Luther King Day)
Feb 3	2 Hr. Early Dismissal
Feb 15	No School – Prof. Development (President's Day)
Feb 22	End of 2 nd Trimester (63 days)
March 3	2 Hr. Early Dismissal
March 9	Parent/Teacher Conferences (4:30-8:00 p.m.)
March 11	2 Hr. Early Dismissal Parent/Teacher Conferences (2:00-4:00 pm & 4:30-8:00 pm)
March 12	No School (Teacher Comp Day)
March 15-19	No School (Spring Break)
April 2	No School – Prof. Development
April 7	2 Hr. Early Dismissal
May 5	2 Hr. Early Dismissal
May 27	End of 3 rd Trimester (61 days) Last Day of School (2 Hr. Early Release)
May 28	No School – Prof. Development
May 31	Memorial Day (No School)

Make-up Days

All full days of school missed due to inclement weather will be made-up starting June 1 unless otherwise designated by the Board of Education.



Open Enrollment

- Over 50% of our student body is open enrolled in from other districts. The biggest question United gets asked is concerning 6th grade. Because United offers a 6th grade, resident students do not fall under our whole-grade sharing agreement. United cannot provide transportation to any students in grades PS-6th to another district.
- Deadline for open enrollment is March 1st for grades 1st-6th and September 1st for kindergarten. Each child in the family must have an open enrollment request filed individually.
- General Department of Education Information can be found here regarding Open Enrollment: DE Open Enrollment For further information, contact the Superintendent, Dr. Pam Dodge, at 515-432-5319.

SNOW DAY MAKEUP DAYS

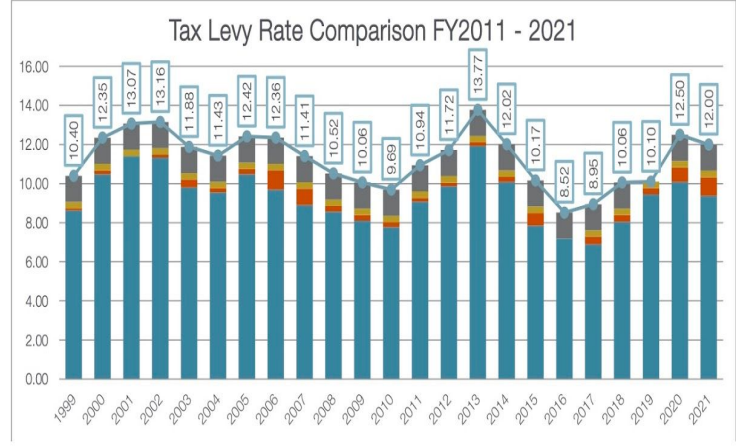
As per the calendar adopted by the board last year, any days of school missed this year will be made up. The first makeup day will be May 28th.



20 Year Tax History

Tax Levy Rate Comparison FY1999 - 2021

Fiscal Year	Operating	Management	B.PPEL	V.PPEL	Debt	Total	Fiscal Year	Notes:
1999	8.63	0.11	0.33	1.34	0.00	10.40	1999	
2000	10.48	0.20	0.33	1.34	0.00	12.35	2000	
2001	11.40	0.00	0.33	1.34	0.00	13.07	2001	
2002	11.33	0.16	0.33	1.34	0.00	13.16	2002	
2003	9.81	0.40	0.33	1.34	0.00	11.88	2003	
2004	9.55	0.22	0.33	1.34	0.00	11.43	2004	
2005	10.48	0.26	0.33	1.34	0.00	12.42	2005	
2006	9.69	0.99	0.33	1.34	0.00	12.36	2006	
2007	8.91	0.83	0.33	1.34	0.00	11.41	2007	
2008	8.56	0.29	0.33	1.34	0.00	10.52	2008	
2009	8.10	0.29	0.33	1.34	0.00	10.06	2009	
2010	7.77	0.25	0.33	1.34	0.00	9.69	2010	
2011	9.08	0.19	0.33	1.34	0.00	10.94	2011	
2012	9.86	0.19	0.33	1.34	0.00	11.72	2012	
2013	11.93	0.19	0.31	1.34	0.00	13.77	2013	
2014	10.08	0.27	0.33	1.34	0.00	12.02	2014	
2015	7.84	0.65	0.33	1.34	0.00	10.17	2015	
2016	7.18	0.00	0.00	1.34	0.00	8.52	2016	
2017	6.89	0.41	0.31	1.34	0.00	8.95	2017	
2018	8.04	0.35	0.33	1.34	0.00	10.06	2018	
2019	9.44	0.33	0.33	0.00	0.00	10.10	2019	
2020	10.08	0.75	0.33	1.34	0.00	12.50	2020	
2021	9.37	0.96	0.33	1.34	0.00	12.00	2021	
High:	11.93	0.99	0.33	1.34	0.00	13.77		
Low:	6.89	0.00	0.00	1.34	0.00	8.52		
Average:	9.33	0.36	0.31	1.28	0.00	11.28		



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Piper Jaffray

Tax Rates - Neighboring Districts

The chart to the right illustrates the tax rates broken down by fund and the total School Levy on the right-hand side. United is the lowest school tax levy in the area. The ideal school tax range would be between 9.5% and 11%.

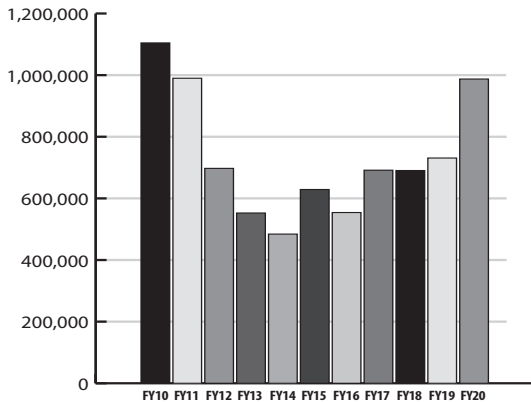
Iowa Association of School Boards												
Property Tax Rates By Type (Tax Rates Expressed Per \$1,000 of Taxable Valuations) - Self Selected Districts												
Return to Instructions												
FY 2021	Operational (General Fund) Levies						Man. Levy	Regular PPEL	Voter PPEL	PERL	Debt Service	Total School Levy
District	Uniform Levy	Additional Levy	Instructional Support	Ed. Imp.	Cash Reserve	Total General Fund						
United	\$ 5.4000	\$ 1.3413	\$ 0.1151	\$ -	\$ 2.5124	\$ 9.3689	\$0.9612	\$ 0.3300	\$ 1.3400	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 12.0001
Ames	\$ 5.4000	\$ 2.2199	\$ 0.1342	\$ -	\$ 1.8422	\$ 9.5962	\$0.2107	\$ 0.3300	\$ 1.3400	\$ -	\$ 2.8641	\$ 14.3411
Ballard	\$ 5.4000	\$ 4.0050	\$ 1.4034	\$ -	\$ 2.0181	\$ 12.8264	\$1.5066	\$ 0.3300	\$ 0.8942	\$ -	\$ 4.0500	\$ 19.6072
Boone	\$ 5.4000	\$ 4.5688	\$ 1.1005	\$ -	\$ 1.4848	\$ 12.5540	\$0.5725	\$ 0.3300	\$ 1.3400	\$ 0.1350	\$ 4.0500	\$ 18.9816
Ogden	\$ 5.4000	\$ 2.7780	\$ 0.6160	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 8.7940	\$0.9787	\$ 0.3300	\$ 1.3400	\$ 0.1350	\$ 2.4650	\$ 14.0428
Interstate 35	\$ 5.4000	\$ 4.0737	\$ 1.5741	\$ -	\$ 1.3608	\$ 12.4087	\$0.9408	\$ 0.3300	\$ 1.3400	\$ -	\$ 3.6541	\$ 18.6736
Gilbert	\$ 5.4000	\$ 3.0608	\$ 1.3725	\$ -	\$ 1.3762	\$ 11.2095	\$1.1584	\$ 0.3300	\$ 1.3400	\$ -	\$ 4.0500	\$ 18.0879
Roland-Story	\$ 5.4000	\$ 3.9148	\$ 0.1738	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 9.4886	\$0.9238	\$ 0.3300	\$ 0.9392	\$ -	\$ 1.8334	\$ 13.5150
Woodward-Granger	\$ 5.4000	\$ 3.7352	\$ 1.3035	\$ -	\$ 0.7862	\$ 11.2249	\$1.5906	\$ 0.3300	\$ 1.3400	\$ -	\$ 4.0187	\$ 18.5042

Unspent Authorized Budget (UAB)

The unspent authorized balance (UAB) is the authorized amount the district can spend. The best analogy is to think of UAB as a credit card spending limit. The limit is the amount determined from the annual budgeted revenues less expenditures and add the prior year unspent balance. It is best practice to retain an annual percentage of 10% to 15% for the unspent balance.

UNITED CSD UNSPENT BALANCE TRACKING

FISCAL YEAR	UAB	UAB %	CHANGE FROM PRIOR YEAR
FY10	1,104,556.00	NA	
FY11	989,911.00	NA	(114,645.00)
FY12	697,420.00	14.80%	(292,491.00)
FY13	552,532.00	12.40%	(144,888.00)
FY14	484,110.00	10.40%	(68,422.00)
FY15	628,850.00	13.31%	144,740.00
FY16	554,103.00	10.55%	(74,747.00)
FY17	691,488.00	12.28%	137,385.00
FY18	690,398.00	11.33%	(1,090.00)
FY19	730,992.00	11.63%	40,594.00
FY20	987,333.00	14.08%	256,341.00 ESTIMATED

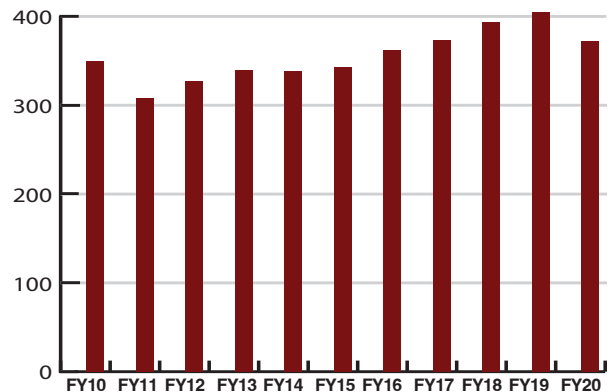


Enrollment History

Enrollment is the key component for the school finances. Funding is provided on a per pupil basis set by the Iowa Legislature each year. Certified enrollment is the resident count of those students who live within the district boundaries. United has experienced an increasing certified enrollment since Fiscal year 11. In Fiscal year 20, the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted certified enrollment across the state of Iowa producing lower enrollment numbers.

UNITED CSD Enrollment analysis-forecasting

FISCAL YEAR	ENROLLMENT COUNT	CHANGE YEAR TO YEAR
FY10	349.8	18.8
FY11	307.9	-41.9
FY12	327.1	19.2
FY13	339.6	12.5
FY14	338.9	-0.7
FY15	342.6	3.7
FY16	361.5	18.9
FY17	373.1	11.6
FY18	393.4	20.3 Oct-18
FY19	404.3	10.9 Oct-19
FY20	372	-32.3 Oct-20



Dear United Families,

It has been a pleasure serving as principal for about a year now. I have enjoyed getting to know families and students! Working as the United Community principal has been fulfilling because I have been able to focus my attention on instructional leadership, which leads to student growth and school improvement.

Every year, the Department of Education analyzes each school in the state of Iowa on the school performance. Last year, United was deemed "targeted". United now receives support from our Area Education Agency (AEA) to work towards school improvement through our action plan. This designation has helped our staff and district desire to make huge growth and expedited our process of analyzing our current curriculum and instruction.

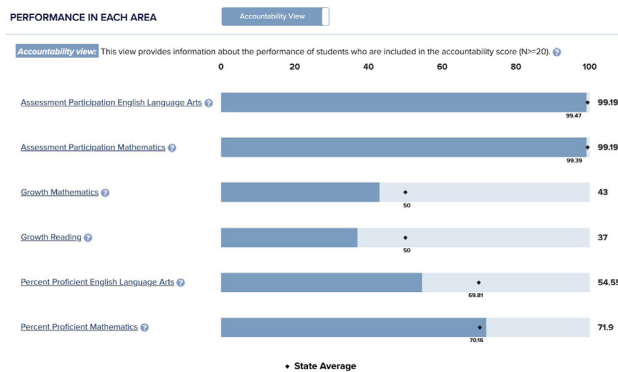
A strong commitment our school board made to support our instructional improvement, was in purchasing the new reading curriculum. This has allowed us to have a standardized reading and writing instruction across our system. We also have focused our efforts on math interventions and through partnership with our AEA, we are a part of the Numeracy Project. This has been robust training for our teachers to ensure they have access to high leverage math interventions and diagnostic tools. Our focus on social-emotional learning has been intentional and grown this school year. Our counselor has utilized screener data, formative assessments, and small groups, to work closely with students and their specific needs.



As this school year continues, we will remain on track with designing instruction to match our student needs and a focus on action steps that allow for student growth.

Sincerely,
Rumor Clark, *Principal*
rumor.clark@united.k12.ia.us

Building Level Data



United School Summary on the Iowa School Performance Profile, 2019

Statement Regarding the Homeless

The Board of Directors of the United Community School District is responsible for locating and identifying homeless children and youth who are "found" within the district. A "homeless child or youth of school age" is defined as a child between the ages of 5 and 21 who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and includes a child or youth living on the street, in a car, tent, abandoned building or some other form of shelter not designed as a permanent home; living in a community shelter facility; or living with non-nuclear family members or friends who may not have legal guardianship over the child or youth of school age. The district shall make available to the homeless child or youth all services and assistance including, but not limited to: compensatory education, special education, English as a second language, vocational courses or programs, programs for talented and gifted, health services, and food and nutrition programs, as those services and assistance are provided to resident pupils. For further details, contact the homeless liaison, Rumor Clark, Principal at 515-432-5319 ext 5 or email rumor.clark@united.k12.ia.us.



United Comets doing their part to stay active.

Equal Opportunity Update

The role of the Equity Coordinator is to ensure non-discrimination in employment and personnel practices on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, disability, religion, creed, age, marital status, sexual orientation, and gender identity. The district also prohibits harassment and bullying by/of employees and students on the basis of race, national origin, color, language, gender, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, familial status, physical and mental ability or disability, age, religion, creed, physical attributes, ancestry, socioeconomic status, political party preference, and political beliefs. United Community's Equity Coordinator is Anne Sutter. She can be reached by calling 515-432-5319 or by email at asutter@united.k12.ia.us.

Parents/Guardians in the United Community School District have the right to learn about the following qualifications of their child's teacher: state licensure requirements for the grade level and content areas taught, the current licensing status of your child's teacher, and baccalaureate/graduate certification/degree. Parents/Guardians may request this information from the Office of the Superintendent by calling 515-432-5319 ext 9 or by sending a letter of request to: Office of the Superintendent 1284 U Ave. Boone, IA 50036