Update on United CSD's Whole-Grade Sharing Process

Emailed in November 3 of 2026

Dear United Families,

Thank you for taking the time to share your questions and perspectives about United CSD's intent to negotiate a whole-grade sharing agreement with Madrid.

We recognize the concerns this proposed change brings for students and families. Friendships, relationships with teachers, routines, and traditions matter. We hear your concerns about leaving familiar schools and what a transition from Ames and Boone to Madrid would mean for your children.

We are here to provide the best possible educational experience for our students. That purpose guides the board's work in evaluating a sharing partner.

The decision is not final. Announcing our intent to negotiate an agreement with Madrid is a step in the process to be finalized by **February 1**. A **public hearing will be held on December 15**, giving families and community members an opportunity to share their input before a final decision.

As your district leadership team and elected board, we are responsible for evaluating educational opportunities and making decisions that serve United students. The board has worked hard over the past several months to identify a partner that supports students' academic needs, school experience, and future success.

The board's interest in Madrid reflects these priorities:

- **A small-town environment** that supports connections among students, staff, and families.
- **Small class sizes** that support individual attention and relationships with teachers.
- **High academic achievement** and preparation for students' next steps.
- **Strong extracurricular opportunities** that help students develop their talents, participate, and build connections.

Our purpose is to provide the best possible educational experience for United students and prepare them for future success. We will keep families informed as negotiations proceed and the board works toward a final decision.

Updated questions and answers are included at this link. Please reach out to me at hholm@united.k12.ia.us with questions or to schedule a meeting. I welcome the opportunity to hear your concerns and discuss what this proposed change means for your family.

Sincerely,
Heather Holm
United CSD