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Clear Creek Amana Middle School students meet after school weekly to practice their marimba band music under the direction of instructor Paul Corbiere. PHOTOS BY RICHARD HAKES/IOWA CITY PRESS-CITIZEN

ESCUCHA MI VOZ IOWA Group asks for \$300K to benefit immigrant services

Organization makes plea to Johnson County

Jessica Rish
Iowa City Press-Citizen
USA TODAY NETWORK

Escucha Mi Voz Iowa has provided over 2,000 direct services to immigrants despite limited funding from Johnson County. Citing an even greater need, the organization is calling on local officials to earmark \$300,000 to support immigrant families.

The Iowa-based, immigrant-led organization delivered a formal letter to the Johnson County Board of Supervisors during a budget hearing on Wednesday, April 15.

The letter, signed by 10 Escucha Mi Voz Iowa members, two from each of the five county districts, asks the board to amend the budget for comprehensive immigrant services.

They want the county to also partner with community-based organizations to meet what they say is a growing need.

Escucha Mi Voz Iowa members, according to a recent press release, believe Johnson County is moving in “the

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Miguel Torres speaks during a public comment section of a hearing on the proposed fiscal year 2027 budget estimate for Johnson County on April 15 in Iowa City. Torres asked Johnson County Supervisors to allocate \$300,000 of the budget for immigrant services.

JULIA HANSEN/IOWA CITY PRESS-CITIZEN

Soothing sounds

How marimba music is moving band students at Clear Creek Amana



Taking Liberties
Richard Hakes
Columnist

Stroll through East Ridge Elementary School in Coralville after hours some weekday and you’ll hear the warm, mellow, resonant tones of marimba music wafting down the hallways.

In its music room, you’ll find two dozen or so fourth and fifth-graders, each happily pounding away with mallets on the polished wooden bars of these unique and extraordinary xylophone-like instruments.

The kids are warming up, but the cacophony of sound ends abruptly as Clear Creek Amana elementary music instructor Paul Corbiere steps to the center of the room. He lifts two seed-filled gourds similar to maracas, called “hoshos,” and begins shaking them to set the beat.

Soon, the students are deep into one

of their favorite marimba songs, lost in the lively rhythm and harmonies of an instrument that some believe dates back 5,000 years to Asia and Africa.

“It’s the coolest thing on campus, according to the elementary kids,” Corbiere told me. His younger students claim to love the shocked look on their friends’ faces when they see and hear the unique band in a lively performance.

Clear Creek Amana marimba students are enthusiastic learners

About half of the marimbas are owned by the Clear Creek Amana school district, and the rest by Corbiere, who actually built one from scratch. He teaches and directs four different marimba bands each week – two elementary, one middle school and one school staff band.

He started marimba bands while teaching at Columbus Junction 20 years ago, then brought the fun to the

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Fourth grader Corra Varzavand enjoys playing with one of two elementary marimba bands at East Ridge Elementary in Coralville. Next to her are Jameson Parrish, Dawson Haas, and Byron Clark in the background.

JD Vance will campaign with Zach Nunn in Iowa



U.S. Vice President JD Vance speaks at “This is the Turning Point Tour” at the University of Georgia in Athens, Georgia on April 14. REUTERS/ALYSSA POINTER

Brianne Pfannenstiel
Des Moines Register
USA TODAY NETWORK

Vice President JD Vance will campaign in Iowa alongside U.S. Rep. Zach Nunn ahead of a competitive midterm election.

“Iowa is at the center of the fight for our majority,” Nunn said in a statement provided to the Des Moines Register. “Having the vice president on the ground is a testament to the momentum we’re building and our commitment to

finishing the job for working families.”

Vance will appear in Iowa April 30. Axios, which first reported the news, said Vance would also attend an event with the Turning Point USA at Iowa State University in Ames.

Nunn is seeking reelection to Iowa’s 3rd Congressional District, which is perpetually among the nation’s most competitive.

It is one of 17 U.S. House seats rated as a “toss-up” by nonpartisan elections analysts at the Cook Political Report, and it is one of the top targets for Demo-

crats seeking to flip control of the chamber.

The district spans 21 counties and includes the cities of Des Moines, West Des Moines, Ottumwa and Winterset.

“No one has been able to hold the 3rd District for more than two terms,” Nunn told a crowd in West Des Moines at an April 13 event. “... We’re going to break the mold. We’re going to succeed, and we’re going to do it because we’re taking Iowa’s voice to the nation’s capital.”

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