



Bemis Junior High

ANNUAL REPORT 2005-2006

12500 Nineteen Mile Road • Sterling Heights, MI 48313 • 586.797.2500
Principal Joyce A. Spade • Average Daily Attendance 95.98%

Our school is state and nationally accredited

Bemis Junior High School is accredited by both the North Central Association (NCA) Commission on School Accreditation and Improvement and Michigan's Education YES! legislation – as are all 40 schools in the Utica Community Schools district. Accreditation certifies that our schools meet recommended standards for quality education for all students.

NCA is a regional agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education that establishes demanding standards for public and non-public schools. As a participant school, we have undertaken a rigorous NCA-monitored process for continuous school improvement. Our staff works together within the process to identify goals for improving student achievement, implement strategies to meet our goals and utilize recommended assessments to accurately measure progress.

Education YES! is the state's report card accreditation system for public schools. Schools are assigned letter grades based largely on their long-term performance on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) and other indicators.

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), a standard set by the federal No Child Left Behind legislation, is also part of the report card.

Whether a school makes AYP is based on these factors:

- MEAP scores of all students in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics
- MEAP ELA and Mathematics scores of student subgroups*
- 95 percent participation of all students on the MEAP tests
- student attendance or graduation rate.

*Student subgroups include Ethnic Origin, Economically Disadvantaged, English Language Learners and Students with Disabilities.

Bemis Report Card

AYP 2005: Yes
AYP 2006: Yes

Education YES! Grades:

2005 - A
2006 - A

MEAP summary on page 3

All UCS teachers meet the Highly Qualified standard

As mandated by the federal No Child Left Behind legislation, all Utica Community Schools teachers in core academic subject areas, such as English, reading, language arts, science (physics, chemistry, biology, earth science or physical science), mathematics, government and civics, history, economics, geography, foreign languages, fine arts or elementary education, have met the law's Highly Qualified requirements.

In addition, all UCS teachers possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university. All have also met State of Michigan certification requirements and successfully completed the district's own rigorous selection process.

Three-quarters of UCS teachers possess master's degrees and many have also completed course work or degrees beyond the master's level.

Newly hired teachers are assigned an experienced mentor teacher, and all teachers, new and experienced, are regularly observed and evaluated by their building administrators as they work with students. UCS teachers are required to participate in continuous professional development programming, and all new teachers must meet additional professional development requirements.

Our points of pride

- Bemis Honor Roll students (all A's or A-average) number 240; Gold Card students (B-average and higher) number 464.
- All three Destination Imagination teams who competed in the regional competition advanced to compete at the state level.
- The Social Studies Olympiad team represented Bemis well with seven bronze metals, earning high scores in all areas of the competition.
- Many eighth grade SAGE students received awards at the Celebration of the Books Festival in several categories. After the class earned first place in the "Book Battle," Bemis earned six other first place awards and ranked in the top three for their movie presentation.
- The eighth grade Yearbook class earned the Partnership in Excellence Award, and successfully produced monthly newspapers and TV-news programs, as well as another great video yearbook.
- Fifteen Bemis students qualified for ninth grade placement at the Utica Center for Mathematics, Science and Technology.
- Bemis drafting students continued our school's winning tradition in both the regional and state competition. A total of 27 projects advanced to state levels, where students earned first, second and third place honors. This marks the twenty-fourth consecutive year that Bemis drafting students received first place honors at the Michigan Industrial Technology Education (MITE) state competition.
- Forty-six wood shop projects were also entered in MITE competition, where 19 Bemis students placed at the state level.

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School improvement boosts student achievement

Utica Community Schools continually works to strengthen its educational programs by implementing proven school improvement initiatives designed to increase all aspects of student learning and achievement. Following is an update of ongoing district-wide school improvement initiatives, all of which impact our school:

State and Federal Legislation

- Monitor progress of State of Michigan Education YES! accreditation and North Central Association (NCA) accreditation processes.
- Implement new high school graduation requirements, known as the Michigan Merit Curriculum in effect for the 2011 graduating class.*
- Implement the Reading First initiatives at Burr, Dresden and Wiley Elem. schools.

Curriculum Design

- Monitor alignment of grades K-12 core content areas of English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, Science and Social Studies with revised state standards.
- Facilitate and support co-curricular programs.
- Differentiate instruction so that all students can achieve and meet state standards.
- Implement and monitor the state-mandated high school content expectations.*
- Monitor secondary English Language Learners curriculum reform.*

Instructional Practices

- Monitor and adjust alignment of math, science, foreign language, physical education, fine arts and career and technology education curricula with national and state standards.
- Facilitate technology use in the teaching and learning process at all levels.
- Support interdisciplinary instruction at all levels.
- Support auxiliary instructional programs such as alternative education and adult education.
- Continue implementation of Best Practices across the curriculum incorporating 21st Century skills.
- Implement and evaluate intervention programs targeting a range of student needs.
- Monitor implementation and progress of the schools' plans to improve student writing for grades K-6.
- Implement and monitor secondary level Reading Apprenticeship initiatives.*

Assessment

- Analyze and communicate standardized test data.
- Monitor the implementation of common assessments and common course outlines for grades 9-12.
- Evaluate current ELL program design in grades K-9.*

Staff Development

- Facilitate staff development aligned with the North Central Association school improvement process, the federal No Child Left Behind law and Michigan's Education YES! legislation.

Behavioral Initiatives

- Monitor implementation of a comprehensive, standards-based guidance and counseling program in grades K-12.
- Monitor and continue implementation of anti-drug, alcohol and tobacco initiatives at all grade levels.
- Continue communicating updated UCS safety and security procedures to staff, students, parents and community.
- Continue promoting the Success Skills program in all grades.

Parent/Community Involvement

- Continue parent, business and community involvement initiatives.

*New initiatives in the 2006-2007 school year.

UCS graduation rate remains high

Estimated data from the Michigan Department of Education indicates an average annual dropout rate of less than two percent at the district's four high schools.

The percentage of ninth graders who will graduate within four years if they remain in Utica Community Schools for their high school experience, is shown below.

Latest estimated data from the Michigan Dept. of Education

	2004	2005
UCS Dropout Rate	1.86%	.93%
Retention Rate	98.14	99.07
Graduation Rate**	92.66	96.22

** UCS students who graduate in four years. Data does not include students who remain in school and graduate at a later date.

UCS curriculum is standards-based

In Utica Community Schools, the core curriculum is based on national, state and district standards.

As indicated by the district-wide school improvement initiatives (at left), the curriculum is constantly reviewed and updated to assure that every student has the opportunity to gain the knowledge and skills necessary for success in the 21st Century workplace.

The UCS *Learning Links*, a district publication available on our website www.uticak12.org, clearly defines the learning standards UCS students can be expected to achieve in each area of study at each grade level. By reviewing the *Learning Links*, parents/guardians can track their child's progress throughout the school year

In addition, UCS curriculum and scheduling procedures are designed to ensure that every student is enrolled in core academic classes each year and remain challenged and encouraged to achieve at higher levels.

MEAP scores

All public school students in grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 11 took the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) tests during the 2005-2006 school year. MEAP is a criterion referenced test, meaning it measures a student's achievement on state-defined learning standards in each grade.

The following charts indicate the state target scores for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA - reading and writing), and the percentage of Bemis Junior High School students who met or exceeded MEAP proficiency standards.

Under the national No Child Left Behind (NCLB) law, all students, including those in the identified subgroups, must meet the target scores in order for the school to make AYP.

Schools also must meet attendance or graduation requirements and 95 percent of all students must take the MEAP tests. The scores of subgroups with fewer than 10 students were not reported by the state, but were included in the total scores for all students.

Overall MEAP Science and Social Studies scores are reported below, but are not factored into AYP.

	ELA - Gr. 7 State Target - 43		Math - Gr. 7 State Target - 43		ELA - Gr. 8 State Target - 43		Math - Gr. 8 State Target - 43	
	>95% participation Number Tested	Percent Proficient	>95% participation Number Tested	Percent Proficient	>95% participation Number Tested	Percent Proficient	>95% participation Number Tested	Percent Proficient
All Students	493	84	494	78	499	84	499	82
Males	259	81	260	78	258	79	258	83
Females	234	87	234	77	241	88	241	82
American Indian/Alaskan Native								
Asian/Pacific Islander	13	69	13	85	16	81	16	88
Black/Not of Hispanic Origin	17	76	17	41	22	59	22	59
Hispanic	<10		<10		<10		<10	
White, Not of Hispanic Origin	454	85	455	79	453	85	453	83
Multiracial	<10		<10		<10		<10	
Economically Disadvantaged	52	67	53	60	47	62	47	68
English Language Learners	<10		<10		<10		<10	
Students with Disabilities	42	40	42	33	38	32	38	26
District	2,275	81	2,285	75	2,385	81	2,398	79
State	128,074	73	128,830	60	129,000	69	129,646	63

	Science Gr. 8 Percent Proficient
All Students	90
District	89
State	77



Our points of pride *continued ...*

- Special thanks to the Sounding Board parents for volunteering their time and effort to sponsor our annual fundraiser and the Student Awards Assembly. This partnership with supportive parents earns many rewarding instructional items for our school.
- The Student Council gathered more than 9,200 items for local families as Bemis once again contributed to the Sterling Heights Kiwanis food drive. Student Council also provided \$800 to the Make a Wish Foundation through students' "Jar Wars" charity competition. Our Sucker Sale raised \$140 to donate to the American Heart Association and the "Paw Wars" charity competition collected \$100 for the Macomb Humane Society.
- Ninety-seven percent of Bemis band students participating in the Solo and Ensemble Festival earned medals. Five students qualified for the Michigan School Band and

- Orchestra Association Honors Band and three students earned scholarships to the Blue Lake music camp.
- Thirty-two Bemis students participated in the Utica Community Schools Arts Festival, with the work of six chosen for display at the UCS Administrative Service Center.
- Bemis eighth grade boys' track and eighth grade girls' volleyball teams recorded two undefeated seasons.
- The Life Skills classes have been busy with many service learning projects, including collecting more than 1,880 books for needy children; 275 pairs of glasses for the Lions Club; hand crafting 77 blankets for Project Linus; gathering 120 pounds of Halloween candy for Forgotten Harvest; crayons and children's socks for Sweet Dreamzzz Detroit; 40 Easter egg dye kits to Samaritan House; and many toys and games for both Children's Hospital of Michigan and the U.S. Marine Corps "Toys for Tots" drive.

Special Education

Utica Community Schools provides a full range of services for students in these special education categories:

- Autistic Impaired
- Hearing Impaired
- Learning Disabled
- Emotionally Impaired
- Speech and Language Impaired
- Cognitively Impaired
- Early Childhood Development Delay
- Visually Impaired
- Physically or Otherwise Health Impaired

Approximately 3,800 students are enrolled in the district's special education programs.

Placement of a student into special education programming is based on the recommendation of the Individual Educational Planning (IEP) team, which is comprised of appropriate school district staff members and the student's parents/guardians.

In general, students requiring special education are well served by district programs. However, in certain cases, a student's needs may be better met by one of the programs provided by the Macomb Intermediate School District (MISD). In the 2005-2006 school year, 264 students from the Utica Community Schools district attended MISD school sites.

Bemis Junior High's NCA school improvement goals

This year Bemis completed the fourth year of the five year continuous NCA process. The focus for the fourth year in the NCA process was evaluating and assessing the detailed goals and instructional strategies for Bemis (below). A number of student assessments, including standardized and locally developed assessments, such as department exams, were reviewed and analyzed by staff. Through this analysis and the sharing of teacher observations, a thorough reflection on the successfulness of each strategy was determined.

Goal 1: All students will improve their informational writing skills.

Teachers shared strategies that have been working well within their classrooms such as the peer revision technique called "Stars and Wishes". Stars are drawn to indicate strengths and wishes are listed to identify weaknesses or items that are missing within students' compositions. Graphic organizers that were highlighted throughout the year, and were useful to students in writing included "Get to the Point" and the "Five Point Sensory Star." Utilizing these, students used their five senses in describing their writing. In addition, student-made videos discussing the writing expectations within Bemis were shown throughout the year.

Goal 2: All students will improve their problem solving skills.

After reviewing this goal, it was decided to examine some of the graphic organizers that Bemis students use in mastering their problem solving skills. Teachers found the session on "foldables" useful, where students learn to fold paper into different configurations to categorize and organize problems. This strategy is incorporated in many classrooms, with the staff keeping track of its use and success.

Goal 3: All students will improve their informational reading skills.

Several new book selections were purchased to supplement the Bemis professional library for the reading goal. Raising Voices: Creating Youth Storytelling Groups was one title chosen after three teachers attended an Author's Book Conference which discussed how storytelling improves reading skills and promotes inventive thinking. Also, a guest speaker from the MISD was brought in to present more reading strategies that teachers would use within the classroom on one staff development day. The reading strategy "talk to the text" was found most impressive to the staff. More staff will be trained in the Reading Apprenticeship Workshops to continue literacy training next year for classroom instructional use.

We will continue to work on our goals and strategies throughout next year. This will give the staff three years of data on using the instructional strategies. We continue to tabulate the use of the reading, writing and problem solving strategies from daily classroom instruction. Our final exams and MEAP tests will be used to validate student achievement and successes on all three goals. Finally, we look forward to writing a culminating report next June for NCA accreditation. Following this five-year cycle, we will start the process again, as we continually strive to improve our instructional techniques to give our students the best opportunities for academic success.

Parent-teacher conference participation

Utica Community Schools encourages parents/guardians to take an active role in their child's education and to become involved with school activities. Participation in Parent-Teacher Conferences is one of the best ways for parents to monitor their child's academic progress. At Bemis Junior High School, the total number of fall conferences attended by parents/guardians was 3,441 in 2004 and 3,582 in 2005.



Thank you for taking time to read this Annual Report, which is also available on the UCS website, www.uticak12.org. Additional information about any part of this report may be obtained by calling the school principal.