

Mission Statement —  
In the Eppler Learning Community,  
Everyone  
Promotes the  
Practice of  
Lifelong Learning in an  
Environment of Excellence, Achievement,  
Respect and Responsibility



# Eppler Junior High

## ANNUAL REPORT 2005-2006

45461 Brownell • Utica, MI 48317 • 586.797.2900  
Principal Julie Patterson • Average Daily Attendance 94.95%

### Our school is state and nationally accredited

Eppler 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.

### 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.

#### Eppler Report Card

AYP 2005: Yes  
AYP 2006: Yes

Education YES! Grades:  
2005 - B  
2006 - A

MEAP summary on page 3

### Our points of pride

- A total of 178 Eppler students were either on the "A" Honor Roll or Academic Aces.
- More than 50 percent of Eppler students earned a Gold or Silver Card for academic achievement and/or academic improvement per quarter.
- Seventh graders Connor Hinebaugh and Sean McQuade, and eighth graders Natalie Agresta and Jonathan Nguyen, took the ACT test and received a Certificate of Recognition for Excellent Achievement from the Midwest Academic Talent Search, a program offered through Northwestern University.
- Mary Hauswirth, ninth grader, was awarded a \$600 Exploration in Engineering Scholarship to attend Michigan Technology University this summer.
- Ninth graders Kyle Ellis, Nick Kyewski, Shelby Johnson and Jessica Wiswary won the 2006 New York Festival's Courageous Persuaders Award for Most Creative Television Commercial. In addition, each student received a \$500 scholarship. The commercial, which promoted the message of saying "no" to alcohol, will be featured at the New York Festival in February, 2007.
- Poems by ninth graders Audrey Huth, Scarlet Urbin and Stefanie Younce were published in the 2006 Creative Communication Poetic Power anthology.

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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](http://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 chart indicates the state target scores for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in Mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA - reading and writing), and the percentage of Eppler 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	230	77	231	71	240	69	241	76
Males	119	69	119	72	132	61	133	78
Females	111	85	112	70	108	79	108	72
American Indian/Alaskan Native	<10		<10					
Asian/Pacific Islander	<10		<10		<10		<10	
Black/Not of Hispanic Origin	<10		<10		<10		<10	
Hispanic	<10		<10		<10		<10	
White, Not of Hispanic Origin	214	77	215	72	227	70	228	77
Multiracial								
Economically Disadvantaged	25	64	25	36	31	61	31	58
English Language Learners	<10		<10		<10		<10	
Students with Disabilities	25	48	25	28	30	23	30	33
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	Social Studies Gr. 9 Percent Proficient
All Students	88	87
District	89	86
State	77	75



## 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.

## Eppler Junior High's NCA school improvement goals

As a participant school in the North Central Association Commission on Accreditation and School Improvement, our staff has developed important school improvement goals that are specific to the needs of the students in our building. The goals, implementation strategies and assessment measures are as follows:

- **All students will improve their reasoning skills in applications across the curriculum**

At the beginning of their classes, students were given problem-solving challenges. They studied and practiced the scientific method and were taught to plan, monitor, and evaluate their own work. Teachers taught students how to use higher level thinking skills during classroom discussions and on assessment tests.

- **All students will improve their reading comprehension skills as applied across the curriculum.**

All classrooms contain posters that encourage reading and depict reading strategies: SQ3R (Survey, Question, Read, Recite, Review); KWL (What I Know, What I Want to know, What I Learned); Cornell Note-Taking strategies; and Retelling. In all seventh grade English classes, students participated in daily sustained silent reading. Teachers received professional development in reading strategies that were practiced in their classrooms.

- **All students will improve their writing skills as applied across the curriculum.**

The SURFERR (Search, Use, Relate, Formulate, Explain, Reread, Revise) Method was taught and practiced to help students write a constructed response. Students used *Inspiration* software for classroom assignments to improve their writing skills.

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## Points of pride *continued...*

- Eighth grader Natalie Agresta and seventh grader Reed Cunningham advanced to the state level Reader's Digest Word Power Challenge Vocabulary Bee.
- In April, ninth grader Aaron Picket placed tenth in Dramatic Interpretation at state Forensics competition in Ann Arbor.
- At the Solo and Ensemble competition, band students received 31 first division ratings and orchestra students received 22 first division ratings. Eppler's Orchestra and eighth and ninth grade Bands received the highest rating of "I" at the Michigan School Band and Orchestra district festival.
- Eighth grader Muneeb Ahmed won the Eppler Spelling Bee and competed at the county level.
- Thirteen students competed in the state woodworking competition.
- Eppler students participated in a number of charitable fundraisers benefiting Toys for Tots, Turning Point, Utica Lions Club Canned Food Drive, Salvation Army, Rasheed Wallace Foundation, Victims of Hurricane Katrina and Saint Jude Children's Research Hospital.

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## 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 Eppler Junior High School, the total number of fall conferences attended by parents/guardians was 1,960 in 2004 and 2,049 in 2005.

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