



Annual Report of School Year 2006-2007

Seven Indicators of Excellence identified in 2006-07

Utica Community Schools has always operated under district goals adopted by the Board of Education aimed at improving student achievement.

Our current district goal – EVERY CHILD ACHIEVES – is a simple, powerful statement that captures the reason for what we do and why we do it. It is our assurance to you that the work of every UCS employee centers on creating, improving and maintaining a high performing learning culture where every child, regardless of his or her ability, can and will achieve.

At the start of the 2006-2007 school year, the Board of Education adopted the Indicators of Excellence, which are the following seven guideposts for raising the academic bar for our students:

We believe that Every Child Achieves when...

- All children are proficient in English Language Arts, mathematics, science and social studies
- The Class of 2011 meets graduation requirements as defined by the Michigan Merit Curriculum (the state's new graduation requirements)
- Advanced Placement opportunities are expanded for all students
- The number of seventh and eighth graders who take and pass Algebra I increases
- A safe and supportive learning environment is maintained
- Parental involvement is celebrated
- Data is used to guide our decision-making

Through Vertical Teaming, UCS teachers and administrators are working together to align what is taught from one grade level to the next

To better prepare our students to achieve higher levels of proficiency in challenging course work, Vertical Teaming was implemented districtwide in 2006-2007.

Vertical Teaming brings together Utica Community Schools elementary, junior high and senior high school teachers who teach within a common core curricular area to build upon existing programming and develop effective, research-based instructional strategies that benefit all students.

Vertical Teaming is designed to close any gaps in student learning, eliminate unnecessary re-teaching year-to-year of material already learned and enable teachers and administrators to pinpoint the unique needs of the students in a particular K-12 attendance sequence.

Michigan Report Card for Beacon Tree

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) —

2005-06: N/A 2006-07: Yes

Education YES! Grades —

2005-06: NA 2006-07: A

A complete data report of MEAP achievement, AYP, teacher qualifications, attendance or graduation rates, dual enrollment, accreditation, parent-teacher conference attendance and school improvement programs is posted on the district website, www.uticak12.org.

During 2007-2008, the Vertical Team in place at Beacon Tree Elementary School will meet with Vertical Teams from other schools in our feeder pattern to work together to improve grade-to-grade instruction in the areas of English Language Arts and Social Studies.

Advanced Placement is the goal for all UCS students

Utica Community Schools has begun its campaign to encourage and expect every student to enroll in Advanced Placement (AP) courses in high school. One of the goals of vertical teaming is to better prepare students in the earlier grades by introducing more of the higher level learning concepts and thinking skills they will need for success in accelerated classes when they reach high school.

UCS launches “Indicators of Excellence — Reaching Higher,” a data driven plan to improve student achievement

To further advance student achievement toward 100 percent proficiency by 2014, as required by No Child Left Behind, and to continue exceeding state standards established by the MEAP assessments and the state's Education YES! program, the Board of Education approved in August 2007 a series of new Indicators of Excellence that will be implemented in the 2007-2008 school year.

The new Indicators are drawn from a recommendation to the Board of Education by the Accountability Advisory Committee. This was a group of district parents, employees and residents who worked together at the direction of the

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Superintendent of Schools to develop a more structured process for ensuring that UCS students continue to excel.

Progress toward reaching the new Indicators of Excellence will be measured through regular analysis of student performance data specific to each Indicator.

The Indicators of Excellence — Reaching Higher initiative is based on these three districtwide goals that set our course for the future:

- **District Goal 1 —**
By 2014 all students in the Utica Community Schools will meet or exceed proficiency standards in English language arts (reading and writing), math, science, social studies, fine arts and career and technical education, as identified by national, state and UCS standards.
- **District Goal 2 —**
The school district will implement a world-class instructional program.
- **District Goal 3 —**
Parent, business and community partnerships will be an integral part of student learning.

The plan is structured upon three “tiers,” or levels of responsibility:

- **Tier I Indicators** apply district-wide and are designed to assess whether federal, state and district requirements are being met. For example, one Indicator of Excellence stipulates that, beginning with the graduating class of 2011, all students will meet or exceed state standards and qualify for the Michigan Promise Scholarship, based on qualifying scores on the Michigan Merit Exam.
- **Tier II Indicators** will be established by all schools and departments in the 2007-2008 school year. Tier II Indicators will be school or department specific, designed as the basis for targeted improvement in support of the Indicators of Excellence.
- **Tier III Indicators** consist of a written narrative from each school outlining both what has been done to improve student achievement and the plans and challenges specific to that building.

Beacon Tree Elementary School’s Tier III narrative for 2006-2007 is as follows:

Beacon Tree Elementary had a successful 2006-07 school year. As a new elementary school, we continue to bring the students, staff and community together with a focus on student achievement, teaching practices, and development of a positive school culture. Strategies used to enhance student achievement are based on specific student needs determined by state and district assessments. Teaching practices are supported by research and driven by national, state and district standards and benchmarks. All teachers are highly qualified, work as a team and continually attend professional development opportunities.

Early intervention through the RTI (Response to Intervention) model focuses on early reading skills with small group instruction of students. Special education and general education teachers integrate technology within the curriculum and participate in co-teaching opportunities through the Begin with Me program. WEB (Wonderfully Exciting Books), a home/school reading program, and math tutoring allows students to work on specific skills. Differentiated instruction is implemented and monitored through Literacy Work Stations and Writer’s Workshop.

Beacon Tree’s “Reaching for Success” positive behavior support program rewards students for showing the success skill that is targeted for the month. Homework assistance is available through Blackboard.com, home work hotlines and an after-school Homework Club. More than 100 classroom volunteers, a partnership with the Beacon Tree parent group and many area businesses, enriches the learning environment for our students.

The Beacon Tree web site is parent-friendly and contains downloadable flyers, forms, newsletters, and links to student projects and pod casts of student projects. Additional opportunities for students include an extensive after school enrichment program, the “All A’s Breakfast,” Academically Gifted and Talented, and TASK (Training All Star Kids), a peer-to-peer support that teaches about diversity, friendship and teamwork groups.

Our School’s Points of Pride

- Beacon Tree students earned special recognition for Science and Social Studies Olympiads, chess, honors choir and a *Kaleidoscope* publication winner.
- MEAP reading scores in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 were above 94%, score of 6th grade students with disabilities increased by as much as 30% in ELA and math; more than 90 students attended the “All A Breakfast.”
- Academic achievement has been enhanced through professional development and research-based best instructional practices and strategies, support staff involved in the RTI (Response to Intervention) early intervention reading program in kindergarten and first grade, homework assistance available through Blackboard.com, homework hotlines and an after-school Homework Club, a fully equipped science lab, wireless advanced technology, video-conferencing, after school enrichment programs, the academically gifted and talented program for qualifying 4th and 6th grade students and many off-site learning experiences.
- Partnerships with our parent group, classroom volunteers and many area businesses contribute to an enriched learning environment for our students. The Beacon Tree Volunteers provide special activities for our students and purchase additional educational supplies and equipment. Communication with the community is supported through the Beacon Tree Web site with downloadable flyers, forms and newsletters and Pod casts of student projects and photo sheets available to parents.