

Every Child
Achieves



BEMIS Junior High School

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Joyce Spade, Principal



Bemis JHS is a
Michigan Blue Ribbon
Exemplary School

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 Bemis JHS

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) —
2005-06: Yes 2006-07: Yes

Education YES! Grades —
2005-06: A 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 Bemis Junior High 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 Mathematics.

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.

Bemis Junior High School’s Tier III narrative for 2006-2007 is as follows:

Bemis Jr. High’s 2006-2007 school year centered on the highly successful completion of the NCA accreditation process, students attaining high scores on MEAP tests, many individual and teams of students’ successes, and exciting new directions in professional development. Parents and staff have worked hand in hand to ensure the best for Bemis students’ success, and the dedicated professional staff continue to earn our exemplary school status as a national and state Blue Ribbon School.

In April of 2007, the Bemis staff proudly presented the final report for NCA accreditation. This reflected five years of work centered upon school improvement with specific goals to improve all students’ informational reading and writing and problem solving skills. The instructional strategies selected, taught and practiced were based upon a school wide commitment to their application in every classroom for four years. The data collected showed growth in student achievement in all goal areas.

Academically our successes are also reflected in our continuing grade of “A” and meeting AYP on the Michigan School Report Card. Other data that presents academic success is summarized from this year’s MEAP Test results. We are proud of the high proficiency levels which Bemis students achieved, and we are committed to work on the goal towards 100% proficiency.

Plans are set to double the number of both seventh and eighth grade advanced math classes, and we are scheduling the planned reading recovery/literacy and low track math classes to support student opportunities and achievement in the future. With the completion of the NCA accreditation process, school improvement will focus now on the data-driven decision making model. Guided by the curriculum frameworks, staff will monitor student progress. These plans, along with the staff’s excitement about continued professional development in “Differentiated Instruction” and the “Reading Apprenticeship Program,” will all contribute to improve student success and achievement levels in the future at Bemis Jr. High.

Our School’s Points of Pride

- Honor Roll Students (all A’s or A average) number 174; Gold Card Students (B average and higher) number 503.
- Bemis Drafting and Wood students continued to win 1st place honors in both the regional and state MITES competition.
- One hundred percent of Bemis Band students participating in the Solo and Ensemble Festival earned medals and six Bemis students qualified for the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association Honors Band.
- The Life Skills classes completed a variety of service learning projects. These included: donating books for disadvantaged children; sending glasses to Lions Club; handcrafting blankets for Project Linus; and supporting Forgotten Harvest, Samaritan House, Toys-For-Tots and Children’s Hospital.
- The Student Council canned food drive gathered close to 8,000 cans for local families as Bemis once again contributed to the Sterling Heights Kiwanis Club.
- Special Thanks to the Sounding Board parents for volunteering their time and effort.