



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 Davis JHS

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) —
2005-06: No 2006-07: Yes

Education YES! Grades —
2005-06: B 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 Davis 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 Science.

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.

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

Achievement

Prior to MEAP testing, we used review materials designed to reacquaint students with material forgotten over the summer. This helped our 8th graders improve Math proficiency from 73% to 87%. We had significant growth in our disabilities subgroup: ELA increased 15%, Math by 14%, and Science by 5%. We attribute gains to the expansion of co-taught classes and better support for student accommodations during the MEAP tests.

Data Driven Decision Making

We are using data beyond teacher recommendation to schedule students. We rely on MEAP scores, teacher

recommendation, grades and parent request for identifying students eligible for accelerated courses (Project Math, SAGE, Accelerated 9th grade English) and courses which address weaknesses (Literacy Recovery, Algebraic Thinking).

Davis has begun using *Study Island*, a web-based program utilizing Michigan curriculum standards and MEAP-style practice activities. This provides more meaningful assessments to better meet student needs. It allows students to practice MEAP test taking skills at grade level from home.

Staff Development

Twenty-eight (80% core course teachers) of our staff members have completed Reading Apprenticeship training.

Vertical teams have been developed for ELA and Science. The vertical teaming activities have already begun between our 7th grade ELA teachers and our feeder schools. Davis has identified a teacher representative to participate in Data Team training.

Community Involvement

We have substantially increased parent involvement in the planning, preparation and supervision of student activities. Parent volunteers were solicited at Open House and from that response we created a Parent Volunteer list. Parents now assume primary responsibility for our 7th grade Tailgating Party, the Freshman Farewell and the Freshman Formal.

Positive Environment

The Davis staff participated in a full day in-service activity presented by the *Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion*. This raised staff awareness about the forces alienating some students and has fostered discussions about how to address these forces.

We implemented a unified approach to bullying using a matrix of offenses and consequences. Offenders receive counseling support as well as discipline.

Our School’s Points of Pride

- Our MEAP scores in math for all grades increased by 14% over the previous year.
- After bringing home 10 medals in regional competition, the Science Olympiad team competed in the State finals.
- The Davis band earned a Division One rating in the Michigan School Band and Orchestra (MSBOA) competition and individual students won 48 Division One or Two medals in Solo and Ensemble in MSBOA competition.
- One hundred students, parents and staff traveled to Boston to see historical and cultural sites.
- The freshman volleyball team won the UCS Frank Vel Tournament for the 4th consecutive year.
- The freshman basketball team won the UCS Swinehart Tournament and compiled a 15-2 record.