

Every Child
Achieves



EPPLER Junior High School

45461 Brownell, Utica, MI 48317

586.797.2900

Steven Pfannes, Principal

Julie Patterson, 2006-07 Principal

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 Eppler JHS

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

Education YES! Grades —
2005-06: A 2006-07: B

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 Eppler 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.

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

continued...

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.

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

Eppler Junior High was focused on improving academic achievement in the 2006-2007 school year. Many initiatives were implemented to improve student achievement in all of the core areas.

For example, all classes begin with “Bell work/quick write” that involve higher level thinking and writing. 7th grade students have silent reading for ten minutes each day and all students had a “reading minute” each time they entered the library to select a book. 7th and 8th grade academically at risk students participated in an after school writing/study skills

workshop. 80% of 7th graders and 50% of 8th graders who attended improved their over all classroom grades.

To encourage students to become more organized counselors established a “Student Planner Prize Patrol” to encourage students to use their Student Planner. Teachers reported an increased use of student planners and thus better success in their classes.

Our school purchased a web-based program, Study Island, which can be used by teachers in their classrooms and by students in their homes. This resource enables students to improve their knowledge of English, math, science and social studies content. Combined, these initiatives have provided great results.

English Language Arts scores on the MEAP improved by 1% for 7th graders and 6% for 8th graders. The Social Studies MEAP scores showed a 2% improvement over last year. 8th grade Special Education students showed significant gains in every area (6% ELA, 16% Writing, 17% Math, 27% Reading). While we are proud of this growth, the staff at Eppler will analyze the data to discover ways to improve student achievement even more.

For the future, exploring literacy classes and algebraic thinking classes are being offered to provide support in reading and math. 46% of the staff has been trained in incorporating reading strategies in all classes with a goal of 100% trained by the end of next year. Increased academic rigor will be stressed in all classes and more students will be placed in pre-A.P. classes.

Our School’s Points of Pride

- More than 55 percent of Eppler students earned a Gold or Silver Card for academic achievement and/or academic improvement per quarter.
- Eppler Media Center Specialist, Mrs. Lori Wetzel, was named the UCS Junior High Outstanding Teacher of the Year.
- Eppler’s eighth grade SAGE history class, instructed by Mr. Brain Cecil, won the annual UCS Celebration of the Books competition.
- Eppler’s Orchestra and Concert Band both received straight First Division ratings, the highest rating, at the District 16 Michigan School Band and Orchestra Festival in March. In addition, five Eppler students; Janine Baranski, Jean-Francois Henry, Lisa Latouf, Jenna Seib, and Paul Smith, were selected to the MSBOA District 16 Junior High Honors Band.
- Eleven Eppler students 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. Janine Baranski, Linda Camaj, Elizabetha Crkovski, Maxwell Geisendorfer, Connor Hinebaugh, Michell Kim, Kelley Langlois, Sean McQuade, Austin Meyer, Anthony Peddle, and Katrina Suchoski all received this honor.