

Every Child
Achieves



GRAEBNER Elementary School

41875 Saal Road, Sterling Heights, MI 48313

586.797.5000

Linda Schneider-Rediske, Principal



Graebner Elem. 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 Graebner Elementary

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 Graebner 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 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

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.

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

Graebner Elementary School provides an environment that is academically challenging and student centered. As we examine the achievements and challenges of our building, via data driven information, our instructional practices are adjusted to meet the needs of our grade levels, classrooms and individual students.

Academic achievement is the focus of all of our instructional endeavors. The number one goal is that all of our students will meet or exceed proficiency standards in the core areas that are identified at National, State and District levels. Instructional research-based strategies are implemented to impact improvement in learning. Graebner

has incorporated the Writer’s Workshop at all grade levels, including a monthly calendar that specifies a consistent curriculum and assessment tools. Guided reading is a daily part of the language arts program. Informational reading is stressed and literacy work stations have been used to provide student practice. An intense program has also been established to address those students in the lower grades who need more direct support as they develop literacy skills which are crucial to understanding in all subject areas.

Using data from the MEAP scores and significant performance assessments, the teachers discuss and develop lessons that address those concepts which need strengthening. Math lessons include reading skills and provide opportunities to synthesize information. Students are encouraged to engage in dialogue, which allows for questioning, hypothesizing and creating new ideas. Hands-on science lessons, social studies research, art projects and music and physical education participation are also influential to student success.

We want our students to be prepared to contribute to our increasingly diverse world. Graebner has adopted Quantum Learning, a positive behavior plan that relates directly to academic success. Both staff and students worked with national experts to learn about this program and its valuable impact to our learning environment. We also recognize the tremendous support of our parent-teacher organization and our volunteers who provide time, energy and expertise for the benefit of our students. Together, as a community of learners dedicated to improving student achievement, we can do great things for the children.

Our School’s Points of Pride

- The staff at Graebner is dedicated to providing an environment that positively influences the learning of all children. We are focused on delivering instruction that addresses the strengths of the individual child and challenge all students to do their best.
- The robust instructional plans encourage student creativity, thoughtful dialogue and opportunities for academic growth. Using performance data, strategies and activities are designed to meet the unique needs of our students at all levels of learning.
- Two new instructional efforts provide extra support for our students. A “School Within A School” plan offers an opportunity for specific lower elementary children to receive targeted instruction in language arts. This program supports the curriculum in the general education classroom and gives the student the boost needed to become successful readers. A tutoring program, developed by a dedicated group of teachers who volunteer their services at an off site location, provides additional opportunities for assistance with homework and learning activities.
- The Graebner Parent Teacher Organization is an outstanding group of parents who contribute their time, energy and fund raising efforts to our building so that we might have the many special activities that are such an integral part of the school. Our students benefit 100% from their dedicated services.