

Every Child
Achieves



SCHWARZKOFF Elementary School

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Michael Hardy, Principal



Schwarzkoﬀ 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 Schwarzkoﬀ

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 Schwarzkoﬀ 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 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.

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

The 2006–2007 school year was a success in many respects for Schwarzkoﬀ Elementary. Our school was recognized by the Michigan Department of Education as a Blue Ribbon Exemplary School. This honor validates the excellent quality of programming and education we offer our students. Schwarzkoﬀ made A.Y. P. (Adequate Yearly Progress) and received an Education Yes! Grade of A. Our learning community also celebrated 40 Years of Educational Excellence.

Reading – Research has shown the earlier the intervention, the greater the chance students have of developing early literacy skills. In 2006–2007, Schwarzkoﬀ established a Response to Intervention (RTI) program for our first graders. Students were assessed using Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and at-risk students were placed in an intensive reading program to meet their individual needs. Their progress was monitored throughout the school year. Our 2007–2008 kindergarten students were assessed in the spring using Michigan Literacy Progress Profile (MLPP). We identified the lowest group of our new kindergarten students and they will participate in the RTI program this fall. The RTI intervention program will be expanding next year to help our at-risk kindergarten through second grade students.

Writing – Our teachers came to the consensus that writing scores needed to improve and set up monthly assessments using a 6-point rubric to evaluate the strengths and obstacles of each student in their classrooms. We will continue to use the data from this process to drive instruction for the upcoming school year. Writing across the curriculum continues to be an area of need. We will be focusing on the following writing areas: persuasive, informational and cause and effect in all subject areas.

Math – Schwarzkoﬀ teachers differentiated their classroom instruction in math to meet the needs of their students. Math tutors also helped meet the needs of students with low performance in mathematics. Students worked in small groups with our paraprofessionals for about 30 – 45 minutes a week.

Our teachers have made extensive use of data this year and have created a “data wall” to help drive instruction which leads to improved student achievement.

Our School’s Points of Pride

- Michigan Blue Ribbon Exemplary School
- 40 Years of Educational Excellence
- Walmart Teacher of the Year – Art Teacher John Post
- Schwarzkoﬀ Website
- Schwarzkoﬀ Health Team member Lisa Dimpleby won the Giraffe Award from St. Joseph Mercy Hospital of Macomb
- Schwarzkoﬀ Volunteer Group