



Annual Report of School Year 2007-2008

Reaching Higher — Indicators of Excellence successfully launched in 2007-2008 to increase student achievement

It is our expectation in Utica Community Schools that every student will achieve academically to his/her potential and prepare for and pursue some level of higher education or career training following high school graduation.

Utica Community Schools is also required to meet by 2014 the federal No Child Left Behind requirement that 100 percent of our students and student subgroups achieve proficiency on the state MEAP assessments in grades 3 - 9 and the Michigan Merit Exam in high school. In addition, each of our 40 schools is required to annually achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) based on the state standards.

To meet these expectations, *Reaching Higher — Indicators of Excellence*, a data-driven school improvement initiative, was launched in 2007-2008 in Utica Community Schools. It is our guide for increasing student achievement in all academic areas by means of a series of clear, measurable Indicators that are to be met within a specified time.

Reaching Higher is based on three district-wide goals:

- **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.

Stemming from the district goals are three tiers of Indicators — I, II and III — that define how and when the established student achievement targets will be met:

- **Tier I Indicators** — These are the district-wide *Indicators of Excellence* (seven at the elementary level and eight each at the junior and senior high levels - 30 total) designed to assess whether federal, state and district academic requirements are being met within a given time frame.

Michigan Report Card for Beacon Tree Elementary

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) —

2006-07: Yes 2007-2008: Yes

Education YES! Grade —

2006-07: A 2007-2008: A

All UCS schools are accredited by the Michigan Department of Education. In addition, the four UCS high schools are accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (NCA).

A building report of student achievement on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) is available on-line at www.uticak12.org. Under the Information heading, click on MEAP/MME scores to find our school. The on-line report also includes information on teacher qualifications, parent-teacher conference attendance and the district retention rate.

- **Tier II Indicators** — These are school-based indicators established during the 2007-2008 school year by each UCS school. Tier II Indicators are specific to the student needs in that building and designed as the basis for targeted improvement in support of the *Indicators of Excellence*. The Tier II Indicators are supported by SMART goals (specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and timely) for each grade level established by the building staff.
- **Tier III Indicators** — These are the schools' narrative reports on their progress in 2007-2008 toward meeting their Tier II Indicator(s). Our school's Tier II and Tier III Indicators are printed on the back of this page.

The district's Tier I Indicators for its 29 elementary schools are as follows:

Indicator 1.1: All students in kindergarten through second grade will meet or exceed district benchmarks.

Indicator 1.2: All students in third through sixth grades will meet or exceed standards and be identified as proficient on the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) tests in reading, writing, math, science and social studies.

Indicator 1.3: Third through sixth graders who receive special education services will show specified growth on the MI-Access test in reading, writing and mathematics.

Indicator 1.4: Third through sixth graders who are part of the district's English Language Learners (ELL) program will show specified growth on the English Language Proficiency Assessment in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

Indicator 1.5: All students in second through sixth grade will demonstrate proficiency on the district writing test in the areas of persuasive, informative and cause/effect writing.

Indicator 1.6: All students in kindergarten through sixth grade will demonstrate proficiency on the district math test.

Indicator 1.7: All students in third through sixth grade will demonstrate proficiency on the district science and social studies tests.

Beacon Tree Elementary School's Tier II Indicators:

Increase the number of kindergarten and first grade students who score at Level 3 or 4 on the district-wide 4-point writing rubric.

Increase the number of second through sixth grade students who score at Level 4, 5 or 6 on the district-wide 6-point writing rubric.

Beacon Tree Elementary School's Tier III Indicator:

Beacon Tree had a successful 2007-08 school year. Data team training has assisted teachers in analyzing data and aligning strategies to improve student achievement. Fall 2007 (Michigan Educational Assessment Program) MEAP writing scores increased at all grade levels as follows:

Writing	Fall '05	Fall '06	Fall '07
Grade 3	71 %	74 %	80 %
Grade 4	62%	62%	69%
Grade 5	66%	59%	79%
Grade 6	78%	84%	88%

Fall 2007 MEAP data was reviewed using school-developed graphs, cohort data, Golden Package and MI Tracker reports (digitally stored MEAP data) to assist with curriculum delivery effectiveness.

Teachers reviewed MEAP reports, including classroom item analysis, grade level item analysis and individual student reports, to support instruction.

In addition to implementing Writer's Workshop for their students 30 – 40 minutes each day, Beacon Tree teachers administered quarterly benchmark assessments. Teachers met with their grade level data teams, collaborated on scoring the assessments and planned instruction based on student strengths and needs.

During several staff meetings, teachers presented their favorite writing lessons on the 6 + 1 Traits of Writing to the remainder of the staff. In addition, the literacy consultant hosted lunch meetings for teachers to view and discuss videos on the 6 + 1 Traits of Writing.

The staff participated in sharing lessons highlighting Marzano's Big 9 (nine instructional strategies most likely to improve student achievement), resulting in each teacher amassing large binders full of lesson ideas to use to implement each instructional strategy.

Teachers met with the principal in grade-level data teams to analyze MEAP results using the two software programs Golden Package and MI Tracker.

Teachers were provided Golden Package data binders, curriculum and writing binders for data team discussions. Vocabulary lists and areas of weakness identified in the

Golden Package were discussed and provided to all grade levels to improve vertical teaming.

MEAP *Close to Proficient* and *Barely Passing* writing lists were utilized by grade-level teams to assist in planning intervention strategies.

Kindergarten and first grade Response to Intervention (RtI) groups were formed. Small group instruction is provided three times each week by the special education teaching team and literacy consultant. The team uses quarterly Dynamic Indicators of Basic Elementary Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessments to determine student eligibility and plan instruction.

Our School's Points of Pride

- Beacon Tree students improved their MEAP writing scores at all grade levels and scores were above the state and district in all subject areas. More than 100 students attended the "All-A Breakfast," a 12 percent increase over last year.
- Beacon Tree students earned special recognition in Science and Social Studies Olympiads, chess and honors choir. We had a Kaleidoscope publication winner and a team of teachers received a MI Champions grant for educational technology integration.
- Horizontal and vertical data teaming between grade levels provided a common language and increased alignment of the curriculum. Academic achievement has been enhanced through quality professional development; data teams; research-based best instructional practices and strategies; support staff involved in the RtI (Response to Intervention) early intervention reading program in kindergarten and first grade; "Begin with Me," a co-taught support for the writing process; "World of Motion" engineering collaborations with General Motors; homework assistance available through Blackboard.com; homework hotlines and an after school Homework Club; a fully equipped science lab; wireless advanced technology; video-conferencing; after-school enrichment programs; the academically talented and gifted (ATG) program for qualifying fourth through sixth grade students and numerous off-site learning experiences.
- Partnerships with our parent group, classroom volunteers and many area businesses contribute to an enriched learning environment for our students. We thank the Beacon Tree Volunteers for providing special activities for our students and for purchasing additional educational supplies and equipment. Communication with the community is supported through the Beacon Tree web site with downloadable flyers, forms and newsletters, Pod casts of student projects and photo sheets available to parents.
- Beacon Tree students have the opportunity to participate in a variety of learning experiences beyond the classroom: "Reaching for Success," a positive behavior support program that rewards students for showing the success skill targeted for the month; and curriculum enrichment opportunities such as Science Olympiad, Mathematics Olympiad, Social Studies Olympiad, Chess Club, Destination Imagination, Honors Choir, band and orchestra, talent show, student council, service squad, safety patrol, O Ambassadors and other community outreach programs that support charitable organizations.