

Every Child
Achieves



BEMIS Junior High School

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Joyce Spade, Principal



Bemis is a
Michigan Blue Ribbon
Exemplary School

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.
- **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

Michigan Report Card for Bemis JHS

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.

(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 seven junior high schools are as follows:

Indicator 1.8: All junior high students will meet or exceed standards and be identified as proficient on the MEAP tests in reading, writing, math, science and social studies.

Indicator 1.9: Seventh and eighth graders who receive special education services will show specified growth on the MI-Access test in reading, writing and mathematics.

Indicator 1.10: Seventh through ninth graders who receive English Language Learners (ELL) services will show specified growth on the English Language Proficiency Assessment.

Indicator 1.11: All ninth graders will take the Pre-ACT test that will be used as a predictor of success for college-level work on the required ACT test.

Indicator 1.12: All seventh through ninth graders will demonstrate proficiency on the district writing test.

Indicator 1.13: All seventh through ninth graders will demonstrate proficiency on the district math, science and social studies tests.

Indicator 1.14: The number of seventh and eighth graders who take and pass Algebra I will increase annually.

Indicator 1.15: All secondary students enrolled in performance-based fine arts courses will present their work to a public audience.

Bemis Junior High School's Tier II Indicator(s):

Increase the number of students in grades seventh and eighth who score a proficiency level of 1 or 2 on the Writing portion of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program by increasing the "writing process" scores.

Tier II SMART Goals:

The percentage of Bemis seventh graders who achieve a proficiency level of a 1 or 2 on the Writing portion of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) will increase from 82% to 88% by the fall of 2008, as measured by the fall 2008 MEAP test.

The percentage of Bemis seventh graders who achieve a proficiency level of a 1 or 2 on the Writing portion of the MEAP will increase from 81% to 87% by fall 2008, as measured by the fall 2008 MEAP.

Bemis Junior High School's Tier III Indicator:

Bemis Junior High's 2007-2008 goals centered upon a comprehensive approach to instruction to succeed with our Tier II indicator in the area of student writing. Our aim is to improve students' writing proficiency, as measured by MEAP proficiency scores and by progress monitoring from students' completion of 30 writing samples.

We are pleased to report that our Tier II Smart Goals are progressing well, as measured by the 2007 MEAP scores. Bemis seventh graders improved in MEAP Writing from 82% to 84% proficiency, and eighth graders improved in MEAP Writing from 81% to 84% proficiency.

Our challenge is to meet our goal of attaining 87% proficiency in writing on the 2008 MEAP. We plan to meet that challenge by continuing our instructional focus of scheduled writing practices.

Our Tier II strategies also included all departments creating a common writing rubric (standard scoring tool) focusing on the specific areas: writing with details to develop content; organization or connections; and conventions of writing that affect meaning. The focus of our writing practices, done five times in each class throughout this school year, has shown improvement in student writing overall.

A sample of our progress from this year's data notes that the 152 students with Mrs. Forsyth earned an average of 3.13 on writing sample #1 last fall, and they are now achieving a rubric writing proficiency score averaging 4.77 in March, 2008.

One challenge area we see from our data is the need to improve the writing skills of special education students and other at risk students. We plan to work on the district's Tier I goal of more students meeting and exceeding proficiency standards on the MEAP tests by continuing with a common building writing rubric next year. Plans also include district-wide formats for writing instruction, which will be incorporated into future professional development sessions.

Bemis staff members also completed training this year in the process of Data Driven Decision Making. Also, all staff have now completed the Reading Apprenticeship training. As highly committed professionals, we will incorporate district initiatives to meet the challenges of the future.

Bemis Junior High School students are progressing nicely toward the district's system-wide Indicators of Excellence and our own building's Tier II goals.

Our efforts to "Reach Higher" will always be important and key to improving our students' achievement. We are very proud that our academic successes continue to be reflected in our "A" grades on the Michigan School Report Card and by attaining Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

Our School's Points of Pride

- Honor Roll students (all-A or A average) number 239; Gold Card Students (B average and higher) number 528; 301 students earned the President's Education Award (3.5 GPA or higher).
- Every Bemis band student participating in the Solo and Ensemble Festival earned a medal and four students qualified for the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association Honors Band.
- Both Destination Imagination teams advanced from regional to state competition
- Our Social Studies Olympiad team represented Bemis well with seven students bringing home third place honors and one student receiving honorable mention.
- Bemis had 18 students qualify for ninth grade placement at the Utica Mathematics, Science and Technology Center; 10 qualified for the International Baccalaureate program; and 13 qualified for the Center for Science and Industry program all for the 2008-2009 school year.
- Bemis drafting and woods students continued our winning tradition in both the regional and state MITES (Michigan Industrial and Technology Education) competition for the 26th consecutive year. Twenty-three projects advanced in state level where 22 students earned 1st, 2nd and 3rd place honors. Two Bemis students won top state awards: Grand Division Award for Best Architectural Drawing and Best Engineering Drawing.
- The Student Council's canned food drive gathered close to 10,000 food items for local families as Bemis once again contributed to the Sterling Heights Kiwanis Club
- Bemis "Jar Wars" raised \$350 for the Make-A-Wish Foundation; and our "Paw Wars" collected \$100 to benefit the Macomb County Humane Society.
- Special thanks to the Sounding Board parents for volunteering their time and effort to sponsor our annual fundraiser and the Student Awards Assembly.
- The Life Skills classes completed many service learning projects: donating books for disadvantaged children, sending glasses to the Lions Club, handcrafting blankets for Project Linus, gathering Halloween candy for Forgotten Harvest, collecting crayons and children's socks for Sweet Dreamzzz of Detroit, providing Easter egg dye kits to Samaritan House; donating toys and games to Children's Hospital of Michigan for patient therapy.
- The eighth grade yearbook class earned the Partnership in Excellence Award for meeting all deadlines and produced a monthly newspaper, news program and video yearbook.
- The eighth grade team created holiday cards and sent personal care products and treats to U.S. soldiers in Iraq.
- Many students participated in the UCS Arts Festival with one student receiving the Best in Show Award.
- Bemis art students participated in the Peace poster contest. Two students placed first and second.