



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

Michigan Report Card for Eppler JHS

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) —
2006-07: **Yes** 2007-2008: **Yes**

Education YES! Grade —
2006-07: **B** 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.

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 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.

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

Targeted Goal 1 (Writing): The percentage of seventh and eighth grade students scoring at proficiency or higher in writing will increase by 5% by the end of the 2007-2008 school year as measured by the October 2008 MEAP.

Challenge Goal: Increase proficiency in writing by 10%.

Targeted Goal 2 (Reading): The percentage of seventh and eighth grade students scoring at proficiency or higher in reading will increase by 3% by the end of the 2007-2008 school year as measured by the October 2008 MEAP.

Challenge Goal: Increase proficiency in reading by 6%.

Targeted Goal 3 (Mathematics): The percentage of seventh and eighth grade students scoring at proficiency or higher in math will increase by 5% by the end of the 2007-2008 school year as measured by the October 2008 MEAP.

Challenge Goal: Increase proficiency in math by 10%.

Eppler Junior High School's Tier III Indicator:

At the beginning of the school year, the Eppler staff analyzed data relevant to the district's Tier I indicators to identify areas to focus on for improvement. The staff identified three areas on which to concentrate while still improving in all areas.

Reading: To improve the reading scores of our students, 100% of our teachers have been trained in Reading Apprenticeship (RA) and are using RA strategies. Students in need of more intensive interventions were placed in the Exploring Literacy program. Most of these students improved their reading scores through this course.

Writing: To improve writing scores, a core group of teachers were trained in Strategic Writing Instruction for Teachers. They have been working with the rest of the staff to share the information. Each department developed a 6-point rubric based on the MEAP writing rubric for students to follow when writing for their classes. Every teacher (core and elective subjects) assigns a writing assignment using this rubric at least four times a year. The data from these assignments are being collected and analyzed to determine the need for further intervention.

Math: All of the teachers report using math concepts across the curriculum. Students that were struggling with math were given support through a class called Algebraic

Thinking. All students were provided with after-school tutoring opportunities.

Support for all three subject areas: Teachers from Eppler have teamed (Vertical Teaming) with elementary and high school teachers to provide K-12 support for our students. Eppler is building a network of peer support by increasing the number of after school activities available for students from four clubs to twelve clubs. These clubs help make connections between staff and students and give students opportunities to apply their learning in real world settings.

Future: The Eppler staff wants all students to achieve their maximum potential. Staff will be trained in Response to Intervention (RtI) and Universal Design for Learning (UDL). RtI will help us identify proper interventions for all students to reach their maximum potential. UDL will help in this process by reducing barriers to learning. In addition, more accelerated classes are being added across the curriculum.

Our School's Points of Pride

- Our eighth grade environmental science students participated in an International Global Warming Study with students from England, China and Japan. They were also recognized by the City of Utica for planting trees as part of a project to improve the local environment.
- The City of Utica also recognized our social studies students for staging the Heritage Tour. Students learned local history and presented it to the community portrayed themselves as the first settlers to the area.
- The Lego Lightning, Eppler's Lego Robotics Team qualified for the state finals last year in their first year of competition.
- At the Michigan Industrial and Technology Education Society (MITES) regional competition, Eppler students captured eight first place and eight second place medals for woodshop projects ranging from pens to guitars to clocks. At the state MITES competition, we took the second, third and fifth place trophies.
- Our concert band received straight first division ratings at Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association (MSBOA) Festival and qualified for state competition. Our jazz band's performance at the state MSBOA finals earned them an invitation to perform at the Detroit Jazz Festival. Our orchestra, concert and jazz bands all won first place at the Chicago Music in the Parks Festival and Competition.
- Student Adam Bonner's artwork was featured in the Porsche News. Eppler art program students brought home ten ribbons from the Utica Community Schools districtwide art competition.
- The Builders Club, Student Council and STAND student groups donated time and money to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, Glen Peters School, St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital, Turning Point, Toys for Tots, Macomb Count's Shelter for Battered Women, Muscular Dystrophy, and the Haldeman Hope Dinner.
- More than 60 percent of our students earned Silver or Gold cards for high academic achievement!