



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 (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.

Michigan Report Card for Utica High School

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) —
2006-07: No 2007-2008: Yes

Education YES! Grade —
2006-07: B 2007-2008: B

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 Merit Exam (MME) is available on-line. Go to www.uticak12.org and, under the Information heading, click on MEAP/MME scores to find our school. The report also includes information on teacher qualifications, parent-teacher conference attendance and the district retention rate.

The district's Tier I Indicators for its four senior high schools are as follows:

Indicator 1.16: Beginning with the graduating class of 2011, all students will meet or exceed state standards and qualify for the Michigan Promise Scholarship, based upon qualifying scores on the Michigan Merit Exam.

Indicator 1.17: By 2014, the number of students earning college credit or transferable certificates of completion will increase to 100 percent in all Career and Technical Education classes.

Indicator 1.18: Eleventh graders who receive special education services will show specified growth on the MI-Access test in reading, writing and mathematics.

Indicator 1.19: Tenth through twelfth graders receiving English Language Learners (ELL) services will show growth in reading, writing, speaking and listening as measured by the English Language Proficiency Assessment.

Indicator 1.20: The number of eleventh graders selected to take the PSAT/NMSQT tests will increase, resulting in more students qualifying for National Merit recognition.

Indicator 1.21: Beginning in the fall of 2007, the number of students enrolled in Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate courses who take AP or IB exams and achieve a score of three or better will increase annually.

Indicator 1.22: All tenth and eleventh graders will be proficient and on track to meet state graduation

requirements as measured by the district reading, writing, math, science and social studies tests.

Indicator 1.23: Every twelfth grader will submit an application for post-secondary education through a monitored acceptance process.

Utica High School's Tier II Indicator:

The English Language Arts (ELA) writing score for 11th grade students will increase by 10% as measured by the Michigan Merit Exam administered in March 2008.

SMART Goals:

- During the course of the school year, all staff engaged students in monthly writing activities to practice different components of the five paragraph essay. Samples of student writing and writing prompts were compiled in a department resource binder.
- During the first semester of 2007-2008, all teachers required students to participated in writing in all subject areas, following a predetermined schedule.

Utica High School's Tier III Indicator:

The 2007-2008 school year was an "implementation year." Careful planning and re-structuring gave way to new Advanced Placement (AP) course offerings. Students who had never considered taking an AP course were encouraged to pursue this challenging academic curriculum. To assist with this endeavor, recent UHS graduates returned to discuss the benefits of taking an AP course. As a result, AP course offerings doubled this year with 93% of our students receiving grades of A, B or C the first semester. The forecast for 2008-2009 is promising; students are requesting the same number of AP courses next year.

UHS staff focused on our Tier II writing goal. Test data were analyzed and the teams focused on specific skills to improve student writing. Teacher representatives from each department participated in training by the English teachers demonstrating best practice strategies in teaching the components of the five paragraph essay. Teachers learned writing prompts for use within their subject area, reviewed samples of good writing and discussed how teachers and students can use the rubric to evaluate their writing.

To support the writing goal, 11th graders took an ACT writing practice test from the Princeton Review. In addition, Learning Express writing software was utilized by social studies teachers to provide students with an immediate response regarding their skill level and recommended areas in need of improvement. Outlines for a five paragraph essay and a technical/scientific paper can be referenced in our student planner. We plan to continue to incorporate writing strategies in all subject areas and identify courses in which formal writing should be integrated. Teachers representing each department received training in August 2008 and will be instrumental in providing leadership and direction concerning the writing initiative within their departments.

Teachers embraced a new district initiative, Collaborative Data Teams (CDT). They received training in instructional strategies, comparing student performance, measuring/monitoring student progress and developing an intervention plan when needed. Professional development days were used for CDT meetings. In addition, monthly meetings were held with CDT members to participate in the process. Subject area data teams were created within each department and district teams were also formed.

In 2007-2008, our instructional staff completed the Reading Apprenticeship (RA) training. All teachers, including elective and special services teachers, acquired RA skills to assist their students in analyzing reading content in all curricular areas.

A collaborative partnership has been established between UHS teachers and professors in the same content area within the Department of Education at Oakland University to share information regarding the skills high school graduates must possess in order to be successful in their post-secondary studies. The OU professors shared their course outlines and projects and conducted workshops with high school students in order to expose them to the rigorous curriculum and work load expected at the college level.

The state's new MME assessment, along with the more rigorous high school graduation requirements, have prompted teachers to commit countless hours toward updating the curriculum in all areas:

- English teachers worked during the summer with Macomb Intermediate School District (MISD) consultants to pilot the new English 10 curriculum at UHS.
- UCS staff, MISD consultants and state officials have worked together to ensure the class of 2011 meets the new graduation requirements. For example, teachers learned new instructional techniques for teaching Algebra I.
- In addition to the district's ACT/MME test-prep plan, the Princeton Review and Learning Express provided UHS students additional support and resources in preparing for the state exams.

Plans for 2008-2009 include a bi-weekly schedule for CDT meetings, extending our collaborative efforts to include site visits within the district to highlight best practices and finalizing plans to expand our instructional program by utilizing our Electronic Collaborative Classroom (ECC) to connect with classrooms around the world. Offering rigorous coursework, coupled with creating forums for students to communicate with people in other countries and learn of other cultures, will prepare them to compete globally.

Our School's Points of Pride

- Utica High School had two finalists in the 2008 National Merit Scholarship Competition.
- In 2008, UHS had the highest graduation rate in Macomb County.
- The Utica High Student Council was awarded the Michigan Association of Student Council's Award of Excellence and Star Award in 2008.
- Utica High School's 2007 Michigan Merit Exam Social Studies score of 90% was the highest in UCS and the second highest of all Macomb County high schools.
- Our *Arrow* newspaper was nominated for a National Scholastic Press Association Pacemaker Award, ranking it one of the nation's top 50 high school newspapers. At the National Scholastic Press Association competition in Philadelphia, the *Arrow* won sixth place in the Best of Show category; our Warrior yearbook won fifth place.
- UHS Debate Team was recognized by *Detroit Free Press*. At the 2007 Utica Novice Debate League competition of Oakland and Macomb county teams, Utica High School tied for first place with Ortonville Brandon.