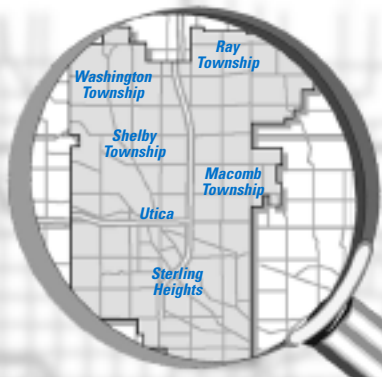


# FOCUS for the community



A Publication for the Residents of Utica Community Schools

**From the Superintendent...**



by Christine M. Johns, Ed.D.

**High school graduation not the end, but the beginning of a world of opportunity**

The start of our 2007-2008 school year was an outstanding one for our nearly 30,000 students. They are actively engaged in their learning, supported by both teachers and their parents.

And a great start in school is more critical than ever. Kindergarten through 12th grade represents the beginning and middle of a child's education, but it should never be considered the end. High school graduation is not the completion of the educational experience; rather, it represents the beginning of post-secondary opportunities ranging from college, university and technical school to specialized academic programs.

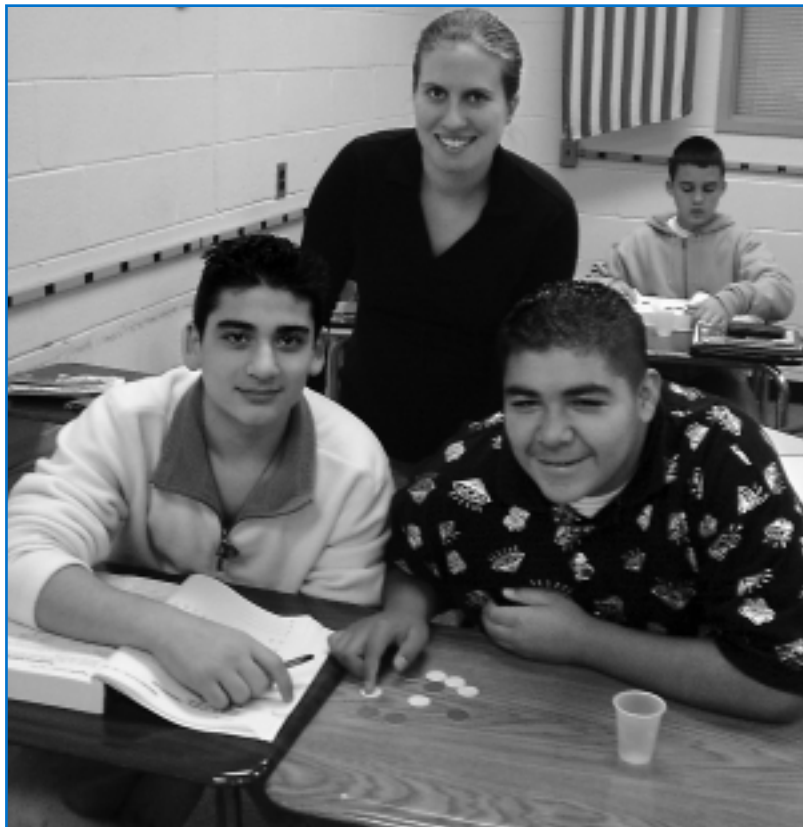
With that objective in mind, Utica Community Schools has organized its programs around our Indicators of Excellence, introduced to you in the **Focus** earlier this school year. These concrete measurements assess a student's academic progress in the areas of reading,

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## Reaching Higher – Aspire, Prepare, Achieve!



*This is the first of a series of informational features about how Utica Community Schools is embracing more rigorous graduation standards and developing new ways to prepare all students to succeed.*

**Imad Gasso, Jr.** (left) and **Chris Hernandez**, students in teacher **Amy Kemmer's** class at Jeannette Junior High, demonstrate a mathematics lesson in experimental probability. The students are gathering data for calculating probability by tossing ten two-sided red and yellow discs twenty times and recording how often each color faces up. After data collection is completed, the students will calculate the probability of each color's appearance and put this number in fraction, decimal and percent forms.

**We are in a crucial, yet exhilarating, time in education.**

Our schools and teachers have the great responsibility of preparing students for careers not yet invented, in a new global economy that is becoming faster-paced and more competitive than ever.

Students coming of age in the 21st Century will find that possessing a college degree or other post-high school career training, as well as higher-order thinking and problem-solving abilities, will prove vital to their workplace success.

In a move to better prepare students for the world they will enter, the Michigan Merit Curriculum was implemented in the state's public schools beginning with the 2006-2007 school year. It contains what are arguably the most rigorous graduation requirements of any state in the nation.

*“Algebraic Thinking is an interactive and motivating program for students. They engage in hands-on experiences that help them connect past learning with current grade-level expectations. These experiences will not only help them in high school Algebra, but also in identifying the ‘why?’ behind mathematical concepts they will need to know for success in their daily lives.”*

– Dana Colo, Jeannette Junior High teacher

The state curriculum presents several challenging “firsts” for all students and teachers, including everyone in Utica Community Schools. For example, beginning with the class of 2011 (current ninth graders), it is the first time every high

school student is required to successfully complete Geometry, Algebra I, Algebra II and a fourth year math elective, as well as Biology and either Chemistry or Physics, in order to graduate.

Additionally, every eleventh grade student must now take the American College Test (ACT) as part of the mandatory Michigan

Merit Exam (MME). Prior to this, the ACT was primarily taken by students seeking college admission.

At the same time, the state is gradually increasing student proficiency expectations for both the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) and MME. This is in response

*continued on page 2*

## UCS business practices earn an A

Utica Community Schools has again received high praise for its business practices from the independent auditing firm of Plante and Moran, following the firm's latest annual financial audit of the district.

“The district continues to maintain overall excellent financial records,” said Plante and Moran certified public accountant and partner, Eric Formberg, in his report to the Board of Education. “If we were

giving a letter grade for their financial practices, it would be an A.”

As in the previous fiscal year, 76 percent of the district's operating funds came from the State of Michigan in fiscal year 2006-2007, the period of time covered by the audit. The state's revenue source for public education comes mainly from sales tax and income tax.

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**Utica Community Schools**  
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## Points of pride

Three UCS students took honors at the 43rd annual Skills USA National Conference in Kansas City, MO. Vittorio Lovato, a 2007 Stevenson High School graduate, won a silver medal in Architectural Drafting and received \$9,000 in software and books. Henry Ford II 2007 graduate **Kaitlyn Freeman**, a Digital Photography competitor, won a silver medal and \$10,000 in scholarships and photography equipment. Ford II senior **Adam Geml** placed fourth in Electronics Applications. The event showcased the skills of some 4,500 Career and Technical Education state winners in 87 career fields.



The UCS School Bus Driving Team captured first place in the 2007 Macomb County School Bus Driving Rodeo. The competition consists of eleven different driving skills tests and a written examination. In the individual events, UCS drivers **Ken Tappen** and **Heidi Howe** took first and third place, respectively, and advanced to the Michigan State Driving Championship where Tappen finished fourth.



For the second consecutive year, the UCS fleet of 240 school buses qualified for a 95 percent or better pass rating following a 135-point safety inspection of each vehicle by the Michigan State Police; a testament to the skills of the district's certified mechanics.



The Utica Shelby, Shelby Day Breakers, Sterling Heights High Noon and Sterling Heights Kiwanis clubs donated backpacks filled with school supplies for needy students in several UCS schools. The clubs also provided dictionaries for all third graders in the district.



The UCS Title I Outreach Program was conducted this summer at different neighborhood sites, enabling roughly 120 eligible upper elementary students to receive additional support in reading, writing, mathematics, problem-solving and homework skills to aid their transition to the next grade.

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# Reaching Higher – Aspire, Prepare, Achieve!

continued from page 1

to the No Child Left Behind mandate that all schools must make Adequate Yearly Progress toward reaching another first – that of 100 percent student proficiency by 2014.

Utica Community Schools is embracing these higher standards as essential to preparing our students for the world ahead. In fact, UCS has raised its own bar even higher by establishing a district-wide College Culture with the expectation that every student will become academically prepared to complete at least one Advanced Placement course in high school and enroll in college or other career training after graduation.

### Our Reaching Higher Goals

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.
2. The school district will implement a world-class instructional program.
3. Parent, business and community partnerships will be an integral part of student learning.

was mailed to all homes in the district. The complete document can be reviewed on the district website, [www.uticak12.org](http://www.uticak12.org).

The Indicators are a series of 30 strategic, data-based academic measurements for attaining the three main goals (above) the Board of Education has set for

goal, especially in the more rigorous mathematics and science courses. Teachers themselves are learning about and implementing new methods to accommodate students' different learning styles. A few of the changes in secondary mathematics and science instruction will be explained here.



Jeannette Junior High School eighth graders (l-r) **Jonathon Qarana**, **Kaylen Anderson**, **Ali Abboud** and **Jennifer Ashak** practice trading equivalent fractions as a way of reinforcing what they have learned.

### UCS Indicators of Excellence demonstrate the district's commitment to making sure every student can aspire, prepare and achieve

This fall, in classrooms and at every school open house, Utica Community Schools students and their parents were introduced to the district's dynamic new framework for student learning known as the Indicators of Excellence. Developed with input from district staff and parents, the Indicators of Excellence were approved by the Board of Education in August and are intended to set the district's course forward for the next three to five years.

The Indicators of Excellence were also unveiled in the back-to-school issue of the *Focus for the Community* newsletter that

the district. Simply stated, when the Indicators are met, the goals will be achieved.

Because it is most related to the district's mission of higher student achievement, the heaviest emphasis is being placed on 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.

A number of classroom changes have taken place intended to assist students by giving them more time and additional learning opportunities, as necessary, in order to meet the

### UCS implements Algebraic Thinking in seventh and eighth grades and changes its high school math sequence to Geometry, Algebra I and Algebra II

Algebraic Thinking is a district-wide seventh and eighth grade teaching strategy now in place that features visual and hands-on learning and skill reinforcement of grade-level mathematics, including Pre-Algebra. It is designed to serve students' different learning styles in preparing them for the graduation requirements.

As Jeannette Junior High teacher Dana Colo explained, "Algebraic Thinking is an interactive and motivating program for students. They engage in hands-on experiences that help them connect past learning with

current grade-level expectations. These experiences will not only help them in high school Algebra, but also in identifying the 'why?' behind mathematical concepts they will need to know to succeed in their daily lives."

The state has accelerated the content of the secondary mathematics curriculum. Much of what had traditionally been taught in Algebra I as a ninth grade subject is now taught in seventh and eighth grade. In turn, Algebra I now contains many components of Algebra II, while Algebra II now includes Trigonometry concepts.

In the box on page three are a few examples of concepts now being taught earlier in the mathematics sequence.

In response, Utica Community Schools has begun teaching Geometry, the more visual of the mathematics courses, in ninth grade rather than the conventional sequence of Algebra I in ninth grade and Geometry in tenth.

The preparatory skills required for Geometry are now taught in seventh and eighth grade; thus, it is the natural next step for ninth graders. And by studying Geometry first, students will gain an extra year to mature and expand their math skills before tackling the more abstract concepts taught in Algebra I in tenth grade followed by Algebra II in eleventh. Students are also likely to retain more of what they learn when Algebra I and II are taught consecutively.

### Secondary sciences also impacted

The district's secondary science curriculum has been realigned according to state content expectations and the course sequence was changed, as well. Biology was moved up from ninth to tenth grade. Physical Science is now taught in ninth grade, where concepts learned will serve as building blocks to better prepare students for Biology the next year, followed by either Chemistry or Physics in eleventh grade.

While secondary students on the accelerated mathematics and science paths will continue having access to advanced courses, as has always been the case in UCS, now all students will have additional enhanced experiences intended to enable them to complete the state math and science requirements by twelfth grade.

**Proficiency on Advanced Placement and the Michigan Merit Exam affords students a head start on college**

This year, Utica Community Schools is offering up to 25 College Board-certified Advanced Placement courses\*\* in its four high schools – nearly double that of past years, and for good reason. Besides gaining in-depth knowledge, Advanced Placement

broadens the analytical abilities and study discipline a student will need to undertake a college workload. In fact, according to the College Board, there is a direct connection between a student's participation in Advanced Placement in high school and successful completion of college.

There are additional benefits for students who do well on the Advanced Placement end-of-

course exams. Students with scores of three, four or five can qualify for college credit while still in high school, thereby placing out of lower level courses in their first year of college and gaining tuition savings, as well.

Some Utica Community Schools students have utilized the Advanced Placement opportunity to earn as many as 20 college credits before setting foot on campus. This is good news for

the nearly 3,500 UCS students who are challenging themselves with AP courses this year – a 68 percent increase in numbers over last year.

In addition, high school students who earn proficient scores on the Michigan Merit Exam become eligible for the Michigan Merit Scholarship program, which offers qualified students \$2,000 “up front” toward their first year of college tuition and \$1,000 each of the following two years for a total of \$4,000.

As an educational leader, Utica Community Schools stands ready to enable every student to succeed at the next level, be it elementary school, junior high, high school or college. We expect every child to *aspire, prepare and achieve*. It is indeed an exciting time for education in Utica Community Schools!

\*\*The College Board is a not-for-profit organization that connects students to college success and opportunity. Its best-known programs are the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) and the Advanced Placement Program (AP).

**Secondary mathematics sequence in Utica Community Schools:**

**Graduating classes of 2008, 2009 and 2010:**

	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
<b>Applied</b>	Math 7	Math 8	Applied Algebra I	Applied Geometry	Applied Algebra II	Applied Trigonometry
<b>Regular</b>	Math 7	Math 8	Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II	Trig./ Discrete Math
<b>Accelerated</b>	Project Math	Algebra I	Geometry	Algebra II	Pre-Calculus	Calculus

*No state requirement. However, UCS requires three courses in any mathematics.*

**Graduating classes of 2011 and thereafter:**

	Grade 7	Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
<b>Applied</b>	Algebraic Thinking 7	Algebraic Thinking 8	<b>Geometry*</b>	<b>Algebra I*</b>	<b>Algebra II*</b>	Math Elective
<b>Regular</b>	Math 7	Math 8	<b>Geometry*</b>	<b>Algebra I*</b>	<b>Algebra II*</b>	Math Elective
<b>Accelerated</b>	Project Math	Accelerated Algebra I	Accelerated Geometry	Accelerated Algebra II	Pre-Calculus	Calculus

\*State required courses for graduation

All courses in grade 7 through Algebra II incorporate the new state grade-level content expectations

Students could move from Algebraic Thinking 7 into Math 8

Applied and regular courses are the same from ninth grade on

**Secondary science sequence in Utica Community Schools:**

**Graduating classes of 2008, 2009 and 2010:**

Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Science 8	Biology	Elective	Elective	Elective

*No state requirement. However, UCS requires three courses in any science.*

**Graduating classes of 2011 and thereafter:**

Grade 8	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12
Earth Science	Physical Science	<b>Biology*</b>	<b>Physics*</b> or <b>Chemistry*</b>	Science Elective
Not yet determined	<b>Accelerated Biology*</b>	<b>Physics*</b> or <b>Chemistry*</b>	Accelerated Science Elective	AP Elective

\*State required courses for graduation

**Secondary math curriculum accelerated**

*Concepts formerly taught at the higher level now being introduced earlier*

**Examples of concepts now taught in Algebra I:**

A. Find the quotient of  $\frac{-3 + 8i}{1 - 9i}$ ?

Correct answer  $\frac{-75 - 19i}{82}$

B. The formula below shows how to find the next number in a series when you know the previous term. What is the 4th term in the series?

$$t_1 = 4; t_n = 3t_{n-1} + 5$$

Correct answer 173

**Examples of concepts now taught in Algebra II:**

A. Fifty individuals were asked if they owned cats or dogs. The results are shown below.



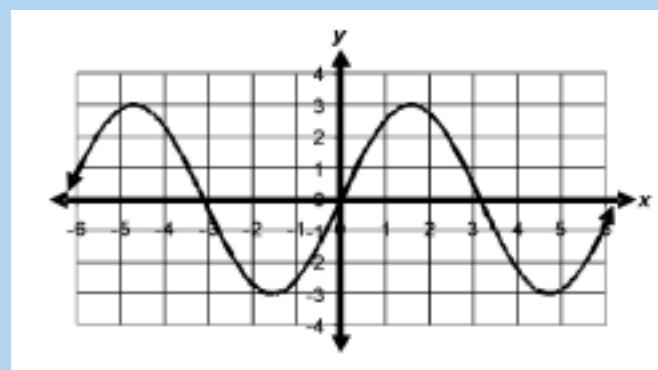
If two individuals from the survey were randomly selected, what is the probability that one would own a dog and one would own only a cat?

Correct answer  $\frac{96}{245}$

B. Individuals who undergo surgery for a cardiovascular disease can choose one of two types of procedures. The first procedure has a 60% survival rate, and 80% of individuals select this option because it has a high rate of full recovery for those who survive the surgery. A less risky procedure has a 90% survival rate, which is selected by 20% of individuals. What is the probability that an individual who undergoes cardiac surgery will survive?

Correct answer 66%

C. What is the equation of the following graph?



Correct answer  $y = 3\sin x$



# Make a Play for **HIGHER EDUCATION** at the...



**Who:** You & Your Parents

**What:** UCS Academic BLITZ

**When:** Thursday, January 24, 2008  
6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**Where:** Henry Ford II High School  
11911 Clinton River Road  
Sterling Heights 48313

**Cost:** **It's Free!**

## UCS ACADEMIC



- Discover UCS Advanced Placement (AP) & other courses that will enhance your high school & college career... & beyond
- Have a chance to win the cost of an AP end-of-course test
- Learn about the MI-Promise scholarship & other scholarships
- AP teachers of the Year from Eisenhower, Ford II, Stevenson & Utica High schools & UCMST will be recognized

*Plan NOW for your life after high school...*

**Make a Play for Higher Education at the UCS ACADEMIC BLITZ!**

### **From the Superintendent...**

*continued from page 1*

mathematics, science and other courses. In this edition, you'll learn how the district Indicators support our students as they delve into more in-depth mathematics courses, as required by Michigan's new graduation requirements.

Last year, we encouraged our students to stretch themselves intellectually by enrolling in Advanced Placement classes, which are equivalent to college-level course work. Our students answered the call, and enrollment in these rigorous classes has greatly increased. We are continuing to encourage enrollment among all of our students by offering the **Academic Blitz** in January at Henry Ford II High School (see above). There, students will learn more about how to plan for their high school careers and beyond using Advanced Placement courses which, upon completion, can result in college credit and additional scholarship opportunities.

Parents and community members continue to support efforts on our students' behalf. The annual Community Survey, conducted last May, indicates continued support

for our efforts. According to residents' responses, UCS teachers, other employees and the district's high-quality educational programs remain the best things about the district, while lack of proper financial support was again cited as the biggest challenge facing our schools.

After many years of uncertain state funding, I believe the community understands the district's financial dilemma. In late October, the state legislature approved its fiscal year 2008 budget, which included funding for public school districts.

We have learned we will receive an increase of about \$85 per student, or an increase of about 1.1 percent from the 2006-2007 fiscal year. This is less than the three percent inflation rate, and while we are glad funding has not been cut, the resulting amount is only enough to operate our school district for not quite three days.

It is critical that the public understand that this anticipated increase is for only one school year, 2007-2008. Despite approving a tax increase for all of Michigan's residents, the legislature still has done nothing to provide a stable, long-term funding source for schools.

At best, it's a quick fix to fund this school year. At worst, the legislature could, as it has twice in the past five years, fail to provide the funds it promised – taking back precious dollars from districts in the middle of the school year.

We continue to urge our legislators to work together to achieve true reform that will provide Michigan's young citizens – our students – with a structural budget solution that will guarantee every child access to the same outstanding – and stable – education their older counterparts have traditionally enjoyed.

At the end of the day, Utica Community Schools remains committed to providing our students with the very best educational program possible. Despite funding gaps, despite very necessary improvements to our state graduation requirements, despite increasing challenges in the work place, we intend to prepare every child for success after high school graduation. And with your ongoing support, we will succeed.

I encourage you to review this issue of the **Focus** to see for yourself how we are providing the tools so that Every Child Achieves.

# Community Survey 2007 confirms residents' continuing confidence in UCS

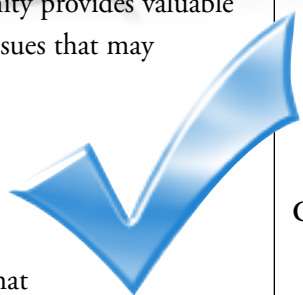
As it has for more than 30 years, Utica Community Schools has again polled its residents for their opinions about the district by means of an annual telephone survey.

Conducted by volunteer callers, the dialogue with a cross-section of the community provides valuable information to help identify issues that may impact our students.

The survey data is used by the Board of Education and district administrators in the decision-making process that shapes student programs and services.

Calls were made to randomly-selected anonymous telephone numbers within the UCS attendance area, resulting in 411 completed surveys – the number needed for a 95 percent statistical confidence level within a five percent plus/minus sampling tolerance. The responses were tabulated by the Macomb Intermediate School District.

The findings indicate a continuing high rate of support and satisfaction with our school district and its programs from both parents and non-parents, alike. At right, you will find a summary of the survey responses.



## What our residents say:

### Of the survey respondents:

- 62.0% do not have school-age children
- 38.0% have school-age children (31.4% have children attending UCS)

### Age of respondents:

- 18-30 ..... 7.3%
- 31-40 ..... 13.9%
- 41-50 ..... 24.8%
- 51-60 ..... 22.4%
- 61-70 ..... 17.8%
- 71-80 ..... 8.0%
- 81+ ..... 3.9%
- no response ..... 1.9%

### Residency:

- Sterling Heights ..... 46.2%
- Shelby Township ..... 36.3%
- Utica ..... 4.6%
- Macomb Township ..... 11.2%
- Other ..... 1.7%

### Gave the district a grade of A or B:

- All respondents ..... 78.1%
- UCS parents ..... 83.4%

### Recommended UCS to others:

- All respondents ..... 88.8%
- UCS parents ..... 91.7%

### Best thing about UCS (top three named):

- Teachers and other staff
- Rigorous curriculum and the variety of courses available
- High standards/quality programs/reputation

### Named the lack of proper financial support as the biggest challenge facing UCS:

- All respondents ..... 45.3%\*
  - UCS parents ..... 54.1%\*
- \*Up from 28.8% and 33.1%, respectively, in 2006.*

“**Improve funding for schools**” was mentioned most often by all respondents when the question of how to improve the district was asked.

### Satisfied with district's overall direction:

- All respondents ..... 74.7%
- UCS parents ..... 82.7%

### Consider themselves knowledgeable about Michigan's new graduation requirements:

- All respondents ..... 59.7%
- UCS parents ..... 69.9%

### Have post-secondary educational expectations for their children:

- All parents ..... 82.7%
- UCS parents ..... 97.0%

### Satisfied with how well the district prepares graduates for the future:

- All respondents ..... 79.3%
- UCS parents ..... 85.0%

### Satisfied with the way the district manages money:

- Parents/non-parents ..... 64.7%

### From UCS parents only:

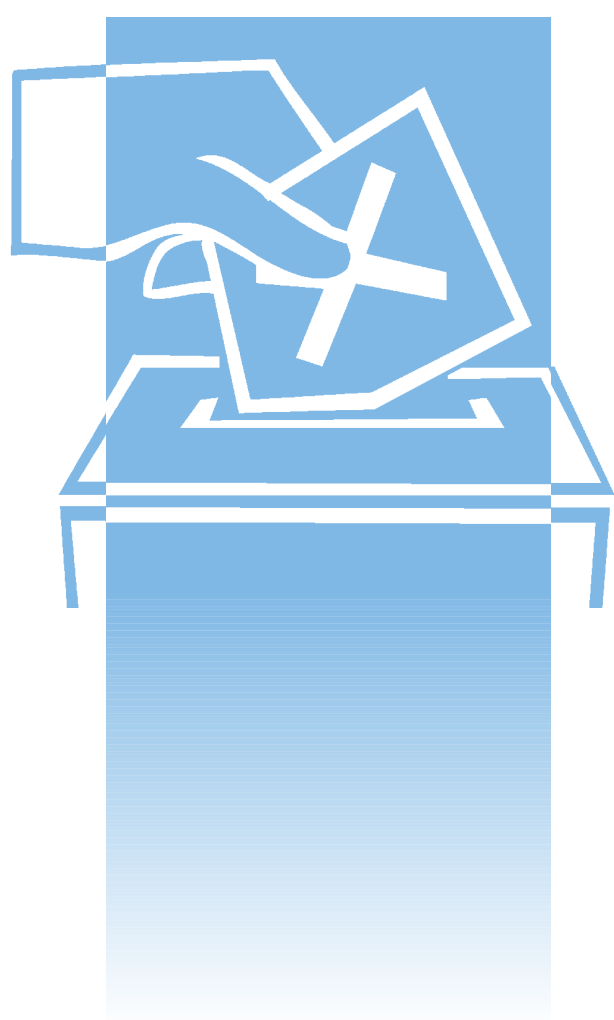
Lastly, the following questions were asked only of UCS parents; nearly all of whom expressed satisfaction with:

- Their children's safety at school – 95.5%
- What their children are learning – 96.2%
- Quality of UCS programs – 91.7%
- Communication between home and school – 94.0%
- Use of classroom technology – 92.5%

In addition, 85.7 percent expressed satisfaction with the way the staff listens to what parents have to say and 79.7 percent said they were satisfied with the amount of extra help available to students when they need it.

The full report of the 2007 Survey of the Community can be found on the district website, [www.uticak12.org](http://www.uticak12.org).

## UCS Board of Education adopts odd-years-only elections



At its regular meeting held Monday, November 12, the Utica Community Schools Board of Education voted unanimously to adopt an odd-years-only cycle for the district's regular school elections, effective beginning in 2008.

As part of the resolution, which was approved following a public hearing the same evening, the current and future terms of office of Board of Education members were extended from four to six years.

The immediate effect will set the next regular election in May 2009 instead of May 2008. It will also extend the terms of current Board members one or two years, depending on when their current terms expire. For the existing Board, the transitioning term ending dates will be as follows:

- Dr. Carol Klenow and Dr. Robert Ross – from June 30, 2008 to June 30, 2009;

- Carl Territo and Michele Templeton from June 30, 2009 to June 30, 2011;
- Gene Klida from June 30, 2010 to June 30, 2011;
- Daniel Meyers and Jennifer Prybys from June 30, 2011 to June 30, 2013

The Board's rationale for the change is two-fold. First, by moving from annual to every-other-year elections, a savings of \$40,000 to \$45,000 will be achieved in the years no election is held. Secondly, the new cycle is intended to continue the date of July 1 as the beginning of a Board term, concurrent with the district's fiscal year.

Michigan school districts are permitted to schedule their regular school elections in May or November. The UCS Board decided to continue holding its elections in May so that newly-elected members can

become familiar with their duties before joining the Board at the start of the fiscal year.

November was not chosen because it would bring new members onto the Board in January, a full six months into the district's fiscal year and four months into the academic year, long after budget and operational decisions for the school year were made.

“This decision balances efficiency with effectiveness,” said Board of Education President Dr. Carol Klenow. “The odd-year May date provides cost savings. And, by keeping the election in May rather than November, new Board members can become acclimated before they take office in July, which is also the start of the district's fiscal year. The result will be that continuity of the Board's work will not be impacted by the change to an odd-year election.”

## Points of pride

continued from page 2

Costco donated backpacks filled with school supplies to students at Magahay Elementary. Costco team members also volunteer to read to Magahay students.



The following UCS twelfth graders qualified as Semifinalists or Commended Students from among the more than one million students nationwide who took part in the 2008 National Merit Scholarship competition:

**Eisenhower:**  
Semifinalist –  
**Charles Andrews**

**Ford II:**  
Semifinalists –  
**Adam Geml**  
**Aaron M. Taylor**  
Commended –  
**Claire Le Guen**  
**Sarah M. Smith**

**Stevenson:**  
Semifinalist –  
**James Courtois**  
Commended –  
**David Redman**

**Utica:**  
Semifinalists –  
**Derek Plotkowski**  
**Christopher Sigler**

Semifinalists are the state's highest scorers, comprising about one-half of one percent of the state's graduating class. Commended Students placed in the top five percent of all tested. Semifinalists advance to the Finalist level of competition for Merit Scholarship awards.



Eisenhower teacher **Christopher Layson** was selected as a reader and scorer of the College Board's World History Advanced Placement Examination, placing him among the nation's leading teachers and professors called upon by the College Board.



The district's four high school marching bands—Eisenhower, Ford II, Stevenson and Utica—each received Division 1 ratings at the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association Festival this fall.

## UCS business practices earn an A

continued from page 1

Of the amount UCS received from the state, 63 percent went directly to classroom instruction. An additional 10 percent was budgeted for instructional support, such as media center operations.

While noting that the district's fund equity, or reserve, has been reduced from 21.2 percent of the budget in 2003-2004 to 16.1 percent in 2006-2007, Formberg said the fund equity continues to sustain the district through volatile financial times in the state. The current fund equity could support district operations for about six weeks.

By state law, Michigan's public school districts must submit a balanced budget by July 1 of each year. The state's budget year, however, begins October 1, resulting in districts not receiving their first funding payment for

the school year until mid-October. This year, the state's ongoing budget crisis delayed the first payment even more.

The October payment schedule forces some districts, typically those without fund equity, to borrow money to pay their bills while awaiting the state payment. The districts must then repay the loan, plus the accompanying interest, which further drains their operating budgets.

"By maintaining fund equity, the district has a dependable source of working capital during

uncertain times," said Formberg.

While the district received compliments for the quality of its financial records, Board of Education President Dr. Carol Klenow pointed out that the overall financial picture for Utica Community Schools is still of concern.

She noted that since the 2003-2004 school year some 275 employee positions have been eliminated and the operating budget has been reduced by

more than \$36 million. Class sizes have been increased and the district has instituted practices to generate revenue, ranging from reductions in programming to pay-to-participate athletics.

Further economies have included a sale of property, closing a building, aggressive student recruitment, an energy conservation program and employee health care options that reduce district costs.

"Although our fund equity seems large, we have to remember that we are an extremely large organization. It does not in any way mean that we are a wealthy district. We are not," Klenow said.

"We have done all we can to operate in an efficient and effective way to protect programs for our students," Klenow said. "We're healthy now, but the (financial) picture in the future remains one of great concern."



## A Gift for Children



True to its motto, "A Gift for Children," the **Utica Community Schools Foundation for Educational Excellence's** latest contribution to the district was a check for \$31,000; the proceeds from its fourth annual golf outing. Since its founding in 1986, the Foundation has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars in support of meaningful educational opportunities for UCS students beyond what the district's budget allows.

Pictured is UCS Superintendent of Schools **Dr. Christine M. Johns**, second from left, accepting the donation from some of the Foundation's trustees and officers: **Nancy Stoneking, Deanna Bethuy, Claudia Jeannette, Brett Bohlinger, Secretary Chelsie Bemis, President Steve Messina and Treasurer Wally Doebler**. At the far left is the organization's office secretary, **Josie Forsell**, and at the far right is its Executive Director, **Dan Moore**.

### NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATION

In compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Elliot-Larsen Civil Rights Act and the Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act, it is the policy of Utica Community Schools that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, sex, age, disability, height, weight, or marital status be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination during any instructional opportunities, programs, services, job placement assistance, employment or in policies governing student conduct and attendance. Any person suspecting a discriminatory practice should contact the Executive Director of Human Resources at Utica Community Schools, 11303 Greendale, Sterling Heights, MI 48312 or call (586) 797-1000.

### Important dates in the 2007-08 school year

**Dec 22 - Jan 2**  
Holiday Break

**January 3**  
Classes resume

**January 17**  
Secondary exams,  
all students half day

**January 18**  
Secondary exams,  
all students half day

**January 21**  
No school - Teacher  
Professional Development

**February 11-17**  
Elementary Parent/Teacher  
conference window

**February 18-22**  
Mid-Winter Break

**February 25**  
Classes resume

**March 3-7**  
Secondary Parent/Teacher  
conference window

**March 21-28**  
Spring Break

**March 31**  
Classes resume

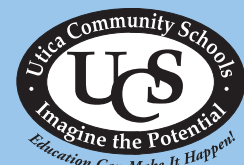
**May 23**  
No school - Teacher  
Professional Development

**May 26**  
Memorial Day - No school

**June 11**  
Secondary exams,  
secondary half day

**June 12**  
Secondary exams,  
all students half day

**June 13**  
No school -  
Summer recess begins



586.797.1000

#### BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Visit [www.uticak12.org](http://www.uticak12.org) for information on programs and curriculum, school news, district calendar, annual reports and employment opportunities.

Information about the district is also available on UCS Television, which broadcasts on cable channels 15 and 22.