

6000 Policy - Excellence, Equity and Access

I. Purpose

In Utica Community Schools, student learning is a responsibility shared by educators, parents and the community. It is achieved through diligence and dedication to improve the educational opportunities for all students.

The Board of Education believes that all children have the right to a rigorous, high-quality education which meets their individual needs. The Board is committed to maintaining a high-quality school district that provides excellence, equity and access for all students as a foundation for successful participation in our democratic society. Utica Community Schools will respect, encourage and empower every student to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to be successful, contributing members of a diverse community and global society.

The Board also believes and research supports that a high-quality education is most effective in a global, culturally diverse setting. Utica Community Schools defines diversity of students and staff broadly, including race/ethnicity, socioeconomic status, disability, and gender. It also includes students and staff from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

One of the key educational benefits associated with diversity, equity and access is improved achievement for all students. Additional educational benefits are:

- A. Students are better prepared to live and work in an increasingly globally, culturally diverse society;
- B. Students engage in deeper and richer class discussions and debates;
- C. Peers are more likely to provide a positive influence;
- D. Parents are more likely to be involved in school;
- E. Teachers are more likely to have high expectations for all students; and
- F. Students learn about and appreciate other perspectives.

Evidence shows that there are educational advantages in schools that serve a diverse student body. For example, achievement in schools is positively impacted by a variety of factors, such as low teacher and principal turnover, teachers with a variety of experience and expertise, teachers with varying levels of educational degrees, increased parent involvement, and equitable allocation of resources.

In addition, the Board of Education values a highly effective and diverse staff in each school. Key components of being a highly effective teacher are being culturally competent and sensitive to the needs of all students that results in learning.

II. Educational Indicators

To demonstrate to the community the Board of Educations' commitment to maintaining a high-quality school district that provides excellence and equity for all students, the District will review and analyze the following indicators:

- A. Elementary reading, science, social studies, writing and math proficiency levels;
- B. Secondary core subject areas: English, math, social studies and science proficiency levels.
- C. Student discipline data (suspension and expulsion);
- D. Course enrollment, participation and passing rates, such as: Advanced Placement (AP), Career and Technical Education (CTE), Honors, Algebra I, advanced math grade 6, dual enrollment, and Early College Macomb (ECM);
- E. Applications, enrollment, acceptance/denials, and retentions for Utica Academy for International Studies (UAIS), Utica Center for Science and Industry (UCSI), Utica Center for Mathematics, Science and Technology (UCMST), Messmore (Montessori), and Oakbrook (Mandarin);
- F. Graduation/dropout rates;
- G. Attendance rates; and
- H. Alternative education enrollment and former junior high and senior high school of attendance.

The district will report the data for each of these indicators at the district level and for each school/program, disaggregated by socioeconomic status, students with disabilities, gender, race/ethnicity and language.

III. Monitoring and Reporting

The Superintendent will submit to the Board of Education annually a report or reports regarding progress towards accomplishing the above indicators. In addition, the report or reports will identify discrepancies and areas of concern and will make recommendations for improving access and equity for all students on the indicators.