

Bridgeport Public Schools Wins \$125,000 in Scholarships; Recognized Nationally as Finalist for The Broad Prize

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WASHINGTON – Bridgeport Public Schools, recognized today as one of the most improved urban school districts in the country, will receive \$125,000 in scholarships as a finalist for the 2007 Broad Prize for Urban Education.

U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings joined philanthropist Eli Broad at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., to announce the winner. Former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell delivered the keynote address at a celebratory Broad Prize luncheon following the announcement, after remarks by U.S. House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

The \$1 million Broad (rhymes with “road”) Prize is an annual award that honors large urban school districts that demonstrate the greatest overall performance and improvement in student achievement while reducing achievement gaps among poor and minority students. The money goes directly to graduating high school seniors for college scholarships.

“Nothing is more important to the future of this country than giving young people the tools to succeed,” said Secretary Spellings, before opening the envelope that revealed New York City was the 2007 Broad Prize winner. “With the help of strong, innovative leadership, Broad Prize school districts are proving that if we raise our expectations, our children will rise to the challenge.”

Bridgeport and the three other Broad Prize finalist districts – the Long Beach Unified School District, Miami-Dade County Public Schools and the Northside Independent School District in San Antonio – each will receive \$125,000 in college scholarships for 2008 graduating high school seniors. This is Bridgeport’s second year as a finalist, bringing the district’s total Broad Prize scholarship winnings to \$250,000. The district will again be eligible next year for the 2008 Broad Prize.

“Bridgeport has expected more of its students – and they have risen to the challenge,” said Eli Broad, founder of The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation. “The district’s impressive efforts to improve learning opportunities for low-income students provide both an example and a guidepost for urban school districts around the country.”

Among the reasons Bridgeport stood out among large urban school districts:

- **Greater overall performance and improvement.** In 2006, Bridgeport *outperformed other districts in Connecticut serving students with similar income levels* in reading and math at all grade levels: elementary, middle and high school, according to The Broad Prize methodology. Bridgeport also *showed greater improvement than other districts in Connecticut serving students with similar income levels* in math at all grade levels and in elementary and middle school reading, according to The Broad Prize methodology.

- **Greater subgroup performance and improvement.** In 2006, each of Bridgeport's student subgroups – *low-income, African-American and Hispanic students* – *outperformed their peers in similar Connecticut districts* in reading and math at all grade levels, according to The Broad Prize methodology. Bridgeport's *low-income students also showed greater improvement* than their statewide peers in reading and math at all grade levels.
- **Closing achievement gaps.** Bridgeport narrowed achievement gaps between:
 - *Low-income students and the state average for non-low-income students* in math at all grade levels and in elementary and middle school reading;
 - *Hispanic students and the state average for white students* in reading and math at all grade levels; and,
 - *African-American students and the state average for white students* in elementary, middle and high school math and in elementary reading. For example, between 2003 and 2006, this African-American achievement gap narrowed in high school math by 9 percentage points.

For additional student achievement outcomes and the key policies and practices that led Bridgeport to be named a Broad Prize finalist, please visit www.broadprize.org.

The Broad Prize was started in 2002. Previous winners include Boston Public Schools (2006), Norfolk Public Schools in Virginia (2005), Garden Grove Unified School District in California (2004), Long Beach Unified School District in California (2003) and the Houston Independent School District (2002).

This year, 100 of the largest urban school districts in the country were eligible for The Broad Prize. The five finalists were selected by a board of 14 prominent national education experts after a rigorous review of data compiled and analyzed by MPR Associates, a leading education research consulting firm based in Berkeley, Calif. A site visit team led by SchoolWorks, an education consulting company based in Beverly, Mass., then visited each finalist district, interviewed administrators, teachers, principals, parents, community leaders, school board members and union representatives, and conducted classroom observations.

This summer, a selection jury of nine prominent national leaders from government, business, industry, education and public service reviewed all resulting quantitative and qualitative data to select the winner. This year's selection jury included:

- **John Engler**, president and CEO of the National Association of Manufacturers and former governor of Michigan
- **Susan Hockfield**, president, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- **James B. Hunt, Jr.**, chairman of the board, Hunt Institute for Educational Leadership and Policy and former governor of North Carolina
- **Shirley Ann Jackson**, president, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- **Roderick Paige**, chairman and founder, Chartwell Education Group and former U.S. secretary of education
- **Hugh Price**, former president and chief executive officer, National Urban League
- **Richard W. Riley**, former U.S. secretary of education and former governor of South Carolina
- **Andrew L. Stern**, international president of Service Employees International Union
- **Mark Warner**, former governor of Virginia

The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation is a national venture philanthropy established by entrepreneur and philanthropist Eli Broad to advance entrepreneurship for the public good in education, science and the arts. The Broad Foundation's education work is focused on dramatically improving urban K-12 public education through better governance, management, labor relations and competition. The Broad Foundation's Internet address is www.broadfoundation.org.

Note: To access newsfeed of the event, visit www.broadprize.org for satellite coordinates. To access photos of the event, visit the AP wire after 4 p.m. on Sept. 18. # # #