

Aldine Independent School District Again Named Finalist for \$1 Million Broad Prize; One of Top Districts in Country for Student Gains

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Wednesday, April 2, 2008

Contact: Erica Lepping
310.954.5053, elepping@broadfoundation.org

LOS ANGELES - The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation announced today that the Aldine Independent School District is among five school districts that have been chosen as finalists for the 2008 Broad Prize for Urban Education, an annual \$1 million award that honors urban school districts across the country that are making the greatest progress in raising student achievement. This marks the third year Aldine is up for the country's largest education prize.

Other finalists this year include:

- Broward County Public Schools, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
- Brownsville Independent School District, on the Texas-Mexico border
- Long Beach Unified School District, Calif.
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools



The Broad (rhymes with “road”) Prize for Urban Education honors urban school districts that demonstrate the greatest overall performance and improvement in student achievement while reducing achievement gaps among ethnic groups and between high- and low- income students.

The winner of The Broad Prize, to be announced on Tuesday, Oct. 14 at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, will receive \$500,000 in scholarships for graduating seniors. Each of the four finalist districts will receive \$125,000 in scholarships.

“While numerous urban school districts are struggling to prepare students today for the jobs of tomorrow, these finalists are demonstrating that academic progress in our cities is possible and is happening,” said Eli Broad, founder of The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation. “Everyone involved, from parents to teachers to staff in these districts, can be proud of their success. Their progress in improving student achievement is a model for other districts around the country.”

Aldine was previously a finalist in 2003 and 2004. This is the third consecutive year Miami-Dade has been a finalist, and the Long Beach Unified School District won The Broad Prize in 2003. Previous Broad Prize winners also include the New York City Department of Education (2007); Boston Public Schools (2006); Norfolk Public Schools (2005), Va.; the Garden Grove Unified School District (2004), Calif.; and Houston Independent School District (2002).

This year, 100 of the largest urban school districts nationwide were eligible for The Broad Prize. The five finalist districts were selected by a review board of 19 prominent education researchers, policy leaders, practitioners and executives from leading universities, national education associations, think-tanks and foundations. The review board evaluated publicly available academic performance data compiled and analyzed by MPR Associates, Inc., a leading national education research consulting firm, and selected the five districts.

Among the reasons that Aldine was chosen as a Broad Prize finalist:

- In 2007:
 - *Aldine students outperformed those in other Texas districts 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. Aldine's low-income, African-American and Hispanic students similarly outperformed their peers in similar districts in reading and math at all grade levels.*
 - *Aldine's African-American, Hispanic and low-income students achieved higher average proficiency rates than their statewide counterparts in reading and math at all grade levels.*

- Between 2004 and 2007:
 - *Aldine showed greater improvement than similar Texas districts in reading at all grade levels and in elementary and middle school math, according to The Broad Prize methodology. In addition, Aldine's low-income and Hispanic students showed greater improvement than their peers in similar districts in elementary and middle school reading and math.*
 - *Aldine narrowed achievement gaps between low-income students and non-low-income students in reading and math at all grade levels.*
 - *Aldine narrowed achievement gaps between African-American and Hispanic students and the statewide average for white students in elementary and middle school reading and math and in high school reading. For example, African-American students narrowed the gap with the state average for white students by 16 percentage points in middle school math.*
 - *Aldine increased the percentage of all students who achieved proficiency in elementary and middle school reading and math faster than the state.*
 - *Average SAT participation rates for African-American and Hispanic students rose. Average SAT scores also increased: for African-American students by 23 points and for Hispanic students by 18 points.*

Over the next two months, teams of educational researchers and practitioners led by SchoolWorks, an educational consulting company, will conduct site visits in each finalist district to gather qualitative information, interview district administrators, conduct focus groups with teachers and principals and observe classrooms. The teams will also talk to parents, community leaders, school board members and union representatives. A selection jury of prominent individuals from business, industry, education and public service will then review both the performance data and the qualitative site visit reports to choose the winning school district.

For more information about The Broad Prize, this year's finalists and the review board, please visit www.broadprize.org.

MPR Associates, Inc., one of the nation's leading education research consulting firms, is committed to strengthening elementary, secondary and postsecondary education and to expanding opportunities for youth and adults. MPR Associates manages the rigorous Broad Prize selection process. For more information, please visit www.mprinc.com.

SchoolWorks is an educational consulting company based in Beverly, Mass. Using a research-based rubric for district quality, SchoolWorks leads a site visit team of researchers and practitioners through the collection and analysis of interviews, documents and observations of Broad Prize finalist district practices. For more information, please visit www.schoolworks.com.

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.