

## **Long Beach Unified School District Again Named Finalist for \$1 Million Broad Prize; One of Top Districts in Country for Student Gains**

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LOS ANGELES - The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation announced today that the Long Beach Unified 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. Long Beach won The Broad Prize in 2003 and has been a finalist every year it has been eligible.

Other finalists this year include:

- Aldine Independent School District, near Houston
- Broward County Public Schools, Fort Lauderdale, Fla.
- Brownsville Independent School District, on the Texas-Mexico border
- 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.”

Last year, Long Beach returned to the competition as a finalist after being ineligible as a prior winner from 2004-2006. The district is one of only two in the country – in addition to Boston – that has been a finalist for The Broad Prize in every year the award has been in existence and it has been eligible. This year is also Miami-Dade and Aldine’s third as finalists.

In addition to Long Beach, previous Broad Prize winners include the New York City Department of Education (2007); Boston Public Schools (2006); Norfolk Public Schools (2005), Va.; the Garden Grove Unified School District, Calif. (2004); 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.

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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 Long Beach was chosen as a Broad Prize finalist:

- In 2007:
  - *Long Beach outperformed other California 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. In addition, Long Beach's low-income, African-American and Hispanic students outperformed their peers in similar districts in reading and math at all grade levels.*
  - *Long Beach's Hispanic and low-income students achieved higher average proficiency rates than their state counterparts in reading and math at all grade levels. In addition, Long Beach's African-American students achieved higher average proficiency rates than their state counterparts in math at all levels and in elementary and middle school reading levels.*
  
- Between 2004 and 2007:
  - *Long Beach showed greater improvement than other California districts serving similar income levels in middle and high school reading and at all grade levels for math, according to The Broad Prize methodology. In addition, Long Beach's low-income, African-American and Hispanic high school students showed greater improvement than similar districts across the state in both reading and in math.*
  - *Long Beach increased the percentage of all students who achieved proficiency in math at all grade levels and in middle and high school reading faster than the state.*
  - *Long Beach narrowed achievement gaps between Hispanic and white students in elementary school reading and math faster than the state narrowed these gaps.*
  - *SAT and Advanced Placement exam participation rates for African-American and Hispanic students increased, as did their average SAT scores.*

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](http://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](http://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](http://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](http://www.broadfoundation.org).