

The Broad Foundation Announces 2008 Finalists for \$1 Million Broad Prize; Five Urban School Districts Honored for Significant Student Gains

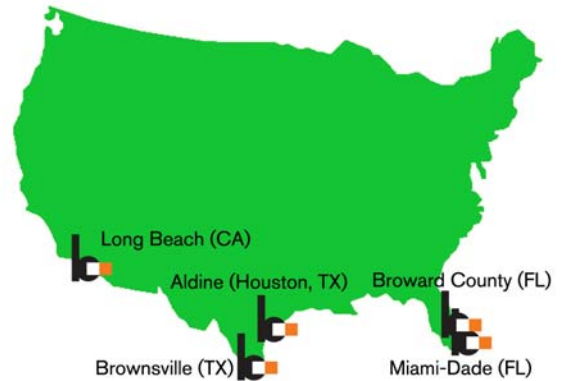
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LOS ANGELES - The Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation announced today the five school districts that are finalists for the 2008 Broad Prize for Urban Education, an annual \$1 million award that honors urban school districts across the country that are making the greatest progress in raising student achievement.

This year's five finalists are:

- Aldine Independent School District, near Houston
- 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.”

One commonality among this year's finalists, all of which serve significant percentages of Hispanic students, is that Hispanic students made notable gains in each district on multiple indicators. For example, Hispanic students in all finalist districts both outperformed and showed greater improvement than their peers in similar districts in their respective states. In addition, all five made notable progress in narrowing achievement gaps between Hispanic students and their white peers.

In the running for the 2008 Broad Prize are two neighboring school districts: Miami-Dade County and Broward County, the nation's fourth and sixth largest districts, respectively. This year's finalists include three previous finalists, one of which is a former Broad Prize winner. This is Miami-Dade's third consecutive year as a finalist, and the third time Aldine has been one of the top five districts since the Prize was first awarded in 2002. Long Beach, which won The Broad Prize in 2003, has been a finalist every year it has been eligible. 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. 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 that stood out in areas that included:

- Academic performance and improvement on state exams compared with other districts in the state with similar low-income student populations
- Closure of income and ethnic achievement gaps
- College readiness indicators such as graduation rates, SAT, ACT and Advanced Placement exam data

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.