

THE 2009 BROAD PRIZE FOR URBAN EDUCATION

Summary of District Data Report for Alief Independent School District

The Broad Prize for Urban Education uses student achievement data across several elements to identify urban school systems that are attaining high levels of performance as well as improving over time. Six elements are considered when determining the winner and finalists for the annual \$2 million Broad Prize:

1. Progress in closing achievement gaps between subgroups.
2. Absolute proficiency rates and growth in proficiency rates vs. the state.
3. Residuals that indicate whether a district is outperforming expectations given its poverty rate.
4. Graduation rates.
5. Performance on college readiness tests.
6. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP).

The information that follows represents a summary of The 2009 Broad Prize data for Alief Independent School District in Houston, Texas. Additional details on the data described below may be found in the 2009 district data report available at www.broadprize.org.

KEY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Between 2005 and 2008, the district showed better than expected improvement than other Texas school districts that serve students with similar family income levels in reading at all school levels (elementary, middle, high) and in math at the middle and high school levels.
- In 2008, 92% of schools in the district met AYP.
- Between 2005 and 2008, the district narrowed 63% of its achievement gaps in reading and math. In particular, it narrowed 100% of its external achievement gaps between its African-American and Hispanic students and the state's white students, and its low-income students and the state's non-low-income students.
- Between 2005 and 2008, SAT and Advanced Placement participation rates for African-American students increased in the district.
- Of 30 possible opportunities to demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the state in reading and math, the district does so in only 9 instances (30%).
- Average graduation rates for all students overall, African-American, and Hispanic students decreased between 2003 and 2006.

ACHIEVEMENT GAPS

The Broad Prize analysis looks at whether or not a district is closing achievement gaps among income and ethnic groups.

- Of 19 potential gap closures in reading (2005-2008) between African-American and white students, Hispanic and white students, and low-income and non-low-income students at the elementary, middle and high school levels, 12 gaps are closing (63%). In addition, 0% of internal reading achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles) in the state of Texas and 0% of internal reading gaps are among the largest in the state (bottom two deciles).

- Of the 19 potential gap closures in math (2005-2008) between African-American and white students, Hispanic and white students, and low-income and non-low-income students at the elementary, middle and high school levels, 12 gaps are closing (63%). In addition, 33% of internal math achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles) in the state of Texas and 0% of internal math gaps are among the largest in the state (bottom two deciles).

PROFICIENCY RATES VS. THE STATE

The Broad Prize analysis looks at whether or not a district is demonstrating higher proficiency gains than the rest of the state and whether or not the district is improving proficiency rates faster than the rest of the state.

- Of 15 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the state* in reading, the district does so in 7 instances in 2008 (47%). Low-income students at all school levels are performing at higher absolute proficiency rates in reading than their peers in the rest of the state.
- From 2005-2008, of 16 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the state* in reading, the district does so in 10 instances (63%). The district is primarily improving faster than the state at the high school level (6 of the 10 instances). All available subgroups at the high school level improved faster than their peers in the rest of the state.
- Of 15 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the state* in math, the district does so in 2 instances in 2008 (13%). Only African-American students at the high school level and low-income students at the middle school are performing at higher absolute proficiency rates in math than their peers in the rest of the state.
- From 2005-2008, of 16 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the state* in math, the district does so in 8 instances (50%). The majority of instances occur at the high school level (5 of the 8 instances).

The Broad Prize analysis also looks at whether or not a higher percentage of a district's students are performing at the highest achievement level on the state assessment than their peers in the rest of the state and whether or not the district is improving rates at the highest achievement level faster than the rest of the state. This analysis is particularly relevant for states where ceiling effects may be a factor.

- Of 15 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher rates at the highest achievement level than the state* in reading, the district does so in 4 instances in 2008 (27%). African-American and low-income students at the middle and high school levels are demonstrating higher rates at the highest achievement level than the state in reading.
- From 2005-2008, of 16 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the state at the highest achievement level* in reading, the district does so in 7 instances (44%). The majority of instances occur at the high school level (5 of the 7 instances).
- Of 15 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher rates at the highest achievement level than the state* in math, the district does so in 3 instances in 2008 (20%). Low-income students at the middle and high school levels are demonstrating higher rates at the highest achievement level than the state in math.
- From 2005-2008, of 16 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the state at the highest achievement level* in math, the district does so in 0 instances (0%).

STANDARDIZED RESIDUALS

The Broad Prize runs regressions for all districts in the state to determine whether or not a district is demonstrating greater-than-expected performance (2008 proficiency levels) and/or greater-than-

expected improvement (trend data from 2005 to 2008) given the district's poverty level. A positive residual signifies that the district is beating expectations given its level of poverty.

- In reading, 2 of 3 performance residuals (elementary, middle and high school) are positive (67%) and 3 of 3 improvement residuals are positive (100%).
- In math, 1 of 3 performance residuals (elementary, middle and high school) is positive (33%) and 2 of 3 improvement residuals are positive (67%).

GRADUATION RATES

The Broad Prize uses three national definitions to determine an estimated graduation rate for the district. The calculations used are the Averaged Freshman Graduation Rate, the Urban Institute Method, and the Manhattan Institute Method.

- Using the average for all three graduation rates, the district is demonstrating an average annual decrease of -1 percentage point per year for the period 2003-2006 (the most recent publicly available data) for all students. A similar negative trend can be seen for African-American students (-1 percentage point per year) and Hispanic students (-2 percentage points per year), while there was an increase for white students (1 percentage point per year).
- Using the average for all three graduation rates, the district is graduating an estimated 54% of its students overall, 49% of African-American students and 47% of its Hispanic students.

COLLEGE READINESS

The Broad Prize analyzes SAT, ACT and Advanced Placement (AP) scores and participation rates as proxies for college readiness.

- In 2008, 54% of the district's seniors took the SAT exam. The mean composite SAT score for all senior test-takers in 2008 in the district was 892 (992 for white students and 839 for African-American students, representing a 153 point gap, and 869 for Hispanic students, representing a 123 point gap). Between 2005 and 2008, average scores and participation rates simultaneously increased for African-American students.
- In 2008, 14% of the district's seniors took the ACT exam. The mean composite ACT score for all senior test-takers in 2008 in the district was 18 (17 for African-American students and 18 for Hispanic students). Between 2005 and 2008, average scores remained steady for all student groups while participation rates decreased for all student groups.
- In 2008, 12% of the district's juniors and seniors took an AP exam (14% of white students, 6% of African-American students, representing an 8 point gap, and 9% of Hispanic students, representing a 5 point gap). The percent of tests taken with scores of 3 or above for all junior and senior test-takers in the district in 2008 was 37% (49% for white students and 23% for African-American students, representing a 26 point gap, and 33% for Hispanic test takers, representing a 16 point gap). Between 2005 and 2008, nearly all student groups increased their participation rates, but only white students simultaneously increased their passing rates.

ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

The Broad Prize reviews district AYP status each year.

- The district met AYP in 2005 and 2007, but did not meet AYP in 2006 or 2008.
- The percent of schools in the district meeting AYP targets in 2008 was 92% vs. 85% of schools in the state.