

THE 2009 BROAD PRIZE FOR URBAN EDUCATION

Summary of District Data Report for Anchorage 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 Anchorage School District in Anchorage, Alaska. 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

- In reading, the district is beating expectations in performance and in improvement given the district's poverty level, at all school levels (elementary, middle, high)..
- SAT mean total scores have increased for all student groups while participation rates have either increased or remained flat for all student groups.
- In 2008, nearly all of Anchorage's student subgroups achieved higher average proficiency rates than their counterparts statewide in reading and math at all school levels (elementary, middle and high school).white
- At the high school level, the district is narrowing all achievement gaps in reading and about 70% of gaps in math.
- Average graduation rates for African-American and Hispanic students are lower than the eligible district average and all student subgroups' graduation rates are decreasing.

ACHIEVEMENT GAPS

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

- Of 21 potential gap closures in reading (2005-2008) between Hispanic and white students, African-American and white students, and low-income and non-low-income students at the elementary, middle and high school levels, 16 gaps are closing (76%). In addition, 0% of internal reading achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles) in the state of Alaska while 33% of internal reading gaps are among the largest in the state (bottom two deciles).
- Of the 21 potential gap closures in math (2005-2008) between Hispanic and white students, African-American and white students, and low-income and non-low-income students at the

elementary, middle and high school levels, 11 gaps are closing (52%). In addition, 0% of internal math achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles) in the state of Alaska while 33% 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 12 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the rest of the state* in reading, the district does so in all 12 instances in 2008 (100%).
- From 2005-2008, of 12 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the rest of the state* in reading, the district only does so in 4 instances (33%). The district's strongest improvement in reading relative to the state is at the high school level with low-income students.
- Of 12 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the rest of the state* in math, the district does so in 11 instances in 2008 (92%). The only area where the district's students are not demonstrating higher proficiency rates than their peers is at the middle school level with low-income students.
- From 2005-2008, of 12 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the rest of the state* in math, the district does so in 4 instances (33%). All four instances occurred at the high school level.

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. However, in the case of Anchorage, no data for the proficient or advanced categories were available at the time of analysis.

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

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 for Hispanic students (-1 percentage point per year), while the trend for white students is remaining flat.

- Using the average for all three graduation rates, the district is graduating an estimated 68% of its students overall, 75% of its white students, 58% of its African-American students, and 65% 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, 38% 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 1,073 (1,105 for white students and 925 for African-American students, representing a 180 point gap, and 977 for Hispanic students, representing a 128 point gap). Over the last four years, there has been an average annual increase in the average score for the district in every subgroup, while only Hispanic and white students have demonstrated an average annual increase in participation rates.
- In 2008, 16% 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 23 (24 for white students and 19 for African-American students, representing a 5 point gap, and 20 for Hispanic students, representing a 4 point gap). Participation rates for African-American and Hispanic students increased from 2005 to 2008.
- In 2008, 16% of the district's juniors and seniors took an AP exam (18% of white students and 6% of African-American students, representing a 12 point gap, and 12% of Hispanic students, representing a 6 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 66% (70% for white test-takers and 45% for African-American test takers, representing a 25 point gap, and 56% for Hispanic test takers, representing a 14 point gap). Over the last four years, the participation rates have demonstrated an average annual increase for all student subgroups, while the percent of tests scoring 3 or higher have decreased each year, on average.

ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS

The Broad Prize reviews district AYP status each year.

- The district did not meet AYP in 2005, 2006, 2007 or 2008.
- The percent of schools in the district meeting AYP targets in 2008 was 44% vs. 59% of schools in the state.