

## THE 2009 BROAD PRIZE FOR URBAN EDUCATION

### Summary of District Data Report for Baltimore County Public Schools

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 Baltimore County Public Schools in Towson, Maryland. Additional details on the data described below may be found in the 2009 district data report available at [www.broadprize.org](http://www.broadprize.org).

**A special note regarding Maryland student achievement data:** The Broad Prize typically includes data for the last four years (2005 – 2008) when analyzing average change over time. However, in 2006, tests used for math accountability at the high school level changed from end-of-grade to end-of-course tests. Therefore, results from previous years were not considered comparable. In 2008, Maryland changed its reporting standards for the high school assessment. As a result, 2008 high school test results were not comparable to previous years and were not included in change calculations.

#### KEY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Between 2005 and 2008, the district narrowed 50% of its achievement gaps overall.
- In 2008, the district outperformed other districts in Maryland that serve students with similar family income levels in reading and math at the elementary and middle school levels.
- Using the average for three graduate rate measures, the district graduating an estimated 80% of its students overall, 82% of its white students and 75% of its African-American students in 2006. These are among the highest graduation rates of the eligible districts.
- In 2008, no student groups at the high school level performed at higher absolute proficiency rates in reading or in math than their peers in the rest of the state. Between 2005 and 2008, no student groups at the middle school level improved faster than their peers in the rest of the state in reading or in math.
- Average graduation rates for all students overall and for white and African-American students separately, decreased from 2003 to 2006.
- In 2008, 22% of white juniors and seniors and 8% of African-American juniors and seniors took at least one Advanced Placement exam, representing a 14 point gap. The passing rate

for white test-takers was 76% compared to 31% for African-American test takers, representing a 45 point gap.

### **ACHIEVEMENT GAPS**

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

- Of 18 potential gap closures in reading (2005-2008) between African-American and white students, and low-income and non-low-income students at the elementary, middle and high school levels, 10 gaps are closing (56%). In addition, 0% of internal reading achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles) in the state of Maryland and 0% of internal reading gaps are among the largest in the state (bottom two deciles).
- Of the 18 potential gap closures in math (2005-2008) between African-American and white students, and low-income and non-low-income students at the elementary, middle and high school levels, 8 gaps are closing (44%). In addition, 0% of internal math achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles) in the state of Maryland while 17% 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 16 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the state* in reading, the district does so in 6 instances in 2008 (38%). Nearly all student groups at the elementary school level are performing at higher absolute proficiency rates in reading than their peers in the rest of the state (4 of the 6 instances).
- From 2005-2008, of 16 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the state* in reading, the district does so in 6 instances (38%). The district demonstrates faster improvement in reading relative to the state primarily at the high school level (5 of the 6 instances).
- Of 16 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the state* in math, the district does so in 6 instances in 2008 (38%).
- From 2005-2008, of 16 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the state* in math, the district does so in 2 instances (13%). Both instances occur at the elementary 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.

- Of 16 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher rates at the highest achievement level than the state* in reading, the district does so in 7 instances in 2008 (44%). Low-income students at all school levels demonstrated higher rates than their peers in the rest of the state.
- 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 only 1 instance (6%). Only low income students at the high school level are improving faster than the state.
- Of 16 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher rates at the highest achievement level than the state* in math, the district does so in 2 instances in 2008 (13%). Both instances occur at the elementary school level.

- 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 4 instances (25%). All four instances occur at the elementary school level.

### **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 1 of 3 improvement residuals is positive (33%).
- In math, 2 of 3 performance residuals (elementary, middle and high school) are positive (67%) 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 white students (-1 percentage point per year) and African-American students (-2 percentage points per year).
- Using the average for all three graduate rates, the district is graduating an estimated 80% of its students overall, 82% of its white students and 75% of its African-American students.

### **COLLEGE READINESS**

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

- In 2008, 53% 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 981 (1,082 for white students and 817 for African-American students, representing a 265 point gap). Between 2005 and 2008, average scores decreased for every subgroup; during this period, participation rates increased 3 percentage points per year on average for African-American students.
- In 2008, 19% of the district's juniors and seniors took an AP exam (22% of white students and 8% of African-American students, representing a 14 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 70% (76% for white test-takers and 31% for African-American test takers, representing a 45 point gap). Between 2005 and 2008, there was no change in the participation rate for any student group and only Asian students increased their passing rates.

### **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 85% vs. 83% of schools in the state.