

## THE 2009 BROAD PRIZE FOR URBAN EDUCATION

### Summary of District Data Report for Buffalo 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 Buffalo Public Schools in Buffalo, New York. 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 New York student achievement data:** The Broad Prize typically includes data for the last four years (2005 – 2008) when analyzing average change over time. However, at the elementary and middle school levels, test standards changed in 2006 and so previous years' proficiency results were not comparable and were not included in change calculations. In 2007, more English Language Learners in grades 3-8 were required to participate in the general reading assessment; as a result, 2006 reading proficiency results were not considered comparable.

#### KEY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Participation rates on Advanced Placement exams have increased for nearly student groups.
- Between 2005 and 2008, the district narrowed all of its external achievement gaps in reading and in math.
- In 2008, nearly all of the district's internal achievement gaps in math were among the largest in the state.
- In 2008, no student group in the district performed at higher absolute proficiency rates in reading or in math than their peers in the rest of the state.
- In 2008, the district showed lower-than-expected performance compared to other districts in New York that serve students with similar family income levels in reading and math at the elementary and middle school levels. Between 2005 and 2008, the district also showed lower-than-expected improvement compared to other similar districts in the state in math at all school levels and in reading at the middle and high school levels.
- From 2005 to 2006, the graduation rate for all students overall declined by 5 percentage points.

## ACHIEVEMENT GAPS

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

- Of 24 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, 10 gaps are closing (42%). In addition, 0% of internal reading achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles) in the state of New York while 38% of internal reading gaps are among the largest in the state (bottom two deciles).
- Of the 24 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, 12 gaps are closing (50%). In addition, 0% of internal math achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles) in the state of New York while 88% 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 17 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the state* in reading, the district does so in 0 instances in 2008 (0%). No subgroup in the district is performing at higher absolute proficiency rates in reading than their peers in the rest of the state.
- From 2005-2008, of 17 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the state* in reading, the district does so in 11 instances (65%). All elementary students in the district are improving faster relative to the state in reading (6 of the 11 instances).
- Of 17 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the state* in math, the district does so in 0 instances in 2008 (0%). No subgroup in the district is performing at higher absolute proficiency rates in math than their peers in the rest of the state.
- From 2005-2008, of 17 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the state* in math, the district does so in 9 instances (53%). The district demonstrates faster improvement in math relative to the state primarily at the elementary school level (5 of the 9 instances).

The Broad Prize analysis also looks at whether or not a higher percentage of a district's students is 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 17 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher rates at the highest achievement level than the state* in reading, the district does so in 0 instances in 2008 (0%).
- From 2005-2008, of 17 possible opportunities to *demonstrate better improvement rates than the state at the highest achievement level* in reading, the district does so in 11 instances (65%).
- Of 17 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher rates at the highest achievement level than the state* in math, the district does so in 0 instances in 2008 (0%).
- From 2005-2008, of 17 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, 0 of 2 performance residuals (elementary, middle and high school) are positive (0%) and 1 of 3 improvement residuals is positive (33%).
- In math, 0 of 2 performance residuals (elementary, middle and high school) are positive (0%) and 0 of 3 improvement residuals are positive (0%).

## **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 annual decrease of -5 percentage points for the period 2005-2006 (the most recent publicly available data) for all students. A similar negative trend can be seen for white students (-4 percentage points), African-American students (-6 percentage points), and for Hispanic students (-4 percentage points).
- Using the average for all three graduation rates, the district is graduating an estimated 54% of its students overall, 60% of its white students, 49% of its African-American students, and 43% 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, 62% 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 834. Between 2005 and 2008, there has been a decrease in the average score for the district; however, participation rates have increased 1 percentage point per year on average.
- In 2008, 15% of the district's juniors and seniors took an AP exam (18% of white students and 11% of African-American and Hispanic students, representing a 7 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 15% (24% for white test-takers and 6% for African-American test takers, representing a 18 point gap, and 14% for Hispanic test takers, representing a 10 point gap). Between 2006 and 2008, the participation rate for all students increased for all subgroups while passing rates declined.

## **ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS**

The Broad Prize reviews district AYP status each year.

- The district did not meet AYP in 2005, 2006, 2007, or 2008.