

## THE 2009 BROAD PRIZE FOR URBAN EDUCATION

### Summary of District Data Report for Denver 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 Denver Public Schools in Denver, Colorado. 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).

#### KEY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Between 2005 and 2008, the district was more successful than the state at increasing the percentage of students – students overall, and low-income and Hispanic students taken separately – who achieved proficiency in reading and math at all school levels.
- Between 2005 and 2008, the district showed better than expected improvement than other Denver school districts that serve students with similar family income levels in reading and in math at all school levels (elementary, middle, high).
- Fifteen out of 18 of the district's internal achievement gaps are among the largest in the state of Denver.
- No student group in the district is performing at higher absolute proficiency rates in reading or in math than their peers in the rest of the state, with the exception of white students at the high school level.
- From 2005 to 2008, participation on the ACT exam decreased by 8 percentage points per year, on average.

#### 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 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, 11 gaps are closing (46%). In addition, 0% of internal reading achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest in the state of Colorado (top two deciles) and 89% 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 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, 9 gaps are closing (38%). In addition, 0% of internal math achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest in the state of Colorado (top two deciles) and 78% 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 rates 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 rest of the state* in reading, the district does so in 0 instances in 2008 (0%).
- From 2005-2008, of 15 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the rest of the state* in reading, the district does so in 11 instances (73%), primarily at the middle and high school levels.
- Of 15 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the rest of the state* in math, the district does so in only 1 instance in 2008 (7%). The only student group in which the district is demonstrating higher proficiency rates in math than the state is white students at the high school level.
- From 2005-2008, of 15 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the rest of the state* in math, the district does so in 13 instances (87%). Only Hispanic and white students at the elementary level did not improve faster than the rest of the state in math.

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 rest of the state* in reading, the district does so in 5 instances in 2008 (33%).
- From 2005-2008, of 15 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the rest of the state at the highest achievement level* in reading, the district does so in 4 instances (27%).
- Of 15 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher rates at the highest achievement level than the rest of the state* in math, the district does so in only 3 instances in 2008 (20%). All three instances occurred with white students.
- From 2005-2008, of 15 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the rest of the state at the highest achievement level* in math, the district does so in only 2 instances (13%).

### **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 3 performance residuals (elementary, middle and high school) are positive (0%) and 3 of 3 improvement residuals are positive (100%).
- In math, 2 of 3 performance residuals (elementary, middle and high school) are positive (67%) and 3 of 3 improvement residuals are positive (100%).

### **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 -2 percentage points 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 (-3 percentage points per year), Hispanic students (-5 percentage points per year), and white students (-4 percentage points per year).
- Using the average for all three graduation rates, in 2006 the district graduated an estimated 49% of its students overall, 53% of its African-American students, 37% of its Hispanic students, and 73% of its white students.

### **COLLEGE READINESS**

The Broad Prize analyzes SAT, ACT and Advanced Placement (AP) scores and participation rates as proxies for college readiness. From 2005 – 2007, no data for the subgroups were available for the ACT.

- In 2008, 78% 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 (23 for white students and 16 for African-American and Hispanic students, representing a 7 point gap). From 2005 to 2008, the mean composite score remained flat, while participation decreased by 8 percentage points per year, on average.
- In 2008, 18% of the district's juniors and seniors took an AP exam (31% of white students and 9% of African-American student, representing a 22 point gap, and 12% of Hispanic students, representing a 19 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% (51% for white students and 15% for African-American students, representing a 36 point gap, and 24% for Hispanic students, representing a 27 point gap). Between 2005 and 2008, only white test takers demonstrated an average annual increase in passing rates or in participation 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 32% vs. 60% of schools in the state.