

## THE 2009 BROAD PRIZE FOR URBAN EDUCATION

### Summary of District Data Report for Forsyth County 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 Forsyth County Schools in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. 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 North Carolina 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, reading test standards and inclusion policies changed in 2007 and 2008 respectively. As a result, neither year was comparable to previous years. At the high school level, the reading test changed in 2007 and was not comparable to previous years. Math test standards and inclusion policies changed at all levels in 2007. As a result, 2007 data were not comparable to previous years.

#### KEY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Between 2007 and 2008, the district narrowed all of its achievement gaps in math.
- In 2008, the district's student subgroups demonstrated higher rates at the highest achievement level than their peers in the state in reading and math in 50% of comparisons.
- Participation rates on the SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement exams have increased for nearly all student groups. Passing scores on the AP exams are also very high for most student groups.
- Between 2005 and 2008, the district showed better than expected improvement than other North Carolina school districts that serve students with similar family income levels in reading at all school levels and in math at the elementary and middle school levels.
- In 2008, 89% of the district's internal gaps in reading and math were among the largest in the state.
- Between 2003 and 2006, average graduation rates for students overall and for African-American and Hispanic students separately, experienced an average annual decrease.

- In 2008, 39% of the district's white juniors and seniors took an Advanced Placement exam compared to 7% of the district's African-American juniors and seniors, representing a 32 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 3 potential gap closures in reading (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, 1 gap is closing (33%). However, 0% of internal reading achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles) in the state of North Carolina while 89% of internal reading gaps are among the largest in the state (bottom two deciles).
- Of the 21 potential gap closures in math (2007-2008) 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, all 21 gaps are closing (100%). However, 0% of internal math achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles) in the state of North Carolina while 89% 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 state* in reading, the district does so in 3 instances in 2008 (25%).
- Of 12 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the state* in math, the district does so in 5 instances in 2008 (42%). White and non-low income students at the elementary and middle school levels and African-American students at the elementary school level are performing at higher absolute proficiency rates in math than their peers in the rest of the state.
- From 2007-2008, of 12 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the state* in math, the district does so in 4 instances (33%). Hispanic and low-income students at the elementary level and African-American and Hispanic students at the middle school level are improving faster than the state.

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 12 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher rates at the highest achievement level than the state* in reading, the district does so in 6 instances in 2008 (50%).
- Of 12 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher rates at the highest achievement level than the state* in math, the district does so in 6 instances in 2008 (50%).
- From 2007-2008, of 12 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the state at the highest achievement level* in math, the district does so in 5 instances (42%). The district demonstrates faster improvement in math relative to the state primarily at the elementary school level (4 of the 5 instances).

## 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 3 of 3 improvement residuals are positive (100%).
- In math, 1 of 2 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 white students (-1 percentage point per year), African-American students (-1 percentage point per year), and for Hispanic students (-6 percentage points per year).
- Using the average for all three graduation rates, the district is graduating an estimated 67% of its students overall, 75% of its white students, 57% of its African-American students, and 46% 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, 64% 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 1,009 (1,098 for white students and 833 for African-American students, representing a 265 point gap, and 969 for Hispanic students, representing a 129 point gap). Between 2005 and 2008, Hispanic and white students increased their average scores; participation rates increased 1 percentage point per year on average for African-American, Hispanic, and white students.
- In 2008, 12% 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 21 (24 for white students and 17 for African-American students, representing a 7 point gap). Between 2005 and 2008, means scores and participation rates increased for all students overall and for white students, but remained flat in both cases for African-American students.
- In 2008, 26% of the district's juniors and seniors took an AP exam (39% of white students and 7% of African-American students, representing a 32 point gap, and 15% of Hispanic students, representing a 24 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 73% (76% for white test-takers and 40% for African-American test takers, representing a 36 point gap, and 75% for Hispanic test takers, representing a 1 point gap). Between 2005 and 2008, the participation rates for white and Hispanic students increased; during the same period, only Hispanic students experienced an average annual increase in 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 12% vs. 31% of schools in the state.