

THE 2009 BROAD PRIZE FOR URBAN EDUCATION

Summary of District Data Report for Mesa Unified 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 Mesa Unified School District in Mesa, Arizona. Additional details on the data described below may be found in the 2009 district data report available at www.broadprize.org.

A special note regarding Arizona student achievement data: Student achievement data for non-low-income students were not available. Therefore, some analyses could not be conducted.

KEY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- In 2008, all student groups in the district performed at higher absolute proficiency rates in reading and math than their peers in the rest of the state. In addition, in many cases, a larger percentage of the district's students are attaining the highest achievement level on the state assessment compared to their peers in the rest of the state.
- Between 2005 and 2008, participation rates on all college readiness exams increased for Hispanic students.
- The district is beating expectations in performance given the district's poverty level, at all school levels (elementary, middle, and high) and in both subjects (reading and math).
- Between 2005 and 2008, the district only closed 17% of its achievement gaps in reading and math. Two-thirds of the district's internal achievement gaps in 2008 were among the largest in the state.
- Between 2005 and 2008, no student groups increased proficiency rates faster than the state.
- Graduation rates decreased for all subgroups from 2003 to 2006.

ACHIEVEMENT GAPS

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

- Of 9 potential gap closures in reading (2005-2008) between Hispanic and white students at the elementary, middle and high school levels, only 2 gaps are closing (22%). In addition, 0% of internal reading achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles)

in the state of Arizona while 67% of internal reading gaps are among the largest in the state (bottom two deciles).

- Of the 9 potential gap closures in math (2005-2008) between Hispanic and white students at the elementary, middle and high school levels, only 1 gap is closing (11%). In addition, 0% of internal math achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles) in the state of Arizona while 67% 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%). All subgroups with data available in the district are performing at higher absolute proficiency rates in reading than their peers in the rest of the state.
- From 2005-2008, of 12 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the rest of the state* in reading, the district does so in 0 instances (0%).
- Of 12 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the rest of the state* in math, the district does so in 12 instances in 2008 (100%). All subgroups with available data in the district are performing at higher absolute proficiency rates in math than their peers in the rest of the state.
- From 2005-2008, of 12 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the rest of the state* in math, the district does so in 0 instances (0%).

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 12 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher rates at the highest achievement level than the rest of the state* in reading, the district does so in 9 instances in 2008 (75%). A higher percentage of students overall, as well as low-income and white students, attain the highest achievement level on the state's reading assessment compared to their peers in the state at the elementary, middle, and high school levels.
- From 2005-2008, of 12 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the rest of the state at the highest achievement level* in reading, the district does so in 0 instances (0%).
- Of 12 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher rates at the highest achievement level than the rest of the state* in math, the district does so in 11 instances in 2008 (92%). Hispanic students at the elementary level did not demonstrate higher attainment rates than the state.
- From 2005-2008, of 12 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the rest of 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, 3 of 3 performance residuals (elementary, middle and high school) are positive (100%) and 1 of 3 improvement residuals are positive (33%).
- In math, 3 of 3 performance residuals (elementary, middle and high school) are positive (100%) 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 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 for Hispanic students (-2 percentage points per year).
- Using the average for all three graduation rates, the district is graduating an estimated 69% of its students overall, 77% of its white students and 59% 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, 26% 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 1,068 (1,092 for white students and 938 for African-American students, representing a 154 point gap, and 985 for Hispanic students, representing a 107 point gap). Over the last four years, the average score for all student subgroups has decreased ever year, on average; however, participation rates for Hispanic and white students have increased every year, on average.
- In 2008, 18% 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 20 for African-American students and Hispanic students, representing a 4 point gap). Over the last four years, only African-American students showed an average annual increase in their average score, and only Hispanic students showed an average annual increase in participation rates.
- In 2008, 12% of the district's juniors and seniors took an AP exam (13% of white students and 9% of Hispanic students, representing a 4 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 68% (70% of white test-takers and 41% for African-American test takers, representing a 29 point gap, and 65% for Hispanic test takers, representing a 5 point gap). Over the last four years, participation rates for all available student subgroups have shown an average annual increase, but the percent of tests taken with scores of 3 or above has only increased for Hispanic students.

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 68% vs. 73% of schools in the state.