

THE 2009 BROAD PRIZE FOR URBAN EDUCATION

Summary of District Data Report for St. Lucie 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 St. Lucie County Public Schools in Fort Pierce, Florida. Additional details on the data described below may be found in the 2009 district data report available at www.broadprize.org.

KEY STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- Between 2005 and 2008, participation rates on the SAT, ACT, and AP exams increased for almost all student groups. In particular, the average annual increases in ACT participation rates for all students overall, for African-American and Hispanic students, were among the highest of the eligible districts.
- Between 2005 and 2008, the district narrowed 33% of its achievement gaps in reading and math. During this period, the district did not narrow any of its achievement gaps between African-American and white students.
- Of 36 possible opportunities to demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the rest of the state in reading and in math, the district did so in only 2 instances in 2008. From 2005-2008, of 36 possible opportunities to improve faster than the rest of the state in reading and in math, the district did so in only 1 instance.
- In 2008, the district showed lower-than-expected performance compared to other districts in Florida that serve students with similar family income levels in reading and math at all school levels.
- Between 2003 and 2006, the average graduation rate for all students overall and for African-American and white students declined 1 percentage point 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 27 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, 9 gaps are closing (33%). However, 11% of internal reading achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles) in the

state of Florida and 0% of internal reading gaps are among the largest in the state (bottom two deciles).

- Of the 27 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, 9 gaps are closing (33%). However, 11% of internal math achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles) in the state of Florida and 0% 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 18 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the rest of the state* in reading, the district does so in only 2 instances in 2008 (11%). Only African-American and low-income students at the middle school level are performing at higher absolute proficiency rates in reading than their peers in the rest of the state.
- From 2005-2008, of 18 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the rest of the state* in reading, the district does so in 0 instances (0%). No student groups are demonstrating higher proficiency rates than the rest of the state in reading.
- Of 18 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the rest of the state* in math, the district does so in 0 instances in 2008 (0%). No student groups are demonstrating higher proficiency rates than the rest of the state in math.
- From 2005-2008, of 18 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the rest of the state* in math, the district does so in only 1 instance (6%). Only Hispanic students at the high 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 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 18 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher rates at the highest achievement level than the rest of the state* in reading, the district does so in only 2 instances in 2008 (11%).
- From 2005-2008, of 18 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 18 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher rates at the highest achievement level than the rest of the state* in math, the district does so in 0 instances in 2008 (0%).
- From 2005-2008, of 18 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, 0 of 3 performance residuals (elementary, middle and high school) are positive (0%) and 1 of 3 improvement residuals is positive (33%).
- In math, 0 of 3 performance residuals (elementary, middle and high school) are positive (0%) and 1 of 3 improvement residuals is positive (33%).

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 (-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 African-American and white students (-1 percentage point per year) while there was no change for Hispanic students.
- Using the average for all three graduation rates, the district is graduating an estimated 56% of its students overall, 56% of its white students, 53% of its African-American students, and 64% 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, 37% 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 979 (1,020 for white students and 887 for African-American students, representing a 133 point gap, and 958 for Hispanic students, representing a 62 point gap). Between 2005 and 2008, participation rates for all student subgroups exhibited an average annual increase while only Asian and Hispanic students simultaneously increased their average scores.
- In 2008, 46% 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 (21 for white students and 16 for African-American students, representing a 5 point gap, and 17 for Hispanic students, representing a 4 point gap). Between 2005 and 2008, all subgroups increased their participation rates while average scores primarily remained flat.
- In 2008, 12% of the district's juniors and seniors took an AP exam (12% of white students and 8% of African-American students, representing a 4 point gap, and 14% of Hispanic students, representing a -2 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% (18% for white test-takers and 6% for African-American test takers, representing a 12 point gap, and 17% for Hispanic test takers, representing a 1 point gap). Between 2005 and 2008, participation rates increased for African-American and Hispanic student subgroups while passing rates 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 10% vs. 24% of schools in the state.