

## THE 2009 BROAD PRIZE FOR URBAN EDUCATION

### Summary of District Data Report for United Independent 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 United Independent School District in Laredo, Texas. 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 narrowed achievement gaps between its low-income and non-low-income students in reading at all school levels (elementary, middle, and high) and in elementary and middle school reading.
- In 2006, the district graduated an estimated 71% of its Hispanic students. This is one of the highest rates for Hispanic students among the eligible districts.
- In 2008, of 24 possible opportunities to demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the state in reading and math, the district did so in only 2 instances.
- In 2008, the district showed lower-than-expected performance compared to other districts in Texas that serve students with similar family income levels in reading at all school levels and in math at the elementary and middle school levels.
- Between 2005 and 2008, the SAT participation rate decreased an average of 5 percentage points per year for all students overall. This is the largest average annual decrease among the eligible districts.

#### ACHIEVEMENT GAPS

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

- Of 12 potential gap closures in reading (2005-2008) between Hispanic and white students, and low-income and non-low-income students at the elementary, middle and high school levels, 7 gaps are closing (58%). In addition, 0% of internal reading achievement gaps in 2008 are among the smallest (top two deciles) in the state of Texas while 100% of internal reading gaps are among the largest in the state (bottom two deciles).
- Of the 12 potential gap closures in math (2005-2008) between Hispanic and white students, and low-income and non-low-income students at the elementary, middle and high school

levels, 6 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 Texas 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 12 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the state in reading*, the district does so in 0 instances in 2008 (0%). No students 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 state in reading*, the district only does so in 3 instances (25%). All three instances occur at the middle school level.
- Of 12 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher proficiency rates than the state in math*, the district does so in 2 instances in 2008 (17%). Only Hispanic and low income students at the high school level 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 state in math*, the district does so in 4 instances (33%). Three of the four instances occur at the middle school level.

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 0 instances in 2008 (0%).
- From 2005-2008, of 12 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the state at the highest achievement level in reading*, the district does so in 0 instances (0%). No student groups are demonstrating faster improvement in reading relative to the state.
- Of 12 possible opportunities to *demonstrate higher rates at the highest achievement level than the state in math*, the district does so in 1 instance in 2008 (8%). Only Hispanic students at the elementary school level are demonstrating higher rates at the highest achievement level than the state.
- From 2005-2008, of 12 possible opportunities to *improve faster than the state at the highest achievement level in math*, the district does so in 2 instances (17%). Both instances occur at the elementary school level.

### **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, 1 of 3 performance residuals (elementary, middle and high school) is positive (33%) 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 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 Hispanic students (-1 percentage point per year).
- Using the average for all three graduation rates, the district is graduating an estimated 72% of its students overall, and 71% 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, 54% 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 850 (928 for white students and 849 for Hispanic students, representing a 79 point gap). Between 2005 and 2008, the participation rate decreased an average of 5 percentage points per year; however, average scores increased for all available subgroups.
- In 2008, 15% 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 (17 for Hispanic students). Between 2005 and 2008, there was a decrease in the participation rates while average scores remained steady.
- In 2008, 14% of the district's juniors and seniors took an AP exam (14% of Hispanic students). The percent of tests taken with scores of 3 or above for all junior and senior test-takers in the district in 2008 was 42% (42% for Hispanic test takers). Between 2005 and 2008, the percent of tests scoring 3 or higher decreased for Hispanic students while participation rates increased.

## **ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS**

The Broad Prize reviews district AYP status each year.

- The district met AYP in 2005, 2006, and 2007, but did not meet AYP in 2008.
- The percent of schools in the district meeting AYP targets in 2008 was 72% vs. 85% of schools in the state.