

Special Broad Prize Edition

\$1 Million in Scholarships for 2009 Grads

BISD Wins 2008 Broad Prize



On October 14, 2008, at a ceremony held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, two former U.S. Secretaries of Education, Rod Paige and Richard Riley, announced that Brownsville ISD had won the 2008 Broad Prize, the largest education prize in the country awarded to the most improved urban school district.

The Broad Prize is an annual award that honors large urban school districts that demonstrate the strongest student achievement and improvement in America while narrowing achievement gaps between income and ethnic groups.



The Broad Prize is a 65 lb. bronze statue. It was created by Tom Otterness, a renowned American sculptor.

“Brownsville is the best kept secret in America,” said Eli Broad, founder of the Eli and Edythe Broad Foundation. “Other school districts can learn a great deal from Brownsville’s success.”

As the winner of The Broad Prize, Brownsville Independent School District will receive \$1 million in college scholarships for graduating seniors this spring.

The Broad Prize was started in 2002. Previous winners include the New York City Department of Education (2007), Boston Public Schools (2006), Norfolk Public Schools, Va. (2005), Garden Grove Unified School District, Calif. (2004), Long Beach Unified School District, Calif.(2003) and the Houston Independent School District (2002).

Frequently Asked Questions ?

- Create competition and provide incentives for districts to improve.
- Showcase the best practices of successful districts.

WHAT IS THE BROAD PRIZE FOR URBAN EDUCATION?

The \$2 million Broad Prize for Urban Education, established in 2002, is the largest education award in the country given to school districts. The Broad Prize is awarded each year to honor urban school districts that demonstrate the greatest overall performance and improvement in student achievement while reducing achievement gaps among poor and minority students.

WHAT ARE THE GOALS OF THE BROAD PRIZE?

- The Broad Prize for Urban Education has four goals:
- Reward districts that improve achievement levels of disadvantaged students.
 - Restore the public’s confidence in our nation’s public schools by highlighting successful urban districts.

WHO WERE THE FINALISTS FOR THE 2008 BROAD PRIZE?

- Aldine Independent School District, Texas
 - Broward County Public Schools, Fla.
 - Long Beach Unified School District, Calif.
 - Miami-Dade County Public Schools
- Long Beach won The Broad Prize in 2003. This was the third year Aldine and Miami-Dade have been finalists. Broward was a first-time finalist.

CAN DISTRICTS APPLY FOR OR BE NOMINATED FOR THE BROAD PRIZE?

No. One hundred of the country’s largest districts that also serve significant percentages of low income and minority students are automatically eligible for The Broad Prize. These 100 districts are automatically analyzed and considered each year based on publicly available data.

FAQ Continued on Page 2...



WHO CHOOSES THE WINNER?

A Selection Jury comprised of ten nationally prominent business, government and public service leaders, including two former U.S. secretaries of education, chooses the winner.

The selection jury that chose this year's winner included:

- **Henry Cisneros**, chairman and CEO, CityView America, former president of Univision and former U.S. secretary of housing and urban development
- **John Engler**, president and CEO of the National Association of Manufacturers and former governor of Michigan
- **Louis V. Gerstner, Jr.**, retired chairman and CEO, IBM Corporation
- **Susan Hockfield**, president, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- **James B. Hunt, Jr.**, chairman of the board, Hunt Institute for Educational Leadership and Policy and former governor of North Carolina
- **Shirley Ann Jackson**, president, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
- **Roderick Paige**, chairman and founder, Chartwell Education Group and former U.S. secretary of education
- **Richard W. Riley**, former U.S. secretary of education and former governor of South Carolina
- **Andrew L. Stern**, international president of Service Employees International Union
- **Lawrence Summers**, Charles W. Eliot university professor at Harvard University and former president of Harvard University

The selection jury evaluated quantitative data on the finalists, consisting of publicly available student performance data compiled and analyzed by MPR Associates, Inc., a leading national education research consulting firm. In addition, the jury evaluated the five finalist districts' policies and practices based on site visits, interviews with administrators, teachers, principals, parents, community leaders, school board members and union representatives, and classroom observations. The site visits were conducted by a site visit team led by School Works, an education consulting company based in Beverly, Mass.

WHAT MADE BROWNSVILLE STAND OUT AMONG LARGE URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS?

Among the reasons Brownsville stood out among large urban school districts:

- ★ **Outperforming other similar Texas districts.**
- ★ **Greater improvement by ethnic and income subgroups.**
- ★ **Closing achievement gaps.**
- ★ **Strong district-wide policies and practices.**

Superintendent's Message...

Dear BISD Friends:

I believe that everyone in the Rio Grande Valley knows that Brownsville ISD is the recipient of the prestigious 2008 Broad Prize for Urban Education.

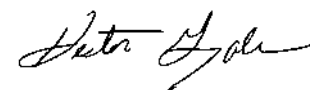
It was my privilege to attend the announcement ceremony in mid-October at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City with our Board of Trustees. A representative from one of our local teacher organizations also accompanied us. Prior to the announcement, I had the honor of participating on a panel with the superintendents from the other four Broad finalist districts. We answered questions in front of an audience of the nation's leading education experts.

Representing our school district in New York was the highlight of my professional life. It was an experience that I will never forget. I will always be grateful for the opportunity to accept the Broad Prize on behalf of Brownsville ISD.

The national spotlight is shining brightly on our students, parents, employees, district, and community. We are receiving numerous calls and requests from other school districts and media sources for interviews and site visits. Brownsville has made history in raising student achievement. Our doors are open. We are pleased to share our successes and challenges. As we have learned from others, now others can learn from us. It is an exhilarating time.

Winning the 2008 Broad Prize means that our 2009 high school seniors and graduating juniors will be eligible for \$1 million in college scholarships. We encourage our students and their parents to contact their high school counselors as soon as possible in order to apply.

My sincere thanks and heartfelt appreciation go out to all those who support our Brownsville students and district.



Hector Gonzales
Superintendent of Schools



Pictured is BISD Superintendent Hector Gonzales speaking with fellow superintendents, Long Beach's Chris Steinhauser (left) and Broward's Jim Notter (right), on The Broad Prize Superintendent's Panel at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City.



WE DID IT: Gonzalez Elementary students share their excitement over the district's recent Broad Prize Award. Each BISD school will receive a flag and banner to display.

CHEERING SUCCESS: Six days after the Broad Prize announcement, BISD hosted a citywide celebration at the Brownsville Events Center. Approximately 800 people joined in the festivities.



Brownsville Wins the CUBE Award

The National School Boards Association's Council of Urban Boards of Education (CUBE) recently selected Brownsville ISD as the winner of the Annual Award for Urban School Board Excellence, an award that honors school districts demonstrating progress in educating children and serving as role models for excellence in school board governance in large urban districts.

The two other finalists were Chula Vista Elementary School District in California and the School District of Omaha in Nebraska. The winning district was announced on September 27, 2008, at an award ceremony during the annual CUBE conference in Las Vegas.

A panel of judges selected the winner based on the school districts' submissions and independent research. Applicants presented evidence that exhibited their accomplishments in four core areas: school board governance, community engagement, closing the achievement gap, and academic excellence.

Recent winners include Houston Independent School District in Texas and Miami-Dade Public Schools in Florida. The winning district will receive recognition in CUBE programming and NSBA publications, including CUBE's advocacy newsletter, the Urban Advocate.

For four decades, CUBE has been at the forefront in helping urban school districts strive for excellence. Established in 1967 by the National School Boards Association's Board of Directors, CUBE is the only national membership organization governed solely by urban school board members and dedicated to the needs and interests of urban school boards. CUBE's mission is to create opportunities for urban school board leaders to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to be effective policy makers and advocates for excellence and equity in public education. CUBE member districts total 113 districts, covering 36 states, including nine of the largest school districts in the United States. These urban educators govern and educate nearly eight million students in more than 12,000 schools with a collective budget of near \$80 billion.



Applying for a Broad Scholarship

Brownsville high school seniors and graduating juniors who graduate in 2009 will be eligible for \$1 million in college scholarships. Broad Prize scholarships are awarded to students who demonstrate financial need and show a record of academic improvement during their high school careers. The scholarship process is managed by Scholarship and Recognition Programs, a unit of Educational Testing Service (ETS).

THE BROAD PRIZE SCHOLARSHIP IS A TWO STEP PROCESS.

THE FIRST STEP is an initial application available online at <http://www.broadprize.org> or available from the head/senior counselor at each BISD high school campus. Students should complete the "Applicant Information" section (typed or printed legibly) and then return it to the guidance counselor who will complete the "School Information" section. All initial applications must be received by ETS Scholarship & Recognition Programs, no later than December 15, 2008. The campus deadline is December 1, 2008 to ensure proper document review and compliance with mailing instructions and deadlines.

IN THE SECOND STEP, applicants chosen by ETS will be required to complete a secondary application by February 2, 2009 and must also submit an official transcript, letters of recommendation and a copy of their FAFSA Student Aid Report (Required FAFSA pin# available at <http://www.pin.ed.gov> and FAFSA form available at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>).

The deadline for secondary applications is March 9, 2009 and winners will be announced in May/June 2009.

Number and Value of Scholarship Awards:

BISD will receive 50-65 scholarship awards. Scholarship amounts and awards will vary depending on college selection by the recipients (\$5,000 per year at a 4 year university for a total of \$20,000 and \$2,500 at a technical/two year college for the first two years and \$5,000 for the next two years if a bachelor's degree is pursued).

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

- ★ BISD seniors or graduating juniors must have a minimum cumulative weighted grade point average of 2.75 (scholastic average of 80 for BISD applicants) in their senior year.
- ★ Students must enroll fulltime at an accredited college, university, community or junior college, or vocational/technical program in the Fall of 2009.
- ★ Students must show academic improvement from the 9th to the 11th grade as measured by an improved grade point average (GPA) and/or class rank.
- ★ Students must show financial need as demonstrated on FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid).
- ★ Students must be U.S. Citizens or U.S. Permanent Residents in possession of valid Alien Registration Receipt Cards (INS Form 1-551).
- ★ Graduating juniors must attach an official "Letter of Intent for 3 Year Graduation" to the initial application.

For more information, contact a BISD high school head/senior counselor or call Pilar Janis, Higher Education Counselor/SAFE, in the Guidance and Counseling Department at 548-8251.

Veterans Memorial High School



TAKING SHAPE: The New Veterans Memorial High School, currently under construction on Military Highway, is expected to open in August 2010.

CALENDAR of Events

November

17-21 Parental Involvement Week
26-28 Thanksgiving Holidays

December

4-5 ...Santa & Friends Performances
13.....BISD History Day
Dec. 22 - Jan. 2 Holiday Break
(Students and Employees)

The BISD Newsletter is published several times each year to inform parents, students, and employees about the activities of the Brownsville Independent School District. To make comments or contributions, contact the:

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Edward Manzano, Jr. Middle School

GROWTH SPURT: BISD held groundbreaking ceremonies for four new schools recently. Pictured is Mittie Pullam with Yturria Elementary students; three nieces of Raquel Peña displaying a cake; Tom Keller greeting friends; and Edward Manzano addressing guests. Also shown are architectural renderings of each new school.