



Education Consumers Foundation

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MAKING THE GRADE:

18 Tennessee principals recognized for students' remarkable learning gains

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Nashville, TN (April 26, 2010) – While teachers are often recognized for the impact they can have on student learning, any teacher can tell you that it takes a great principal to set the right goals and create a culture of performance: without that leadership, even the best teacher will be limited in what he or she can achieve. For this reason, the Education Consumers Foundation is proud to recognize the achievements of 18 of the most effective principals from across the state through its annual Value-Added Achievement Awards. The foundation will present these awards during a ceremony held in the State Capitol.

These school leaders are considered “the best of the best” when it comes to advancing their students academically, as measured by Tennessee’s Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS). Superior school-wide performance reflects superior teaching, teamwork, and leadership. TVAAS measures achievement gain in a way that permits schools to be compared regardless of the makeup of the student body. Schools whose students make the greatest annual gains in achievement earn the highest value-added scores.

“If every school was like those of our 18 winners, Tennessee would have the best education system in the country,” said ECF President Dr. J. E. Stone. “Each of them shows what’s possible when school leaders make student learning their top priority.”

According to Education Commissioner Dr. Tim Webb, “I am pleased to join with ECF in recognizing the educators and schools that are doing such an excellent job of advancing the knowledge and skills of their students,” said Dr. Webb. “Tennessee is the birthplace of value-added assessment, and it continues to grow in importance as a tool for

seeing how our efforts are impacting student achievement. I'm happy to be able to recognize principals whose superior work is reflected in their TVAAS results.”

Dr. Connie Smith, Assistant Commissioner of the Division of Accountability, Teaching, and Learning for the Tennessee Department of Education, will represent the Department by serving as co-presenter of the awards.

In all, 18 winners were selected from among Tennessee's 1300+ public elementary and middle schools. Based on three-year value-added gains in Reading/Language Arts and Math, 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place awards are given in two categories, Elementary and Middle schools, in each of Tennessee's three regions: East, Middle, and West.

Because the awards recognize high quality leadership, only schools where the principal has served for at least five years were considered.

“Eight of our winning principals have been recognized before, with some of them making our list three and four times. This shows that superior performance is sustainable when you build the right team and maintain a relentless focus on student learning,” said Stone. “And these 18 principals have produced superior results among their entire student bodies, regardless of factors like wealth or poverty. They're taking every student, no matter their starting point, and helping them fulfill their learning potential. That's what we want to see in every Tennessee school, and it is the reason we recognize these school leaders today.”

Additional information about the winners, including school performance charts, is available at www.education-consumers.org. Also posted there are “Recipes for Success” from each of the 18 principals and thoughts on what they have done as leaders to help their schools achieve.

The winning principals each receive a certificate, a banner and a cash award: \$3,000 for 1st place, \$2,000 for 2nd place, and \$1,000 for 3rd place.

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About Us: The Education Consumers Foundation is a nonprofit consumer organization. It gathers and disseminates information about education policy and practice on behalf of parents, taxpayers, and their elected representatives. Please visit us at www.education-consumers.org

Winners of the 2010 Value-Added Achievement Awards

Elementary Schools, West Tennessee

1st place:

Lincoln Magnet Elementary
Madison County Schools
Lynne Shuttleworth, Principal

2nd place:

Walker Elementary
Hardin County Schools
Patricia White, Principal

3rd place:

LaRose Elementary
Memphis City Schools
Tonya Cooper, Principal

Elementary Schools, Middle Tennessee

1st place:

The Discovery School
Dickson County Schools
Debbie Bogdan, Principal

2nd place:

Bethpage Elementary
Sumner County Schools
Bill Johnson, Principal

3rd place:

McEwen Elementary
Humphreys County Schools
Vicki Spann, Principal

Elementary Schools, East Tennessee

1st place:

Keplar Elementary
Hawkins County Schools
Sandra Vicars-Williams, Principal

2nd place:

Carter Elementary
Knox County Schools
Julie Thompson, Principal

3rd place:

Boones Creek Elementary
Washington County Schools
Teresa Leonard, Principal

K-8/Middle Schools, West Tennessee

1st place:

West Carroll Junior High School
West Carroll Special School District
Lex Suite, Principal

2nd place:

Humboldt Middle School
Humboldt Schools
Lillian Shelton, Principal

3rd place:

Brighton Middle School
Tipton County Schools
John Combs, Principal

K-8/Middle Schools, Middle Tennessee

1st place:

Smith County Middle School
Smith County Schools
Ronnie Scudder, Principal

2nd place:

LaVergne Middle School
Rutherford County Schools
Dirk Ash, Principal

3rd place:

South Lincoln Elementary
Lincoln County Schools
Greg Holder, Principal

K-8/Middle Schools, East Tennessee

1st place:

Holston Valley Middle School
Sullivan County Schools
Jess Lockhart, Principal

2nd place:

Indian Trail Middle School
Johnson City Schools
Tammy Pearce, Principal

3rd place:

Grassy Fork Elementary
Cocke County Schools
Shannon Grooms, Principal