



## Education Consumers Foundation

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# Leadership Makes the Difference:

## *Recognizing 18 of Tennessee's most effective principals*

**EMBARGO UNTIL May 14, 2012**

Nashville, TN (May 14, 2012) – Education reformers have made teacher quality a top concern in Tennessee and elsewhere – and rightly so. But without the support of a great principal, working quietly behind the scenes to create the conditions for success, even the best teachers will inevitably be limited in what they can accomplish in the classroom. The Education Consumers Foundation is, therefore, proud to recognize the achievements of 18 of these principals from across the state through its annual Value-Added Achievement Awards. The foundation will present these awards during a ceremony held at 1pm at the Tennessee Supreme Court.

Winners are selected based on the most important school measurement available: Learning gains across the entire student body, as measured by Tennessee's Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS). 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.

"These 18 principals show what a dedicated principal and teaching force can achieve in Tennessee schools," noted ECF President Dr. J. E. Stone. "If every school performed at the level of our 18 winners, Tennessee would lead the nation in educational improvement."

According to Commissioner of Education Kevin Huffman, "I am pleased to join with the Education Consumers Foundation in recognizing some of our most effective principals and schools," Huffman said. "Value-added achievement is a central focus as we work to boost student achievement across the state, and these education leaders are shining examples of what's possible in Tennessee."

Commissioner of Education Kevin Huffman will offer remarks about the vital work of the principals and serve as co-presenter of the awards.

## **How the winners were selected**

In previous years, winners were selected on the basis of their three-year average TVAAS scores in reading/language arts and math; this year, the Foundation changed its ranking model to reflect a more comprehensive approach to student achievement. Rankings are now made using schools' letter grades for reading/language arts, math, science, and social studies; reading/language arts and math scores are double-weighted to reflect the importance of these areas. A "grade point average" is calculated, with a complementary measure – the new three-year average Literacy/Numeracy Growth Index – used as a secondary factor.

In all, 18 winners were selected from among Tennessee's nearly 1,300 public elementary and middle schools. First, second and third 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.

## **ECF also presents The Luna Award**

Dr. Stone and Commissioner Huffman also presented The Luna Award, which recognizes a principal who has demonstrated character, the ability to inspire, and an unwavering dedication to students, staff, and the community they serve. This year's award was presented to Sarah Wallace, principal of the Ninth Grade Academy in Lincoln County.

Ms. Wallace was selected to launch the Ninth Grade Academy eleven years ago, and continues to lead the school today. According to Wanda Shelton, Director of Schools in Lincoln County, her dedication is unparalleled: The personal challenges she has faced, including the illness and loss of her husband, have never affected her performance or her commitment to the school. "If I were to return to the classroom I would want to be in Mrs. Sarah Wallace's school," said Shelton. "I would want to work with someone who puts student learning first, who strives for excellence, who loves her school and her job, and who wants engaged student learning happening in every classroom every day."

"The principals we honor today through both the Value-Added Achievement Awards and the Luna Awards are the kinds of principals we want to see in every Tennessee school: dedicated leaders willing to do whatever it takes to create the conditions for student success," said Dr. Stone. "We are also pleased to highlight the fact that several of our principals are repeat winners, showing that such achievements can be sustained over time."

Additional information about the winners, including school performance charts, is available at [www.education-consumers.org](http://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 1<sup>st</sup> place, \$2,000 for 2<sup>nd</sup> place, and \$1,000 for 3<sup>rd</sup> 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](http://www.education-consumers.org)

## Winners of the 2012 Value-Added Achievement Awards

### Elementary Schools, East Tennessee

1<sup>st</sup> place:

Boones Creek Elementary  
Washington County Schools  
Teresa Leonard, Principal

2<sup>nd</sup> place:

Fairview Marguerite  
Hamblen County Schools  
Suzanne Wampler, Principal

3<sup>rd</sup> place:

John Sevier Elementary  
Maryville Schools  
Rick Wilson, Principal

### Elementary Schools, Middle Tennessee

1<sup>st</sup> place:

Stanford Elementary Montessori Design Center  
Davidson County Schools  
Melva Stricklin, Principal

2<sup>nd</sup> place:

Hobgood Elementary  
Murfreesboro Schools  
Barbara Sales, Principal

3<sup>rd</sup> place:

The Discovery School  
Dickson County Schools  
Debbie Bogdan, Principal

**Elementary Schools, West Tennessee**

1<sup>st</sup> place:

Dresden Elementary  
Weakley County Schools  
Mike Laughrey, Principal

2<sup>nd</sup> place:

Lincoln Magnet Elementary  
Madison County Schools  
Lynne Shuttleworth, Principal

3<sup>rd</sup> place:

Alton Elementary  
Memphis City Schools  
Barbara Beaver, Principal

**K-8/Middle Schools, East Tennessee**

1<sup>st</sup> place:

Normal Park Museum Magnet School  
Hamilton County Schools  
Jill Levine, Principal

2<sup>nd</sup> place:

Newport Grammar School  
Newport Schools  
Sandra Burchette, Principal

3<sup>rd</sup> place:

Little Milligan  
Carter County Schools  
J. R. Campbell, Principal

**K-8/Middle Schools, Middle Tennessee**

1<sup>st</sup> place:

Thurman Francis Elementary  
Rutherford County Schools  
Dr. Andra Helton, Principal

2<sup>nd</sup> place:

Bridgeforth Middle School  
Giles County Schools  
J. B. Smith III, Principal

3<sup>rd</sup> place:

Fairview Middle School  
Williamson County Schools  
Brian Bass, Principal

**K-8/Middle Schools, West Tennessee**

1<sup>st</sup> place:

Dyer Elementary

Gibson County Special School District

Brad Garner, Principal

2<sup>nd</sup> place:

West Carroll Junior High School

West Carroll Special School District

Lex Suite, Principal

3<sup>rd</sup> place:

South Side Elementary

Henderson County Schools

Neal Wright, Principal

West- Middle Schools