



## Education Consumers Foundation

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# Black Fox Elementary Recognized for Teaching Excellence

*School receives award for superior value-added performance;  
Principal Joe Thompson to be recognized May 8*

**EMBARGO UNTIL May 8, 2014**

Murfreesboro, TN (May 8, 2014) – Where there are great students, you are likely to find great teachers; where there are both, you will find great principals. It is in this spirit that the Education Consumers Foundation recognizes Principal Joe Thompson for his role in making Black Fox Elementary one of the most effective schools in the state of Tennessee, as measured by Tennessee’s Value-Added Assessment System (TVAAS). The ceremony will take place at the school on May 8 at 1:30pm; the public is invited.

“Mr. Thompson and his staff have done an excellent job in helping their students learn,” said Commissioner of Education Kevin Huffman. “Their record of performance attests to the hard work and dedication of the principals, teachers, students, and parents.”

Every year, the Education Consumers Foundation (ECF) selects 18 elementary and middle school principals to receive its Value-Added Achievement Awards 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; superior school-wide performance reflects superior teaching, teamwork, and leadership

Black Fox Elementary is one of the state’s top performers on TVAAS, ranking 18<sup>th</sup> in the state among 765 elementary schools, and is the second place winner of the Value-Added Achievement Awards among elementary schools in Middle Tennessee.

According to Dr. J.E. Stone, president of the Education Consumers Foundation, “The leadership shown by principals like Joe Thompson is remarkable; it illustrates what can be accomplished regardless of the wealth or poverty of the student body. With TVAAS, people are able

to see exactly what each school contributes to the success of its students, not just the test score averages that are so heavily influenced by demographic and socioeconomic differences. These are the schools that do the best job of helping students ‘be all they can be,’ regardless of their strengths and weaknesses, their advantages and disadvantages.”

“Murfreesboro City Schools is very proud of what Black Fox has accomplished,” said Dr. Linda Gilbert, Murfreesboro Director of Schools. “Through Professional Learning Communities and a focus on the whole child, Black Fox has enabled student success. The school’s superior performance clearly demonstrates that they are doing an exceptional job in serving their students.”

### **How the winners were selected**

Each year, the Education Consumers Foundation ranks Tennessee elementary and middle schools according to their value-added performance. Rankings are 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 raw TVAAS value of schools’ reading/language arts and math scores – 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.

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. Additional information about the winners, including school performance charts, is available at [www.education-consumers.org](http://www.education-consumers.org).

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