



Education Consumers Foundation

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Bridgeforth Middle School Recognized for Teaching Excellence

*School receives award for superior value-added performance;
Principal J.B. Smith, III to be recognized May 5*

EMBARGO UNTIL May 5, 2014

Pulaski, TN (May 5, 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 J.B. Smith, III for his role in making Bridgeforth Middle School 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 5 at 8:00 am; the public is invited.

“Mr. Smith 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

Bridgeforth Middle School is one of the state’s top performers on TVAAS, ranking 4th in the state among 539 K-8 and middle schools, and is the first place winner of the Value-Added Achievement Awards among K-8 and middle schools in Middle Tennessee. Mr. Smith was also recognized last year through the awards program.

According to Dr. J.E. Stone, president of the Education Consumers Foundation, “The leadership shown by principals like J.B. Smith 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.”

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 1st place, \$2,000 for 2nd place, and \$1,000 for 3rd place. Additional information about the winners, including school performance charts, is available at www.education-consumers.org.

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