



Education Consumers Foundation

School Achievement Data Goes Public

New online tool gives consumers an easy way to gauge school performance

April 10, 2007 - The Education Consumers Foundation today announced the availability of the [ECF School Performance Chart](#), an online, interactive tool that helps Tennessee citizens clearly understand school data published by the state. This tool, part of a Foundation program to reward high-achieving schools in Tennessee, represents a major step forward in helping consumers clearly understand how well their local schools are performing.

The ECF School Performance Chart was created to support the Foundation's Value-Added Achievement Awards, an annual awards program that recognizes the top-performing elementary and middle schools in Tennessee. The awards program uses publicly-available data from TVAAS (Tennessee Value-Added Assessment System) to rank schools based on the school's contribution to student learning, and the ECF School Performance Chart uses these rankings to present results in a way that every citizen can understand.

"Value-added data is critical to the chart and to the awards program," said Dr. John Stone, President of the Education Consumers Foundation. "It removes non-educational factors like demographics and socio-economic status from the assessment of student academic growth and allows us to highlight the school's contribution to the learning process. As a result, parents and other education consumers can evaluate schools by their effectiveness, and not by factors they cannot control."

While Tennessee has made its school-level data publicly available for some time, this is the first effort to make access to this information truly consumer-friendly. Before, users had to have an some understanding of value-added data and statistical terminology to understand the results; it was also cumbersome to compare the performance of schools and districts. Now, thanks to the School Performance Chart, education consumers can understand the results at a glance, and have the ability to easily compare the performance of schools and districts across the state.

While the Value-Added Achievement Awards and the School Performance Chart are currently available only for the state of Tennessee, they are expected to move beyond the state as the Foundation's awards program grows. Several other states, including Pennsylvania, Ohio, North Carolina, and New York have either moved to value-added assessment or are in the process, and the Foundation's work will expand to cover these states as data becomes available.

Data from the 2006 Value-Added Achievement Awards are available at the Foundation's website; data from 2007 will be available on May 8, 2007, after the winners of this year's awards are announced at a ceremony at the state capitol, co-hosted by Dr. Stone and by Lana Seivers, Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Education.

To view the ECF School Performance Chart, learn about the winners of the Value-Added Achievement Awards, access more information on value-added data, and see step-by-step instructions on the analysis the Foundation conducted to develop its rankings, visit www.education-consumers.com.

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