

Man of the Year - Dr. James Thompson, Jr.

As Superintendent of Schools for the Town of Bloomfield, CT, Dr. James Thompson, Jr. is recognized as one of the state's most respected educational leaders for his work in improving student performance and reducing the academic achievement gap.

Dr. James Thompson, Jr. has had a vital leadership role in reducing the academic achievement gap in Connecticut - a state known for some of the widest achievement disparities in the country. Since being hired as the superintendent of Bloomfield Schools in 2012, Dr. Thompson has led a remarkable academic turnaround in the district and especially at the high school. From being one of the lowest performing high schools in Connecticut in 2011, just four years later – Bloomfield High School juniors scored well-above the state average in Literacy on the new State Smarter Balanced assessments. The high school graduation rate has increased from 74% in 2011 to 90% in 2015. The Class of 2015 graduates received close to \$1 million in scholarships.

In collaboration with his leadership team and Bloomfield stakeholders, Dr. Thompson is the architect of a blueprint that is spurring transformative change in education. The remarkable academic turnaround at Bloomfield High, and the upward trajectory in student performance within Bloomfield public schools, has earned prominent kudos from both Gov. Dan Malloy and Education Commissioner Dianna Wentzell.

As an education leader, he is widely respected in the state and beyond. Dr. Thompson provides an insightful voice about strategies to reduce the academic achievement gap and recruit and retain minority teachers and administrators. He is an accomplished talent-developer and serves as a mentor and role model for dozens of educators.

Dr. Thompson's core management philosophy is rooted in the belief that every child can learn. His forte is in building collaborative leadership teams focused intently on the classroom and in gathering data about student performance. That data is then leveraged as a guide to shape instruction, promote accountability and establish a culture of high achievement.

Three and a half years after graduating from Hartford Public High School, Dr. Thompson received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Elementary Education from Fayetteville State University in North Carolina. Upon completion of his undergraduate studies, he returned to Connecticut and began his career as an elementary school teacher in Hartford. Dr. Thompson received his Master's Degree in Urban Education from the University of Hartford. He earned his Doctor of Education Degree in Education Leadership from Nova University in Fort Lauderdale, FL.