

ERFAE Teacher of the Year 2020

Richland County Elementary School

Melissa Dunn



The 2020 Teacher of the Year from Richland County Elementary School is Melissa Dunn. Mrs. Dunn is a graduate of East Richland High School and Olney Central College. Following her graduation from Eastern Illinois University in 1991, she began her teaching career at the Silver Street Elementary School. In 1996 Mrs. Dunn earned a master's degree in Elementary Education from EIU.

During the past 29 years, Mrs. Dunn has made her students' year in kindergarten one that is very memorable. Children not only learn about letters, numbers, and begin reading, but they feel loved and accepted for who they are. There are many parents of children that spent a year in the Rainbow Ranch that will tell you that their child believes that Mrs. Dunn hung the moon.

Some of the things that Mrs. Dunn's students and colleagues say about her are:

- "Mrs. Dunn loves me."
- "I love being in the Rainbow Ranch!"
- "I really like it when I get a warm fuzzy from Mrs. Dunn!"
- "Melissa is in a league of her own!"
- "Melissa has a true heart for teaching. Any child that is in her class feels love and acceptance."

Melissa Dunn has helped hundreds of children get off on the right foot with their education. She has done this through outstanding skill as a teacher, but more importantly, Mrs. Dunn has done it through a genuine love of children. Congratulations to Melissa Dunn, the ERFAE 2020 Teacher of the Year for Richland County Elementary School.

Richland County Middle School

Jamie Tyler



The 2020 Teacher of the Year from Richland County Middle School is Jamie Tyler, another local product teaching in RCCU1. After graduating from ERHS, Mrs. Tyler attended OCC and Eastern Illinois University. She has been teaching 6th Grade Science since 1997.

Teaching at East Richland/Richland County Middle School for 23 years has allowed Mrs. Tyler to have an impact on the middle school in a very positive way. She anchors the 6th Grade Team and can be counted on to help brighten her teammates' day. Mrs. Tyler models the way for her colleagues with a willingness to always be the first to volunteer and try to find solutions, not problems. Students know that Mrs. Tyler cares about them and is committed to helping them succeed.

Some of the things Mrs. Tyler's students and colleagues say about her are:

- "At least once a week Jamie is bringing some type of treat for our team."
- "Jamie does just about everything in our school. She is always willing to help out."
- "Mrs. Tyler really loves science and makes it interesting for us."
- "Jamie forms strong relationships with her students and the students respond to this."

In addition to teaching 6th Grade Science at RCMS, Mrs. Tyler is the middle school yearbook sponsor and President of the Richland County Education Association. She balances her daily work responsibilities while keeping her eye on the most important thing, working with children. Congratulations to Jamie Tyler, the 2020 ERFAE Teacher of the Year for Richland County Middle School.

Richland County High School

Ryan Denton



The 2020 Teacher of the Year from Richland County High School is Ryan Denton. As with the other Teacher of the Year recipients this year, Mr. Denton is a local product that has brought his talents and passion back to his hometown. He graduated from Kentucky Wesleyan College in 2004 and then earned a master's degree from Eastern Illinois University in Educational Leadership in 2016. Mr. Denton has been teaching in the Social Studies Department at East Richland/Richland County High School since 2005.

Mr. Denton is one of those teachers that bleeds orange and black. He is a founding member of One Tiger Nation and has a passion for RCHS. As a classroom teacher, he utilizes innovative practices and technology to bring history and civics to life for his students. Mr. Denton has also become a terrific resource to his colleagues with his knowledge of how technology can be used to support classroom instruction, which has been especially important during the school closure.

Some of the things Mr. Denton's students and colleagues say about him are:

- "Mr. Denton is a great teacher and coach. You can go to him about advice on school or your sport."
- "Mr. Denton really deserves this award. He is a phenomenal teacher."
- "Ryan is one of the most deserving people for this award and should probably win it every year."
- "Mr. Denton is one of those teachers that goes above and beyond what is expected. He has made me a better teacher by being around him."
- "Ryan is a professional in every sense of the word. He has had a tremendous impact on his fellow teachers and the students."

Mr. Denton exemplifies the qualities of service and loyalty, as well as excellence in teaching. He truly loves RCHS and his students. As a classroom teacher and coach, he has had a positive impact on numerous students over the past 15 years. Congratulations to Ryan Denton, the 2020 ERFAE Teacher of the Year for Richland County High School.