

Congratulations, Michael Redding!

Michael Redding Tennessee Department of Education Teacher of the Year Hickman County Grades 5-8

East Hickman Middle School Teacher of the Year

Michael Redding was born and lived in Nashville, Tennessee, through the fourth grade. His family moved to Hickman County when he started the fifth grade. He has lived there since that time.

Currently Michael teaches science to sixth graders at East Hickman Middle School which is part of the Hickman County School System. He is both a youth pastor at the Fly Church of the Nazarene and a sixth-grade science teacher. He says: "I have a love for our youth, and I want to help them grow in both knowledge and character."

Michael is married, and he and his wife, Stephanie, have two children: Jayda is fifteen and Ethan is eight. He met his wife at church, and they dated in high school. They have just celebrated their 25th anniversary.

Michael says: "After I graduated from Hickman County High School, I thought I wanted to teach. However, I felt there wouldn't be very many job openings. So, I worked in a machine shop for 10 years. During that time, I felt a call on my life to work with youth. I started my studies to become a youth pastor in the Church of the Nazarene and to become a teacher. I graduated from Middle Tennessee State University with my degree to teach K-6. I expanded my degree with an endorsement to teach K-8."

Michael has been teaching for eleven years. In the first year, he served as an interim teacher for both the first and fourth grade. He was a Title 1 teacher for first grade in his second year. For three years he served at East Hickman Middle School as an enrichment teacher, Social Studies teacher, and ELA teacher. For the last six years, he has been a sixth-grade science teacher.

How did Michael receive the award for Hickman County Teacher of the Year? He says: "Each year a teacher at every school is voted Teacher of the Year for that school. Then the central office selects three teachers to receive one of three awards: Hickman County Teacher of the Year for K-4, 5-8, and 9-12. I received the 5-8 Teacher of the Year. After that decision, the central office and the principals for each of the schools vote for one of the three teachers to become Hickman County Teacher of the Year. This year, they voted for me."

What are the requirements to become a teacher of the year? "You must have at least three years of teaching experience and be in good standing with both your actions and your scores to become a Teacher of the Year at your school. After being selected by your school, the teacher must fill out a form explaining your experience and practices that you use in the classroom and for the

school that make you a good teacher. This was the hardest part for me since my teaching practices are a blend of the practices of the great teachers I work with.”

Response Questions

The following are Michael’s responses on his application for Teacher of the Year.

1. Explain how your classroom practices have resulted in high levels of growth and learning for all students in your classroom. Use evidence and data to support your response.

I have designed a classroom that follows our mission statement to create a safe and positive learning environment. To create this environment, I have enlisted the help of other teachers and my students.

I am constantly looking for great ideas to pull into my classroom. I work with outstanding teachers, and many of them have contributed ideas to my class. I have spent many hours in other classrooms observing and gaining knowledge and ideas for my class.

I like to use our first day back from winter break to poll my students for their input into my class. I tell them that each of them has at least six years of experience from kindergarten through 5th grade. They also have had six years of experience with various teachers. Based on this, I ask them to share ideas that can help me hone my class to their needs and learning styles.

I have developed a class with many hands-on projects. Many of my projects use groups that must work together to be successful. The kids love it when they can do something with their hands and learn as they go.

I also have a group research project to reinforce what we are learning. For example, we are currently working on a group research presentation during my RTI class that reinforces my standards about invasive species. Each group will research an invasive species and build a presentation for the class.

Another practice I use is review games. I bring in different review games so we can review for various assessments. This practice allows my students to review questions in a way that does not feel like we are studying but having fun. For the last few years, I have kept a state-released TCAP test until the end of the year. That way, I have a bank of questions that the students have not seen. For our review, I use these questions to gain the best feel for how my students will do on a true state assessment.

2. Describe a project or initiative you have been involved in which contributed to the improvement of overall school culture. What was your role, how did you collaborate with others, and what is the status of this project today? Include evidence of student impact in your response (may include additional supporting documentation).

I have served East Hickman Middle School as a team member of our leadership team. I helped to plan and execute ideas for a stronger school culture. I also have served on the PBS

team, where I helped generate ideas and create plans to improve the behavior of our school. Currently, I serve on our safety team.

I also have initiated a mentoring program for new teachers. This is not an official school position, but it is something I do on my own. I invest my time in our new teachers in the building. I have a passion to help anyone, and I especially want to help new teachers start off on the right foot, grow, and be successful. I had a rough start during my first placement as a 4th-grade interim teacher. I want to help as many new teachers as I can to start on the right foot and have someone they can come to if they ever have a question or concern. What I have learned over the years has come from seeking out and learning from great teachers. I want to pass on the practices I have learned.

Michael Redding, Nazarene Educators Worldwide congratulates you on your awards of Tennessee Department of Education Teacher of the Year, Hickman County Grades 5-8. and the East Hickman Middle School Teacher of the Year. God bless you as you continue to minister to your students at East Hickman Middle School and the youth of Fly Church of the Nazarene.

[Editor's Note: If you are aware of a Nazarene teacher or administrator or a Nazarene Christian school or preschool/childhood learning center who has been honored with an award, please let our organization know about it. Send information to Beula Postlewait at bpostlewait@kc.rr.com.]