

2026 MAEA Art Educator of the Year and Secondary Educator of the Year



Jackie Whiteley



Jacqueolynn Whiteley known as “Jackie” is an experienced art educator with 23 years of teaching experience. Jackie is married with three children, two girls and one boy. When she is not working, she enjoys spending time making memories with her family and friends and creating pottery. She is currently teaching at the high school level in Tecumseh, MI. She started her career teaching in elementary and moved to the HS. The experience of teaching at so many levels has offered the unique opportunity for Jackie to work with kids all the way through their educational experience. She looks at it as a gift to be part of a child's life as they grow and mature. Through art, she gives students the tools to discover who they are and the courage to show it to the world.

Jackie's commitment to the MAEA has spanned her entire career as an active member, a liaison for her region and as the membership secretary. She has taught workshops, hosted gatherings and volunteered time to help others grow as teachers and connect with members.

Throughout her career, she has demonstrated a commitment to fostering creativity and artistic expression among students. In her classroom, Jackie creates an environment where students feel encouraged to explore various artistic mediums and techniques. She believes in the power of art to build confidence and provide students with a voice to express their unique perspectives. Her dedication to education extends beyond the classroom, as she actively seeks opportunities to enhance her students' learning experiences through innovative projects and community involvement. The Tecumseh High School Sculpture Garden is a point of pride for Jackie as she was part of creating it and uses it as a way to enhance her students' learning experience through activities, community service projects and creating sculptures.

Whether in the classroom or in everyday life, Jackie's hope is simple: that everyone she meets walks away feeling a little better than before. As Maya Angelou so beautifully said, “They may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel.”