



Michael Dick

7th Grade Science Teacher

Science Department Chair

Cross Country Coach

Track and Field Coach

Gateway Middle School

Michael Dick received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in education from Bowling Green State University. He has taught science for 30 years at Gateway Middle School in Maumee, spending the majority of his years teaching 7th grade. He coaches the 7th and 8th grade cross country team at Gateway, as well as the track and field team, and has been the science department chair since 2006. On the weekends, Mike works at the Toledo Zoo as an overnight guide, and does volunteer work for Metroparks Toledo. He was named a Jennings Scholar through the Martha Holden Jennings Foundation, and received their 2020 Fund For Teachers Fellowship, which will allow him to travel to Costa Rica to learn about their biodiversity and conservation efforts and discover ways to apply these real world learnings back in the classroom.

Many of Mike's conservation efforts stem from initiatives to help the monarch butterfly population. After reading about the plight of the butterfly, his 7th grade students tagged and released monarchs through a local partnership with the Toledo Zoo. Following this, Mike and his students decided to take further action to help the monarch butterflies with their food source. With the help of the Maumee Garden Club, the Lucas Soil & Water Conservation District, and the teachers at Gateway Middle School, the students engaged in a problem-based learning project that culminated in collaborating with the Toledo Zoo to install a 10,000 sq ft urban prairie on Maumee school grounds.

This project was the beginning of Project Prairie, which has now been responsible for constructing 7.5 acres of prairie on 19 school campuses. As a charter member of the Project Prairie steering committee, Mike has written standards-based lessons for 7th and 8th graders of all partnering schools to actively engage in conservation activities. A special thanks to Mitch Magdich from the Toledo Zoo for his leadership, and to Jamie Kochensparger from LSWCD for showing the Gateway students how best to harvest milkweed seeds from their pods.