



## Outstanding Rural Teacher - 2018

### **Twyla Hicks**

Hickory Co. R-I School District

Twyla Hicks teaches 1st grade at Skyline Elementary School in Urbana, Missouri. She is retiring at the end of this year, after teaching for 39 years, 35 of which have been in Missouri.

According to her principal, Mr. Jason Pursley, "Mrs. Hicks is everything that a teacher should be! The students of Mrs. Hicks not only grow academically, but they also grow as citizens. They are kind to each other and very engaged in the learning process. Anytime there is an award to be given where the staff votes, they always vote for Mrs. Hicks. We will never be able to fill the void left here at our school. Every teacher, both present and future, should try to emulate her."

Kathy Jo Davis shares, "My children were lucky enough to have Mrs. Hicks as their first grade teacher. They have graduated but to this day they refer to their positive experience in her classroom. She made them laugh, learn and be compassionate to their fellow classmates. Mrs. Hicks is an extraordinary teacher who chooses to put her students first every minute of every day."

Dr. Ron Wilken, DESE Area Supervisor, notes, "I vividly remember in 1980, my first year as Superintendent, watching Mrs. Hicks' kindergarten class marching like toy-soldiers down the hallway to the lunchroom in total silence. The fact that she had 42 students and did not have an aide indicates the self-discipline that she had instilled in her students. Her comradery with the administration, staff, parents and patrons is the very best. There may be a few teachers as good as Mrs. Hicks, but there are none better."

Dr. Mark Beem adds, " In my thirty years in education, Twyla Hicks is the best elementary teacher I have ever seen. The number of lives that she has touched over her 39 year teaching career can never be calculated."

Twyla Hicks will be greatly missed by all of those who have come to love and appreciate her compassion and dedicated service to children of the Hickory Co. R-I School District. It is most fitting that she be recognized as the 2018 MARE "Outstanding Rural Teacher". Congratulations!