https://bloxowe.paxtonmedia.com/tncms/asset/editorial/1f9df33b-866a-4014-92dc-addd95ee4d8d/

Dakin recognized with Distinguished Educator Award

By GREG THOMPSON THE NEWS-ENTERPRISE
May 14, 2025



Led by Central Hardin High School Principal Tim Isaacs special education teacher and drama coach Sarah Dakin walks ceremony Tuesday at the school. Dakin is recognized with the WKU Distinguished Educator Award for Exceptional Edu
GREG THOMPSON/The News-Enterprise

“You never know when Mr. (Tim) Isaacs comes and gets you if it’s good or bad.”

That was the first few thoughts running through the mind of Sarah Dakin as the Central Hardin High School principal escorted her Tuesday into the school’s media center and library.

Waiting for Dakin, a special education teacher and drama coach, were Dr. Corrine Murphy, dean of the Western Kentucky University College of Education, Dr. Sue Keesey, director of the WKU School of Teacher Education, and Hardin County Schools Superintendent Teresa Morgan.

Eyes wide as her smile with surprise, Dakin was told she was receiving the WKU Distinguished Educator Award for Exceptional Education.

“You were selected as a function of your mentorship, your leadership and your commitment to your students,” Murphy said. “Thank you for all that you have done for the last 20 years and of course for this year.”

The award is a highlight for Dakin who says it has been a particularly difficult year with the loss of two family members.

She sort of feels like she hasn’t quite been the best.

“I feel like I am usually a better teacher than I have been this year because real life has happened a lot,” Dakin said.

Receiving the award was important knowing what she and other teachers do is recognized and appreciated even when the day-to-day events of life throw up a road block.

Dakin's attention is centered around the students that could very well "fall through the cracks" in areas of special education, where she focuses on reading literacy, as well as her drama students finding their own niche and a place to fit it.

"To know that what I do with them is important to other people in the field is real important," Dakin said.

Each spring, schools have the opportunity to recognize Kentucky teachers across 11 different categories.

Isaacs, who nominated Dakin for the award, said she has a high standard and expects a lot from all of her students.

"She has a way of getting it out of you without feeling like she's on your case," he said.

While demanding excellence from her students Dakin doesn't expect them to figure it out alone. Some of her students struggling in the area of literacy and reading will find any reason they can not to read because of the challenge. With Dakin, they have a tour guide on their journey.

"She's with you on the trip and she's going to take that walk with you," Isaacs said.

Dakin teaches, leads, loves because in her heart it simply is the right thing to do.

"Not because I'm trying to look for anybody to tell me I'm doing a good job."

Greg Thompson can be reached at 270-505-1414 or gthompson@thenewsenterprise.com.

---

gthompson