GRAND HAVEN AREA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

GH literacy coach named Teacher of the Year

KRYSTLE WAGNER • NOV 4, 2017 AT 7:00 AM

One local educator’s efforts in teaching kids to read and write have led to statewide recognition.

The Michigan Council of Teachers of English named Chris Working, a literacy coach for Grand Haven Area Public Schools, as its Teacher of the Year.

Although Working said it’s an exciting recognition, he said it’s collaborative work and there are many deserving educators.

Working, 37, said he was nominated based on his work through the Michigan State University’s chapter of the National Writing Project. Last year, Working developed educational experiences for elementary school-age children to get lost in learning.

For the first 13 years of his career, Working was an elementary school teacher for the West Ottawa district. Last year, he joined Grand Haven Area Public Schools as a literacy coach to work alongside teachers to help grow student literacy.

Mary A. White Elementary School Principal Valerie Livingston said she and her staff are thrilled about Working’s recognition.

“Chris provides professional learning across the county and demonstrates his ability to move from teacher to learner as he supports teachers with the child in mind,” she said.

Being a teacher is a career Working always wanted to pursue. At Hope College, he started off majoring in computer science, but he followed his heart and instead pursued education.

To further his education and strengthen his skills, Working is taking courses through the Educational Psychology and Educational Technology Ph.D. program at Michigan State University.

Working said he’s thankful for his supportive colleagues, and he’s grateful to be part of the Grand Haven school district and the National Writing Project because they value
educators. Seeing kids’ eyes light up when they make connections with what they’re being taught is one of the most enjoyable aspects of the job, he said.

“It’s hard work, but you feel good about what you’ve done,” he added.