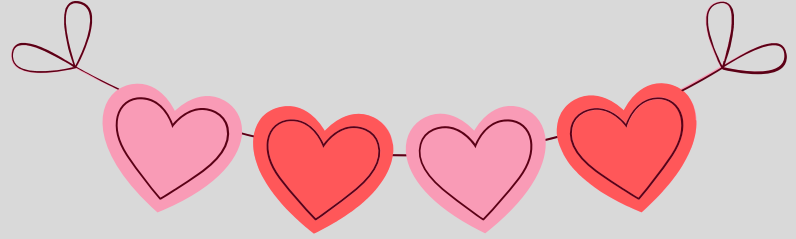


February 2025



JEFFERSON NEWSLETTER

Dear Jefferson Families,
Happy February! Can you believe how quickly the year is flying by? As we move into the second month of the year, we want to take a moment to talk about something very important to us here at Jefferson—the mental health and well-being of our students.

This month is filled with love and kindness, with Valentine's Day right around the corner. But let's also remember that love and kindness extend beyond just cards and chocolates. We believe it's just as important to show our students that they are loved and supported in every way, especially when it comes to their emotional health.

Our hearts are full as we see how our students continue to grow, not just academically but also in the ways they manage their emotions and connect with others. At school, we're working on fostering an environment where everyone feels safe, valued, and heard.

We encourage you to have conversations with your child about how they're feeling and remind them that it's okay to talk about their emotions, whether they're happy, frustrated, or even a little sad.

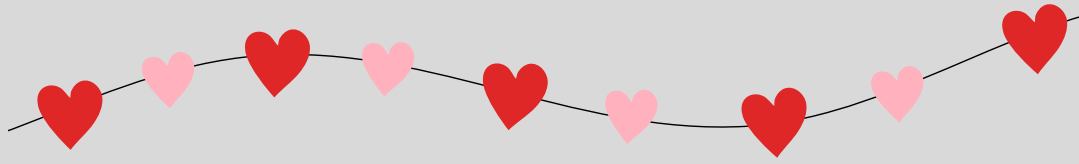
CHOOSE
kindness



Juniper
Certified Therapy Dog



Behavioral Health Team at Jefferson



Katie Petoskey
Behavioral Health Therapist



Katie is a Behavioral Health Therapist at Jefferson Elementary, and she's passionate about supporting students in building the skills they need to succeed academically and emotionally.

She loves working alongside teachers to create a safe space where students can talk through their feelings, especially when accessing services outside of school can be a challenge for families. Katie is grateful to be part of a system that allows families to access these important services during the school day.

Degrees held

- Associate's Degree from Northwestern Michigan College
- Bachelor's Degree in Social Sciences
- Master's in Social Work

Katie's favorite part of her work at MAPS is helping students develop vital life skills. She finds it especially rewarding to have the opportunity to support them in processing their emotions and overcoming challenges. Outside of work, Katie is an avid plant enthusiast, with over 40 plants in her home. She's eagerly anticipating the return of warmer weather so she can get back into gardening.

Jordon Riley
Behavioral Health Therapist



Jordan is a Behavior Consultant at MAPS, where she supports students, teachers, and para-professionals.

After graduating in 2015, she began implementing behavioral therapy for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in both home and clinic settings. Through her work, she and her colleagues identified barriers to success when these students transitioned to school—such as high-intensity behaviors, lack of staff support, and difficulties with transitions.

Degrees held

- Associate's degree from West Shore Community College
- Bachelor of Science in Communication Disorders with a minor in Psychology
- Master's in Applied Behavior Analysis

What she loves most about her work at MAPS is the chance to build meaningful relationships with students. It's incredibly rewarding for her to see students apply the skills they've been practicing and begin to independently navigate challenges in the school environment. Outside of work, Jordan got married in June 2023, and both she and her husband are MAPS alumni from the class of 2009. They have a black lab named Sophie who accompanies them everywhere, and they're passionate Lions fans—win or lose! Go Lions!