

J.F. Tatem New Teacher Spotlight 2021-2022



Megan Saline - Math Intervention

Hi! My name is Megan Saline. I am thrilled to be the new Math Interventionist at both Central and Tatem Elementary! I am excited to return to Central to work with some familiar faces as well as join Tatem to get to know their amazing staff and students!

I was born in Philadelphia, but I grew up in Massachusetts. I am the oldest of six children (three brothers and two sisters). I moved to Atlanta, GA to attend college at Emory University where I earned a Bachelor's degree in Education, International Studies, and French. I returned to Philadelphia to attend the University of Pennsylvania and earn my Masters degree in Elementary Education. This is my 12th year in education and my 6th year in the Haddonfield School District. Previously, I taught 1st and 2nd grade at Central Elementary School. I live in Haddon Heights with my husband, Eli, our 1-year-old, Rory, and our two rescue cats, Wally and Coco.

As the new Math Interventionist, I am looking forward to sharing my passion for best mathematics practices through collaboration with my colleagues, and most importantly, engaging students in innovative teaching practices that will energize, excite, and support them in mathematics. I am excited to take on this new role as a Math Interventionist and get to know students and staff across all grade levels!

Haddonfield is such a wonderful community and I am delighted to continue to be a part of it!

Sincerely,
Megan Saline



Mrs. Smyth- Special Education Teacher

Hello Tatem families! My name is Kaitlyn Smyth and I am so excited to be joining Tatem Elementary as a Special Education Teacher this year! While getting familiar with the area, I immediately fell in love with Haddonfield and its strong sense of community and involvement. I can't wait to learn more about the community and get to know all of you!

I was born and raised in Leominster, Massachusetts. I am a part of a large, close-knit family consisting of my loving parents, three older brothers, two sisters-in-law, two nieces, and four nephews! For the past three years, I was a fourth-grade teacher at Johnny Appleseed School in Leominster, Massachusetts. While earning my bachelor's degree from Fitchburg State University in Elementary Education, I worked at an extended day program and summer camp with students grades K-8. At this program, I led enrichments teaching painting, yoga, and teamwork. I have always loved working with children and helping students reach their full potential as learners. As an educator, I am a lifetime learner and love trying new things to improve my practice to create an engaging, exciting, and safe learning space for all students!

This summer was a busy one for me as I finished my Master's degree in Special Education, got married, traveled down the Pacific Coast Highway in California, and moved to Cherry Hill, New Jersey with my husband and our french bulldog named Philly! Outside of school, I love taking walks outside with my dog, visiting the beach, reading, and being with my family. A fun fact about me is I love donuts! Most Saturday mornings you can find me searching for a new donut spot to try.

I look forward to meeting all of you and am so happy to be joining the Haddonfield community!



Faye Kurtis - Special Education Teacher

Hello, Tatem Families! My name is Faye Kurtis and I am a Special Education Teacher at Tatem Elementary School. I'm beyond excited to join the Tatem Tigers and look forward to this upcoming school year.

I was born and raised in Cherry Hill, NJ, where I currently live with my husband, 2-year-old daughter, and two Italian Greyhounds. As a young child, I worked at camps, babysat, volunteered at my childhood Elementary School, and taught Hebrew School. I always had a passion for working with and caring for children. Outside of teaching, I enjoy running and traveling.

For the past 10 years, I have taught Elementary Special Education across a variety of Elementary grade levels. I attended The College of New Jersey and have a Masters Degree in Education, Special Education, and a Bachelors of Arts in Psychology. I am dual certified in Special Education and Elementary Education. Encouraging students to develop the same passion to learn as I have to learn and teach is very important to me.

My teaching philosophy is that every child can succeed given the right tools and strategies, and I believe that any student can make significant academic progress when their case managers, parents, and teachers partner together.

My goal as a lifelong learner is to continuously seek out new and interesting things. I'm always looking to reflect, develop, and enhance my abilities to best meet the needs of my students. I am honored to be working in the Haddonfield School District, and I truly look forward to being a part of the Tatem Tiger Team.



Connie Lang - Grade 4

Hello Tatem Families! My name is Connie Lang and I'm so excited to be joining this fabulous community as a 4th-grade teacher this year.

I was born and raised in St. Louis, Missouri where my extended family still resides. After years of moving around with my husband's career - between Chicago, Hoboken, Lake Tahoe, and Denver - we were thrilled to finally settle in New Jersey a few years ago. We have 2 boys, ages 7 and 4.

After many years as an event planner, I made a career change to pursue my passion for teaching. I received my Masters in Teaching from Sierra Nevada College and was fortunate to begin my teaching career in Kindergarten at Lizzy Haddon last year. I am now so excited to join the 4th-grade team at Tatem this year!

Outside of school, I enjoy hiking, biking, reading and gardening. My sons and I continued our quest to explore as many local hiking trails as possible this Summer. I also love to travel and enjoyed being able to do so again this Summer.

I am looking forward to a fun and rewarding year ahead and am so excited to share my passion for life-long learning with my class community!



**Vanessa Gottesfeld -
Special Education**

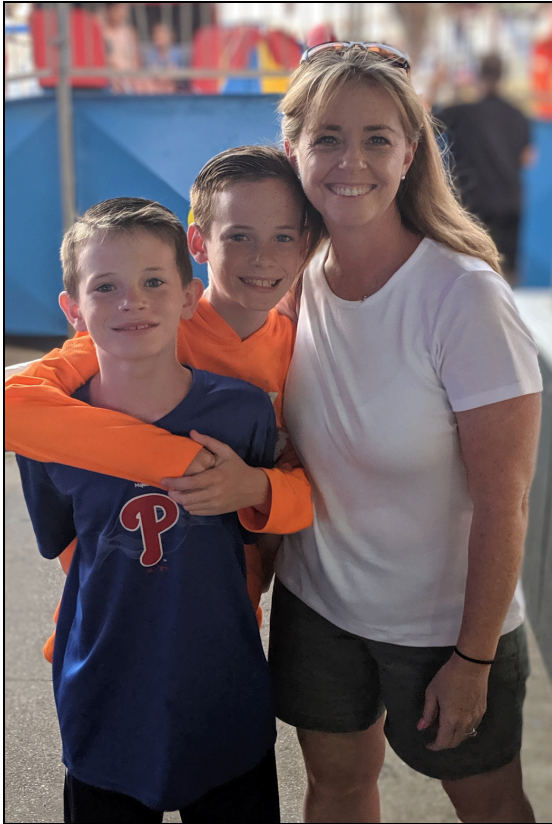
Hello Tatem Families! My name is Vanessa Gottesfeld. I am very excited to be joining the team at Tatem as a Special Education Teacher this year. I am thrilled to become a part of the wonderful Haddonfield community.

I was born and raised in Pitman, NJ. I love living and working in tight-knit communities. Teaching runs in my family! My mom, sister, aunts, uncles, and cousins are all educators. After

college, I moved to Philadelphia. My husband and I continue to live there in a row home built in 1875! In the summer, we enjoy traveling to national parks. In the past four years, we have visited seven different national parks.

I earned my undergraduate degree in Special Education and Elementary Education at West Chester University. For the past 13 years, I have worked as a Special Education teacher in Gloucester County, NJ. During that time, I completed the Orton Gillingham Teacher Certification program through Fairleigh Dickinson University and received my Master of Art degree from Rowan University in the field of Reading Education. I am a certified Reading Specialist, and I hold both Special Education and Elementary Education certifications. I have a passion for teaching all aspects of literacy and helping my students develop a love of reading. In the classroom, I am committed to growing students' confidence in their skills and creating an engaging, nurturing environment.

I am looking forward to a wonderful school year, and I can't wait to meet all of the students and families at Tatem.



Maureen McGroarty - Math Intervention

Greetings! My name is Maureen McGroarty and I am thrilled to be joining the team at Tatem as one of the district's new Math Intervention teachers. As part of this initiative, I'll work to assist students in Kindergarten to fifth grade with their math needs and support teachers as we implement innovative strategies in your child's math classroom. I'm looking forward to working with all the students and staff at Tatem. It's so exciting to start this new adventure!

Of all the things I think you should know about me, it's that family comes first! My husband, Jack, and my sons, Sean (14) and P.J. (12) have taught me more about learning than any classroom could. Education begins at home and that is why collaboration with the families of Haddonfield is so important. One of my sons has ADHD,

and I understand very acutely the gift and struggle that this diagnosis can be. Parenting my sons helps me to see education from both sides, and I am constantly learning! I look forward to serving the Tatem community and learning alongside you this year.

I have been fortunate enough to teach every grade from Kindergarten to Twelfth in my 25-year teaching career. My diverse experience in education, from private to public, elementary to high school, molded me into a more understanding, well-rounded teacher. It is my time in Haddonfield, however, that changed me from being a teacher to serving as an educator. Sixteen years ago, I joined the team at Elizabeth Haddon School and taught Kindergarten and First Grade over the next decade and a half. Two years ago, I moved to Central School as one of the Title 1 teachers there. Along the way, I collaborated with exemplary professionals who shared their expertise with me. I am inspired by my colleagues to serve the community with creativity and thoughtfulness. I believe that education is done best when done with collaboration and innovation. I can't wait to start at Tatem! What a gift to have worked in ALL THREE of our districts' amazing elementary schools! I can't wait to meet you and your family!



Brianna Jensen - Second Grade

Hello Tatem Community!

My name is Brianna Jensen and I will be teaching 2nd grade from September through January at Tatem Elementary School, filling in for Mrs. Friedman during her leave of absence. I am honored to continue being a part of your school district!

I have spent the past 2 years at J.F. Tatem, teaching in 3rd grade and Kindergarten. I have enjoyed getting to know so many students and families already, and look forward to working with even more!

I grew up in Cherry Hill and spent my K-12 years in the Cherry Hill Public School system. I graduated in 2009 and went on to pursue a degree in Education at West Chester University. It's there that I met my husband, during my senior year, while managing the WCU Ice Hockey team. After graduating in 2013, I took the opportunity to teach at several different grade levels during my time as a substitute teacher, all while trying to find my "home" school.

When I am not teaching, I love to hike, travel, run, craft, and sew, however, I've been spending all my free time unpacking and decorating our new, first home! My husband and I love the National Parks! We got engaged in the Rocky Mountains, spent our honeymoon hiking the Grand Canyon, and this summer finally conquered Half Dome in Yosemite National Park. I am eager to begin another great school year, making lots of new relationships and special memories with Tatem students and families!

Brianna Jensen