

THE DISTRICT CORRESPONDENT

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BUILDING THE FUTURE

MCS to launch Mental Health Haven Project

Bethany Legacy Foundation (BLF) awarded a grant in the amount of \$528,000 to Madison Consolidated Schools to fund the *Grow Our Own Mental Health Haven* initiative. The grant, payable over four years, will expand the professional capacity of the Madison Consolidated Schools Student Services Team. "This grant funding will pay tuition expenses for current school counselors who have Master's level degrees to add a licensed mental health practitioner component to their license in addition to providing scholarships for other staff members to return to graduate school to earn a degree towards licensure in a counseling-related field. The grant also allows MCS to hire a Trust Based Relationship Intervention (TBRI) Implementation Coach (PreK-12), and a College and Career Coach (PreK-12) all with the focus of aligning resources to best serve the students, faculty, and staff within our district," shared Lori Slygh, Assistant Director of Programs and co-author of the grant. "We know that our mental health resources within our community are stretched thin and available appointment times, transportation, and cost are sometimes barriers to care. Our goal with this program is to expand our staff with additional resources to provide our students and their families with quality mental health care while at school." The Board of School Trustees approved the grant funding at the board meeting on July 17, 2024.

The TBRI Implementation Coach will support the further integration of TBRI at the classroom level through instructional assistance to positively impact school culture. This grant-funded position/individual will become a certified trainer through extensive TBRI Practitioner training from program experts at Texas Christian University (TCU) and will be responsible for training all faculty and staff members either with initial onboarding and new employees or continuing education around effective practice and implementation of TBRI principles.

A new two-year grant-funded, district-wide College and Career Readiness (CCR) Coach position was approved by the Board of Trustees. With salary and benefits paid through the grant, this position will improve the district's College and Career Readiness programs and services to support the goal of every student who graduates from high school is college and career-ready. The CCR Coach will alleviate non-counseling duties from the current licensed counseling team in order for them to focus time on providing more targeted mental health services. Further grant funding may be available at the conclusion of the two years based on the effectiveness of the program's implementation.

"We are very grateful for this grant and the support of the Bethany Legacy Foundation," Slygh continued. "The opportunities to expand our counseling capacity, combined with the addition of these two positions will allow a more streamlined, intentional, internal support system to address student mental health needs. In addition, we will be able to further support secondary academic planning and career development, and expand career introduction and exploration earlier in our elementary schools."

Students, Staff & Families REMEMBER

We have partnered with Care Solace to help coordinate mental health and substance use treatment services **FREE** of charge for our students, staff, and families. [Click here to learn more.](#)

District Resources by School Location:

Anderson Elementary School

1 School Counselor
1 School Social Worker Intern

Deputy Elementary School

1 School Social Worker

Lydia Middleton Elementary School

2 School Social Workers

Rykers' Ridge Elementary School

1 School Counselor

Madison Junior High School

2 School Counselors
1 School Counselor Intern
1 Licensed Mental Health Counselor

Madison Consolidated High School

3 School Counselors
1 School Counselor/Licensed Mental Health Counselor

District-wide Floating Resource

1 School Social Worker

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HOCO '24

The Madison Cubs will hold the annual Homecoming celebration on Friday, September 27, 2024 at Cub Field.

Lots of fun activities are planned for students at MCHS in the week leading up to the home football game against Heritage Christian. Kickoff is scheduled for a 7:00 p.m.

SPIRIT WEEK Dress Up Days: September 23 - 27

Monday - Pajama Day
Tuesday - Country vs. Country Club
Wednesday - Tropical
Thursday - Soccer Mom vs. BBQ Dad
Friday - Pink Out / Neon



Student Representative Court
Left to right: Natalyn Montgomery (9), Segar Ralston (9), Elena Hinze (10), Bode Heckler (11), and Marley Stivers (11). Not pictured: Gabriel Fife (10)

A new tradition started a few years ago is the Student Representative Court. Each class nominates and selects two students to represent their class during the evening's festivities. This was done as a way to include all grades in the celebration. These students will also be eligible to be nominated as Queen and King when they are seniors.



2024 Senior Homecoming Court

Join us in congratulating the 2024 Homecoming Queen and King candidates. Each was nominated by their classmates and will be selected by the entire student body.

Queen candidates are Riley Jines, Laken Dickerson, Skyy Brackin, Ava Armbrrecht, Alexa Davis, and Allie Rector.

Homecoming King candidates are Abe Reetz, Graham Klein, Jason Cosby, Colton Rutledge, Kyle Roney, and James Schafer.

The crowning of the Homecoming royalty will take place at halftime of the home football game on Friday, September 27, 2024.

 **GEAUX CUBS** 



Meet Clementine

A paws—itively unique addition to our district!



We wanted to take a moment and introduce a few familiar faces in new positions within the district. Earlier this year, the Board of School Trustees approved a new position for the district which is being funded through a grant by the Bethany Legacy Foundation. In alignment with the strategic initiatives of the district, a Trust Based Relationship Implementation (TBRI) Coach was added as a district resource. *(See article on page 1)*

"In the summer of 2023, our entire staff was trained in TBRI through Hope Alight, LLC," shared Janet McCreary, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. "TBRI aligns perfectly with our goals to support the whole student and establish an understanding of how trauma impacts behaviors which ultimately impacts learning."

HopeAlight LLC exists to equip people with essential knowledge and practical tools to help bring hope and healing to children who have experienced adversity. Providing trauma-informed care requires a person to understand, recognize, and respond to the impact of deeply distressing events in the lives of others. Trust Based Relational Intervention® is an attachment-based, trauma-informed intervention that is designed to meet the complex needs of vulnerable children. When we view hurting children through the lens of compassion, our belief systems can shift in such a way that our response creates trust, connection, and felt safety for children. Our schools, homes, and community agencies need to become fields of compassion where children can thrive in our care. (hopealight.com)

"We have seen improvements across the district as we have worked with our partners at HopeAlight LLC to implement and change the way we think about the impact of trauma and young children," continued McCreary. "We are dedicated to continuing this work and wanted to provide a readily accessible, trained resource that would be available to our staff within our district. As part of the recent grant from The Bethany Legacy Foundation, we are able to fund a position for four years to 'train a trainer' within our district to continue this important work."

"This student-level, data-driven work will also be incorporated into our weekly PLC meetings that take place each Wednesday afternoon. We have systems and supports implemented but having a dedicated resource working daily without staff to help us better, truly understand student needs, we can align them more effectively while monitoring progress weekly and make more efficient adjustments as they become necessary," McCreary continued.

"We are very excited to welcome a dynamic duo to this new and exciting position," shared Lori Slygh, Assistant Director of Programs. "Not only is this role unique to Madison, but the addition of Clementine, a licensed, insured therapy dog brings an added benefit to the position. *Clementine* (aka Clem, Clemi) is a standard poodle who passed her Therapy Dog test through Bright and Beautiful Therapy Dogs, placing her in compliance with MCS board policy (po8390). In addition, she is specifically insured (by her hooman) to perform the tasks of her job as a therapy dog. She is very polite and well-behaved, having passed her basic and advanced obedience training through her trainer and certification tester, Trina Copeland, of Copeland's Obedience 101. Her experience includes co-presenting "Dogs in the EL Classroom" last year at the WVEC - Multilingual Learner Conference held at Purdue University."

In her nearly four years of experience working with EL, SPED, general education students, and staff Clemi has met a number of people and is excited to see her first class of hooman students graduate with the Class of 2025 later this school year.

"Students are very familiar with her from their elementary and junior high experiences," shared Michele Stuart, the 'hooman' two-legged hands and feet coach. "She is very attuned to students and has a keen ability to sense where she is needed and can be of assistance to provide a gentle diversion, a warming companion, or simply a soothing presence to help students and staff regulate." While a licensed therapy dog is somewhat new to the district overall, Clem has been an on-and-off presence in most buildings in the district for some time. "She loves going to school and interacting with students, so when I leave her home, there is usually a bit of warming up I need to do when I get home," Stuart shared. "She takes her work very seriously, and isn't afraid to approach when invited but I truly believe she understands the importance of eyes forward so as not to be a distraction when learning is taking place. She is very obedient and my goal is that she becomes an extension of the work we are doing to help students. As she meets new people in the classroom and throughout the buildings, we will stop and say hello but the goal is that she becomes just another staff member you pass in the hallway but know we are available if we can be of service!"

"We are also excited to welcome back Michele Stuart as our new TBRI coach," Slygh continued. "Michele has a unique skill set that will lend itself to a natural transition from previous roles to this new and exciting opportunity that she can help create, establish, and roll out within our district. She will be working closely with our administrators, counselors, teachers, and interventionists to ensure they have the support necessary to continue to proactively and positively impact student learning experiences."

Clemi (and Ms. Stuart) are pictured at the September board meeting with Superintendent Dr. Teresa Brown and Board President, John Wallace. She listened intently during the personnel report and then wrapped up the evening by supervising the signing of the letter of employment.

What teachers and students can expect when Ms. Stuart and Clem come to visit:

- Clem has been trained to work with students. She is most comfortable with greeting people at her eye level. Sitting on the floor or in a chair is what is most comfortable and natural for her. She sees that as an invitation to visit.
- Interestingly enough, she has also been trained to 'back in' when she visits. For some, a dog approaching face first can be a little intimidating. Clem will turn around and sit in front of you with her back to you...this is double awesome because she does all she can to create a safe approach while giving you full access to her back where she loves to be scratched!
- Ms. Stuart and Clemi will be seen out and about throughout the district in different buildings interacting with staff and students. While it may be a lesson, a walk through the halls, or a visit at recess, they are available to be of service when and where needed. Teachers can email Ms. Stuart to arrange a class visit.
- They will work closely with counselors, behavior specialists, and teachers on specific opportunities where their services may be needed and are just a phone call or email away. While most visits will hopefully be planned, we know that sometimes things pop up and they are here to help provide support, love, and regulation.

Michele has 24 years of educational experience ranging from the classroom to administrative roles. She holds a Bachelor Degree in Education from St. Mary of the Woods College and a Masters of Education and Administrative Licensure Program from Indiana Wesleyan University. In her previous role within the district, she was the EL Coordinator and Spanish teacher and worked closely with students and families to ensure their needs were met. Michele prides herself on the successful creation and implementation of programming catering to learner interests and learning styles through the planning of educational activities that target learning objectives while allowing students to experience world cultures in active, hands-on experiences.

Michele is an avid community volunteer lending her expertise to La Casa Amiga, Hispanic Community Center, Fiesta Hispana (Annual Hispanic Festival), and translator/interpreter within the Jefferson County community.

You can follow the fun on Instagram @clemi_goes_to_school to see all the ways Clementine works in our district.



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Harry Potter

AND THE CURSED CHILD

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Telehealth is here!

Thanks to a \$40,000 grant from the Norton Children's Hospital Foundation, Norton Healthcare and MCS are partnering to bring virtual medical care to all six locations within the district. [Read the full press release from Norton Healthcare here.](#)

"We are so very excited to be able to offer this service to our students," shared Superintendent, Dr. Teresa Brown. "We realize there are barriers to healthcare; sometimes, work schedules make it difficult for parents to get their child to the doctor; we want to help remove those barriers."

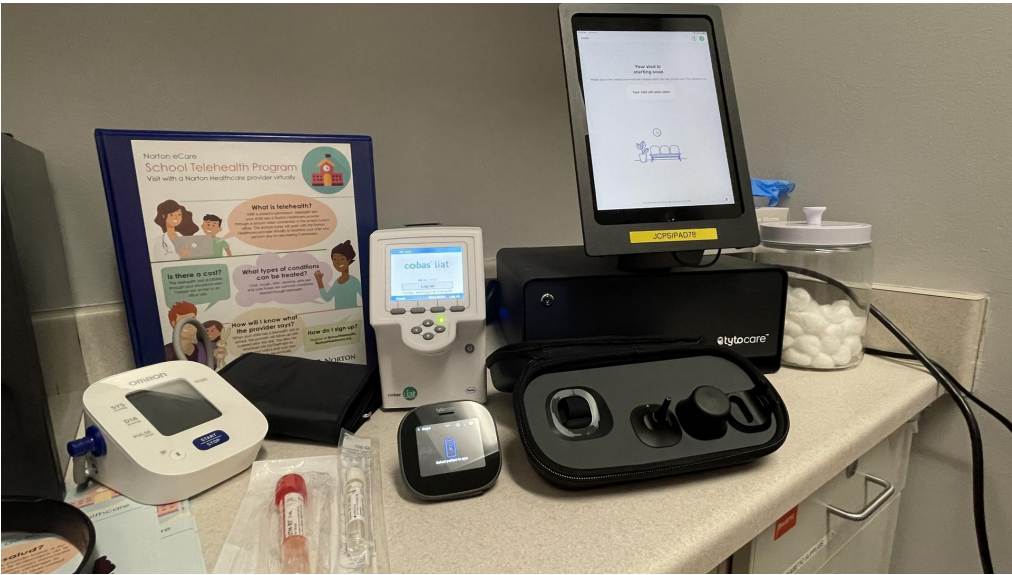
All of the school nurses within the district have been trained on the virtual equipment. "We have worked closely with the Norton team to ensure we are well prepared to offer this service to our students," shared Renee Kitchens-Ogden, district Nursing Coordinator. "Each location has the necessary equipment to connect with a nurse practitioner and provide services during the day."

How does it work?

- Parents register their student for the service each school year. [Click here for more information and registration information.](#)
- When a student visits the nurse's office and determine an appointment may be necessary, they contact the parent.
- With permission, they can schedule a virtual appointment with the Nurse Practitioner usually scheduled within the hour.
- The visit is billed through the families insurance. For those on Medicaid, there is no charge for the visit.
- Parents can join the visit via a link from their location so they don't have to miss work.

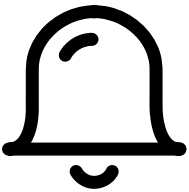
"We hope that providing these services during the school day we can accelerate the care and comfort for the student," Kitchens-Ogden continued. "Our goal is to reduce absenteeism, expand access to healthcare, provide an option for our parents where they can stay at work but get medical attention quickly, and help keep our students healthy."

Services provided onsite include, but are not limited to, Flu, Strep, and Covid testing, prescription coordination, and establishing healthcare with a provider for those without a family doctor. This service is available for students ages 2 and up and parents can join the virtual appointment as well. "We have the ability to order send-out testing kits for RSV if needed or requested by the family," shared Kitchens-Ogden. "Sometimes insurance will not cover the test if the patient is over 3-4 years of age and the care plan is supportive care regardless of the result, since there is no treatment for RSV. Families can discuss this option further with providers if they feel testing is warranted."



Pictured at right are District Nursing Coordinator, Renee Kitchens-Ogden, RN and MJHS School Nurse, Hope Bird, RN training on the new equipment while a Nurse Practitioner joins virtually on the iPad which gives visual and audio access during practice appointment.

The kit includes a number of attachments that our school nurses can use during the exam. There is a lighted stethoscope to listen to lungs, abdominal/gastric sounds. The light also allows them to view the throat, eyes, and skin to help identify any skin irritation. There is an otoscope to look into ears to detect fluid, redness, and/or swelling. There is a blood pressure cuff, a pulse oximeter to measure oxygen saturation in the blood to see how well their body and lungs are getting oxygenated, as well as, heart rate. The last piece is the liat system, which allows nurses to run assays of throat swabs to detect Strep, as well as, nose swabs for flu A and B, and Covid.



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ENTRIES MUST BE SCHOOL-APPROPRIATE
THIS CONTEST IS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MADISON AREA ARTS ALLIANCE

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6 MARCH 2025

5 - 7:00 P.M.

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Are you or someone you know struggling with mental health or substance use? MCS offers mental health care coordination service at no cost to our students, staff and their families.

Be sure to check out [Care Solace](#) and see how they may be able to assist you.



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Safe Place Sites

MCS has partnered with the Jefferson County Youth Shelter to train all of our buildings as Safe Place sites.

From nationalsafespace.org, a Safe Place Site is a business or other public location designated by licensed Safe Place agencies as "safe places" for youth to go when in a crisis situation.

"We want to ensure we are doing all we can to make sure we have safe environments for all youth," shared Dr. Teresa Brown. "By taking this step and training our staff on the necessary protocols for a Safe Place Site, we have one more resource available for our students and other youth within the community, if necessary."

All MCS schools will wrap up the required training by the end of September. You can look for the familiar yellow sign on any of our buildings.

GET HELP NOW

Find a place with the Safe Place® sign.



Or, access help via text.

TXT 4 HELP

Text "Safe"
to 4HELP (44357).

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www.nationalsafespace.org

The Safe Place program in Madison, Indiana
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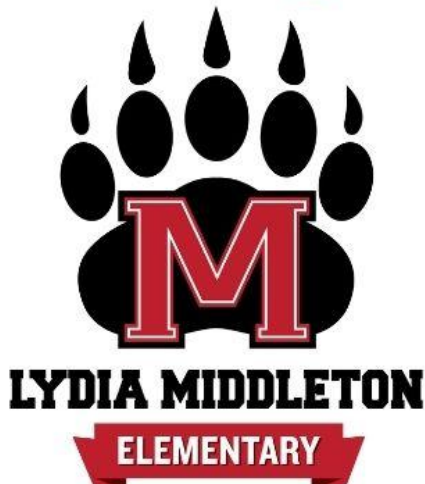
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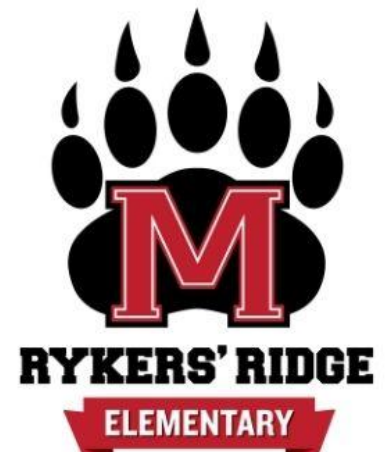
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