Hello! My name is **Kristin Thompson**, and I am your child's Primary (K) teacher for 2026-2027. I am so excited to get to know all my students!

A LITTLE BIT ABOUT ME & OUR CLASSROOM

I'm so excited to be working with K-1 students this year! I began at TPS in 2025 as an Instructional Assistant in the 1-2 room and loved every bit of it! I'm in the final stages of my Transition to Teaching Elementary Education Program, with an MA to follow. My path to teaching has been shaped by a deep love of learning and community. I spent a decade owning a music store, teaching thousands of private lessons and hundreds of group workshops, and for the past 5 years I've worked with Girls Rock Bloomington, a youth music and mentorship program. These experiences taught me that the best learning happens when young people feel safe, supported, and engaged. Outside the classroom: my wife and I just celebrated our 10-year anniversary with a trip to Kauai! I love being outside, biking around town or paddling my kayak on the lake, and I still play banjo in an old-time string band at local events. I'm also never far from my dog, Twiggy.

Your child can call me Ms. Kristin, and my pronouns are she/her.
Our classroom this year will be known as the K-1 Peas in a Pod (or – the Peas)!
You can reach me at kthompson@theprojectschool.org.

HIGHLIGHTS YOU CAN EXPECT IN OUR FIRST FEW WEEKS

We'll spend our first weeks building our classroom community and getting to know one another as learners and people. We'll establish routines that help everyone feel safe and confident, and we'll do some formal and informal assessments to learn about your child's strengths. Expect plenty of read-alouds, hands-on math, and creative projects exploring who we are as individuals and as a class. And since music has always been a part of how I make connections, don't be surprised if a little singing or rhythm-play finds its way into our days, too!

INTRODUCING OUR ARTS & INCLUSION TEACHERS

Here are some additional educators who support the learning of our students:

Sara Irvine (Ms. Sara, she/her) – Visual Arts Specialist
Howdy from (K-8) Visual Arts at TPS with Ms. Sara. I've been with TPS since its 2008 inception and am one of the founders of this wild and wonderful place. When I'm not at TPS2 wrangling the Visual Arts Rodeo, I am at home with my 5 horses, 5 dogs, and one cat. One of my favorite times of year is when all the TPS babes come to Yard Dogs Farm for Field Days. Giddy-up! Reach me: sirvine@theprojectschool.org.

Chris Bultman (Mr. Chris, he/him) – Performing Arts Specialist
Mr. Chris has been the Performing Arts specialist for TPS since 2010, and this year marks his 32nd year of teaching. He began in 1994 at The Curtis School in Los Angeles, where he also spent many of those sixteen "California years" as a performer in music, theatre, and TV – including brief co-starring roles as rather random French doctors on the soap opera "Days of Our Lives." Aside from his passion for all things performing arts, Chris loves outdoors, his dog Moshi, and his big, loving family! Reach me: cbultman@theprojectschool.org.

Em Jalkanen (Ms. Em, she/her) – Primary Inclusion Teacher
I am the Primary Inclusion Teacher at The Project School. This is my second year in this role after spending more than 12 years teaching in early elementary classrooms. I love partnering with students, families, and teachers to create learning experiences that help every child feel included, supported, and successful. One of my favorite parts of my job is celebrating each student's unique strengths while helping them build confidence,

independence, and resilience. Outside of school, I enjoy reading, playing games, and spending time with my husband and our three energetic children. I am looking forward to a wonderful year of learning and growing together! During the first few weeks, I'll be popping into rooms to observe and spend time with students exploring likes/dislikes, strengths, and what they are working on. Reach me: ejalkanen@theprojectschool.org.

WHERE OUR CLASSROOM IS LOCATED

Our classroom is on the first floor on the west side of the Main Building. Your child will walk up the ramp and enter through the Main Building front door each morning. Once they enter the front door, they'll turn left and enter the west side hallway. Our classroom is the second door on the left in that hallway!

WHO ELSE AT TPS CAN HELP!

We want to make sure that you know that everyone on our staff is excited to welcome you and your child, and eager to help all of you feel comfortable at the start of the new year! Specifically, we want to mention some key people and the roles they play, along with their contact information. You can always find their names and contact information on the website, too:

Lori Ihle – School Principal
Contact Ms. Lori with overarching instructional questions (beyond classroom curricular topics)
lihle@theprojectschool.org

Nicole Eller – Special Education Coordinator
Contact Nicole with questions about Individual Education Plans and support services
neller@theprojectschool.org

Alex Wulf – Office & Facilities Manager
Contact Alex with administrative and payment questions
awulf@theprojectschool.org

Angie Fish – Food Services Director
Contact Angie with meals-related questions
afish@theprojectschool.org

Bri Jacobson – Health Aide
Contact Bri with health and medication questions
health@theprojectschool.org

Rene Riley – Life Skills Coach | Mike Emmert – Social-Emotional Learning
Contact Ms. Rene & Mr. Mike with social-emotional or socio-economic support needs
rriley@theprojectschool.org | memmert@theprojectschool.org

Amy Jackson – Communications & Outreach Director
Contact Ms. Amy with communications, website, and events questions
connect@theprojectschool.org

I cannot wait to welcome everyone to a great year! – Ms. Kristin

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This institution is an equal opportunity employer.