



## Meet Map: Megan

### Map Academy Student

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**Megan:** My name is Megan Roderick and I go to Map Academy. The school that I had been to previously, it was very terrible. I got bullied a lot. I almost took my life because of it but I'm glad I found my way here because I wouldn't be here today if it wasn't for Map. I have Tourette's, so it takes a little bit more time for me to learn, a little bit slower pace. Sometimes I need a little extra help, and that's just something I wasn't getting at my old school – and support.

I wasn't very confident in the school, to be honest, but once I got settled in, everyone made me feel so welcome at the start and they still do. Then I started liking it a lot more and more and I love it here now. It has taken a lot of stress off that I used to have. For regular schoolwork, we'd have a due date or a time to finish it, but with Map, you can go at your own pace. If I'm having a panic attack, I can take a 15-minute break or however long I need and then I can go back to working or I don't even need to work for the rest of the day. I can just take some time to regain everything. I used to not be able to come in at all sometimes. Some days, I would get too many panic attacks to the point where I just felt like I couldn't do anything. Map taught me how to deal with that stress a little bit more and better, different ways to cope with it.

I love the staff I think the most. They just feel so warm and welcome, because they take the time to get to know you. They really show interest in your interests, and that's what I love the most because not a lot of teachers would do that. You feel like, "Oh, I have some space in some room to express myself, but also not feel bad for expressing myself." You still have room for academics and for being yourself.

It does feel nice to have freedom, but it also feels good to have trust. I feel like Map trusts each and every one of their students. It's amazing how you can miss a day or two and you can come back and you won't be criticized for it, and you won't get reprimanded or anything. It's just, "Oh, we're happy you're back. Let's try to get this done and that done." It just feels nice.

If you need support out of school, they'll 100% give it to you. I text a lot of my teachers, one in particular, a lot more than the others. Whenever I need help with my feelings, or if I'm feeling down or anxious. If I need help with anything, it just feels--it's nice. You do get a lot of support out of school, not just academics. They'll help you with pretty much anything, from these moments, these small little moments that you end up just becoming friends with everyone, even the teachers. I don't open up to people a lot, but I do have Map because I feel safe.

It's okay to make mistakes, and that it's okay to learn from those mistakes. I learn a lot actually every day, more than I think I do. Sometimes I think, "Oh, this is just a normal day. I didn't really learn anything," but then I think about it more and more and then I realize I did learn something each day that I come here.

I always say that I think it's one of the reasons why I'm still in school, and still trying to learn, and still trying to get into college. I just bring up how much I love the staff and how good I'm doing with the credits. I don't know, I just tell them it's a very good school, very nice people that work at the school, and that it helps me to try and finish my goal when I thought I was going to stop.

**[00:04:20] [END OF AUDIO]**