



Growing by Leaps and Bounds

Martha Jones School - Westwood, MA

Matt Kuklantz, Principal

**Martha Jones Motto:
Be Kind. Be Curious. Be Courageous.**

[Westwood Public Schools](#) | [Martha Jones School](#) | [Martha Jones PTO](#)

Issue 8 - December 13, 2024

Principals Message

MJ Community,

As we enter the winter months (and hopefully some snow). I wanted to remind our community that students go outside, even in snowy weather, unless it is an unsafe temperature. Students will also not have outside recess if the conditions are too icy or rainy. Please make sure your children are dressed for the winter temperatures, so they can play outside comfortably and safely.

On snowy days, please make sure your children are equipped with snow pants and snow boots. Without this gear, students will need to play on the shoveled blacktop areas of the playground, which is a lot less fun than playing in the snow on the field or playground. Please send your children to school with a pair of shoes in addition to snow boots. It is also helpful to send an extra pair of shoes with your children on and after rainy days. This will help students stay comfortable and keep our hallways and classrooms clean and dry throughout the day.

Finally, please label all of your students' outdoor gear: jackets, boots, gloves and hats. It makes finding the owner much easier.

Matt Kuklantz
Martha Jones School

MJ Mission Statement and Core Values

Earlier this fall, a group of MJ staff and parents came together as a working group to look at our school's core values. We created a survey that was sent to MJ staff and caregivers and was also completed by our 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students. The group took that feedback and developed our initial draft of a mission statement and core values.

We are now seeking feedback from staff and community members on this initial draft. Please see the [survey](#) to find the content of our Draft Mission Statement and Core Values and a few questions that will help guide our thinking as we move forward.

Thank you in advance for providing your feedback!

Reminder - December 20th Dismissal

Just a reminder that dismissal on December 20th is at 12:00.

Jolabokaflod - Yule Book Flood

Jolabokaflod, an Icelandic tradition, will be celebrated in Library class next week by exchanging books and getting cozy and reading. See the flyer!

This week students will be learning about an Icelandic tradition called *Jolabokaflod* (Yule Book Flood).

Jolabokaflod, translating to "Christmas Book Flood," is a unique and cherished tradition in Iceland, celebrated on Christmas Eve.

This tradition involves giving and receiving new books, but its essence lies in the joy of reading them together.

This week and next, I would like to invite each student to bring in ONE or TWO gently used books from home that they would like to exchange.

Even if they forget, or don't bring in a book, next week all students will get to pick one "new" book from those brought in.

During the week of 12/18-12/22 students are invited to bring a small blanket and/or stuffy to library and we will spend our library time curled up with our new books!

Happy Jolabokaflod!



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Math Newsletter

Mrs. Erin Aaron and Mrs. Molly Singh, Martha Jones Math Specialists, have created a [Quarterly Math Newsletter](#). Within it are updates on the math curriculum and valuable tips to support your child's mathematical journey.

Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks

While your child's classroom teacher gave an overview of the grade level curriculum at curriculum night, you can also access the [Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks Parent Guides](#) for each grade level. These guides to the Massachusetts learning standards help families understand what students are expected to know and be able to do by the end of each grade in English Language Arts and Literacy, Mathematics, Science and Technology/Engineering, and History and Social Science.

Important Upcoming Events

Fri, Dec. 20 - Early Dismissal, 12:00pm

Mon, Dec 23-Wed. Jan. 1, 2025 - No School - Vacation

Thur, Jan. 2 - School Resumes

Wed, Jan 8 - Early Release, 12:00pm
Wed, Jan 15 - Westwood SEPAC Community Meeting, Westwood Public Library/[Zoom](#), 7:30-8:30pm
Mon, Jan 20 - No School - Holiday
Wed, Jan 22 - Early Release, 12:00pm
Fri, Jan 31 - 1st Grade Enrichment, Chinese New Year
Wed, Feb 5 - Early Release, 12:00pm
Wed, Feb 12 - Westwood SEPAC Coffee Meet Up - Muffin House, 10:00-11:00am
Mon, Feb 17-21 - No School - Vacation
Wed, Feb 26 - Early Release, 12:00pm
Fri, Mar 7 - **Fri**, Mar 14 Read-A-Thon
Tues, **Mar 11** - MJ PTO Book Fair (Park St Books)
Wed, Mar 12 - Early Release, 12:00pm
Wed, Mar 19 - Enrichment / Author Visit: Brian Lies
Thurs, Mar 20 - Gr. 5 Concert, 10:00am
Wed, Mar 26 - Early Release, 12:00pm
Tues, Apr 8 - MCAS ELA (Gr. 3, 4, 5)
Wed, Apr 9 - Early Release, 12:00pm
Thurs, Apr 10 - MCAS ELA (Gr. 3, 4, 5)
Tues, Apr 15 & **Thurs**, Apr 17 - MCAS ELA Make-up Dates
Wed, Apr 16 - Westwood SEPAC Coffee Meet Up - Muffin House, 10:00-11:00am
Mon, 18-25 - No School - Vacation
Wed, Apr 30 - Early Release, 12:00pm
Tues, May 13 - MCAS Math (Gr. 3, 4, 5)
Wed, May 14 - Early Release, 12:00pm
Wed, May 14 - Westwood SEPAC Community Meeting, Westwood Public Library/[Zoom](#), 7:30-8:30
Thurs, May 15 - MCAS Math (Gr. 3, 4, 5)
Fri, May 16 - MCAS Math Make-up (Gr. 3, 4, 5)
Mon, May 19 & **Tues**, **May 20** - MCAS Science (Gr. 5)
Thurs, May 22 - MCAS Science Make-up (Gr.5)
Wed, May 28 - Early Release, 12:00pm
Wed, June 4 - Early Release, 12:00pm
Mon, June 16 - Student Last Day (no snow days)

News from the Front Office

Morning's in the Office here at MJ

Patience and grace is what gets us through the mornings here at MJ. Here is a quick run-down of the activity timing in the front office first thing in the morning.

8AM and it's the start of the work day - logging on to the various computer programs that help track student (SDM & X2) and staff (Aesop & X2) attendance. As student absences and late arrivals are received in SDM these are added to X2 (until the 9AM start bell).

At 8:30 the internal "Daily News" is distributed electronically to MJ Building Staff advising of coverage needs for absences & meetings, any hot items for the day like schedule changes, special visits/enrichment, or deadline reminders. (The Daily News also has a quick link resource section



for staff to access a variety of items including staff directory, duty schedules, specials schedules, and district approved teaching resource links to mention a few.)

At 8:40 the early arrival bell rings which begins the teacher work day with some staff on morning recess and breakfast. Buses are arriving from 8:40 - 8:55, and substitutes are coming in for morning assignments.

At 8:55 the line-up bell rings and students proceed to classrooms. In the office we are also getting ready for "Morning Announcements" - presented by three 5th grade volunteers! 9:01 and it's live from the "MJ broadcast booth" (Ms. Santangelo's desk) with the announcements and morning pledge.

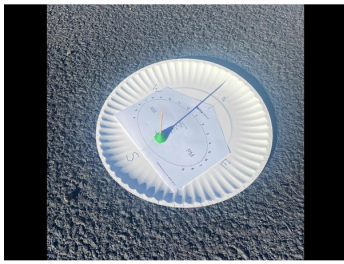
By 9:10 all attendance from classroom teachers should be completed. Now it's time to reconcile and make sure absences in classrooms match what the school has been alerted too through the SDM app. If there are discrepancies a call is made to the classroom to confirm the student absence and an email sent to parent/guardian advising of absences. The goal is to have the email go to parents no later than 9:30.

Also note that while all the above is happening the front door gets a constant stream of rings from late students, special visitors, and/or parents dropping off items or volunteering here at MJ. Busy mornings here so a well deserved thank you and shout out to all who help. :)

CLASSROOM NEWS

News from the MJ Classroom's News from 5B (Mr. Bartlett)





Mr. Bartlett's class has been exploring how the shadows we see everyday can help explain the Earth's rotation this week.

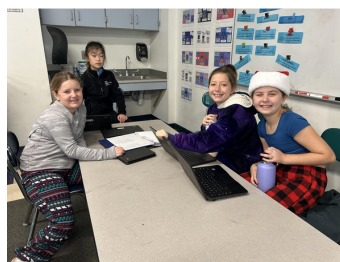
Students started by learning some background knowledge and vocabulary around this topic, and then used flashlights to explore how shadows can change their direction and length.



They then took part in a hands-on activity to make a shadow stick experiment, where students went outside multiple times during the school day to measure the direction and distance of the sun's shadow on a large poster sized compass.

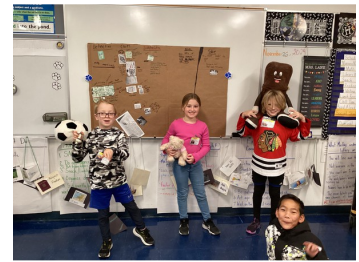
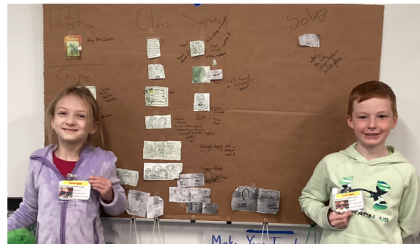
Finally, students built a working sundial and tested this out on a sunny but cold December day, and learned how to adjust this for the month of the year and daylight savings time.

News from 4P (Mrs. Perry)



In reading, fourth graders are currently planning for a research project. Students have been given a natural disaster topic (i.e. tornadoes, earthquakes, blizzards, hurricanes) to study. As researchers, they are breaking down this big topic into smaller subtopics. To stay organized, students are keeping track of notes in research binders!

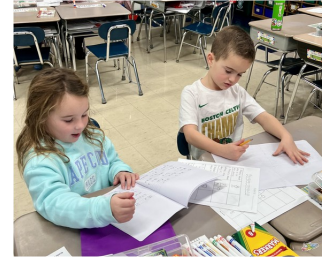
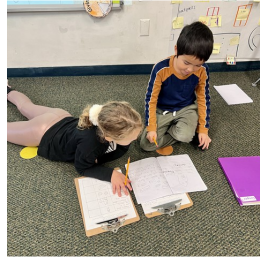
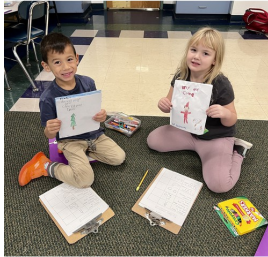
News from 3La (Mrs. Lane)



The students in 3 Lane just finished a reading unit on Mysteries. As "detectives" they had to read a mystery book and keep track of all the parts of their book on a crime board. To earn their detective badge they had to work together to retell their mystery book using their crime board and mystery vocabulary words.

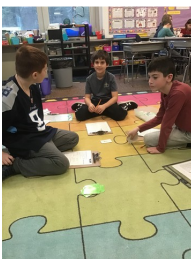


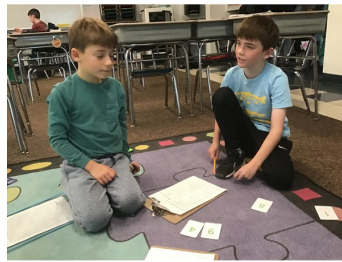
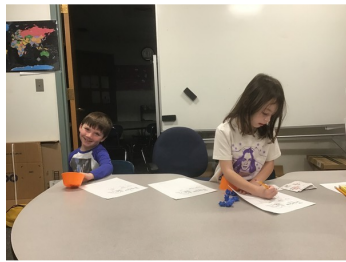
News from 1B (Ms. Brock)



First graders have been working hard on their personal narratives! Writers zoomed in on small moments to write their stories and have added character feelings, dialogue, and movement. Students are learning about revising and editing their stories with writing partners.

News from the Math Room (Mrs. Aaron)





Math Games are a great way to practice math skills and computation as well as a fun way to problem solve and strategize while articulating your thinking. Games are used throughout the curriculum in every grade. Here is a link to Investigations Games website for each grade level that you could also play with your child at home!

[Investigations Math Games](#)



MARTHA JONES SCHOOL

PTO

Be Kind. Be Curious. Be Courageous.

PTO News

MJ Families,

As we enter the Winter Break and New Year, we wanted to remind you of some upcoming volunteer opportunities. Please consider signing up for a committee! We cannot make all of our incredible events a success without parent and caregiver volunteers. Please feel free to contact the PTO if you have any questions (mjpto@westwood.ma.us). We appreciate all of the support this year! Thank you to everyone who has made this school year successful so far.

WEBSITE & DIRECTORY INFORMATION

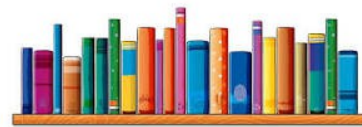
The Martha Jones PTO is a non-profit organization that takes great pride in supporting our teachers and students. We do this by offering valuable programs, organizing exciting events, and providing essential resources that enhance the educational experience of every student. Log in or register on the [PTO website](#) to stay updated on all PTO events, receive important PTO emails, and stay connected with Room Parent communications. You will also be able to update your information, contribute to our Annual Contribution Drive, purchase Birthday Books, and volunteer for various PTO committees or in the Library! Many of our committees are still looking for volunteers. [Sign-up today!](#)

ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION DRIVE

We aim to raise \$7,500 from our annual PTO drive and are halfway to this goal! Every donation, no matter the amount, is appreciated and important in helping us continue to fund enrichment and community activities. Please consider making a [contribution](#) today! As a reminder, we also have a Corporate Match option. Many Employers offer matching donations because MJS PTO is a qualified 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

BIRTHDAY BOOKS & LIBRARY VOLUNTEERS

- Participate in the [PTO Birthday Book Program](#)! Ms. Swinning has selected some fantastic books that students have requested, but the Martha Jones library does not currently have. During their birthday month, participating children are invited to the library to pick a brand new book from this collection. A bookplate commemorating your child's birthday will be placed inside the front cover and they will be the very first student to borrow this book! Once they've finished reading it, the book will be returned to the library's collection, where it can be enjoyed for years to come. The cost of this program is \$15 per student.
- [Sign-up](#) as a **Library Volunteer**! Mrs. Swinning needs one parent per class to help check-in, shelve, and check-out books. This is a great opportunity to get into the school, interact with your child's class, and support the library program!



VALENTINES DANCE COMMITTEE

We are so excited to add a school-wide dance for MJ students and families. This will be the first year for this event and we will need multiple volunteers for planning, setting up, breaking down, and decorating. The dance will be on February 7, 2025 and our first committee meeting will be virtually held in the coming weeks. We would love to see some new faces volunteering! Even if you are brand new to Martha Jones or have never volunteered for this type of event, that's okay! All ideas and help are welcome! Please reach out to Kristen Donahue with any questions (kristen.m.richman@gmail.com). [Sign up Here!](#)



MJS SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Our annual, spring social will be here before we know it! This is one of our biggest fundraisers but it is also a great way to have a fun night out (kid-free) with other Martha Jones Parents and Caregivers. It's a time to catch up with families you know and to meet new ones. Book your sitters for April 5, 2025, and be ready for some fun! Because this is one of our most exciting and successful fundraisers, we will need lots of volunteers to help plan, collect auction items, book vendors, set up, and break down. You do not need to be a party planner, we just need people willing to help! But if you are a party planner, or love doing so, please sign up! Please reach out to Kristen Donahue (kristen.m.richman@gmail.com) with any questions. [Sign up here!](#)



PTO BOARD MEMBER 25/26

We are currently looking for new board members for the 2025-2026 school year. Each board position serves two school years per term. We currently have 4 open positions next year to fill. If you are interested in being on the PTO board please contact Ally Pavlic (allyson.carney@gmail.com). We would love to hear from you!

MARTHA JONES PTO FACEBOOK GROUP AND INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT

Join the Facebook group and follow us on Instagram to get the latest PTO news and updates delivered right to your news feed! [Join our Facebook group](#) or follow us on Instagram @marthajonespto.

Martha Jones PTO Meeting Dates SY 2024-2025
September 24, 2024, 7pm

November 19, 2024, 7pm

March 4, 2025, 7pm

May 6, 2025, 7pm

PTO CONTACT FOR EVENTS, NOTICES:

If you have an event or notice for our PTO update, please email it to:

PTO Co-Secretary - [Priscilla Stephan](#), [Jenn Katsilieris](#)

Martha Jones PTO Board 2024-2025

[Kristen Donahue](#), Co-President

[Ally Pavlic](#), Co-President

[Kristen Gautreau](#), Co-Treasurer

[Abbe Lynch](#), Co-Treasurer

[Priscilla Stephen](#), Co-Secretary

[Jenn Katsilieris](#), Co-Secretary

[Katie Collins](#), Co-Social Media

[Priya Sharma](#), Co-Social Media

District & Community News You Can Use

Westwood SEPAC

The Westwood Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) is a state-mandated, parent-run group working to promote a network of parents, guardians, and caregivers of children with special needs.



Information about SEPAC and events can be found at <https://www.westwoodsepac.org/events>.

Westwood Youth and Family Services

WYFS will be offering three groups this winter, Social Smarts for grades K/1 and 2/3 as well as social solutions for grades 4/5. Below are the links to register. The registrations are open for these so families can sign up using the google forms linked below. In addition to group offerings we are also trying to organize more participants for Friends Network. We are still looking for 12 to 13 kids in 3rd, 4th or 5th grade to be paired with a high school volunteer. The plan will be to have a cohort start in January and continue in the program until we end the week before April vacation. This program is great for kids looking for a positive role model. We often find that this mentorship can be a nice change from the adult guidance that kids get at school and at home. Please feel free to reach out with any questions about any of these offerings!



Social Smarts Registration (K/1 & 2/3) <https://forms.gle/BTomGB7cjRyQGtTeZ>

Social Solutions Registration (4/5) <https://forms.gle/P6Jg8hQvawPkLyHF6>

Friends Network Registration (3,4 & 5) <https://forms.gle/LLVADTa5xSDcfqtN9>

Attention ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FAMILIES!



Westwood Youth
&
Family Services

Registration
Opens Monday,
11/4 at 9 am!



Social Smarts



Social Solutions



SOCIAL SMARTS AND SOCIAL SOLUTIONS

Social Smarts- Sessions for grades K/1 and 2/3

Social Solutions- Session for grades 4/5
Our social skills groups focus on building skills to navigate social challenges that children face at school and among friends. Topics include communication, identifying our strengths and valuing others as well as practicing how to work collaboratively with others.

FRIENDS NETWORK

We are registering Little Friends for a January Start! Now is your chance to sign up if you could not participate in the fall! We have a waitlist of "Big Friends" who would be wonderful role models for your elementary school aged child.

Program meets on Thursday evenings. There are two sessions, 5:15 to 6:15 or 6:30 to 7:30. For children in grades 3, 4 or 5

Questions about groups
or Friends?
Contact Liz Craig at 781
320 1023 or
lcraig@westwoodma.gov

Scan the QR code
to register today!





SOCIAL SOLUTIONS

for 4th & 5th graders

This free clinical group will focus on learning about communication, navigating social challenges, and working collaboratively through interactive activities.

This group is open to all Westwood residents and students of Westwood Public Schools.

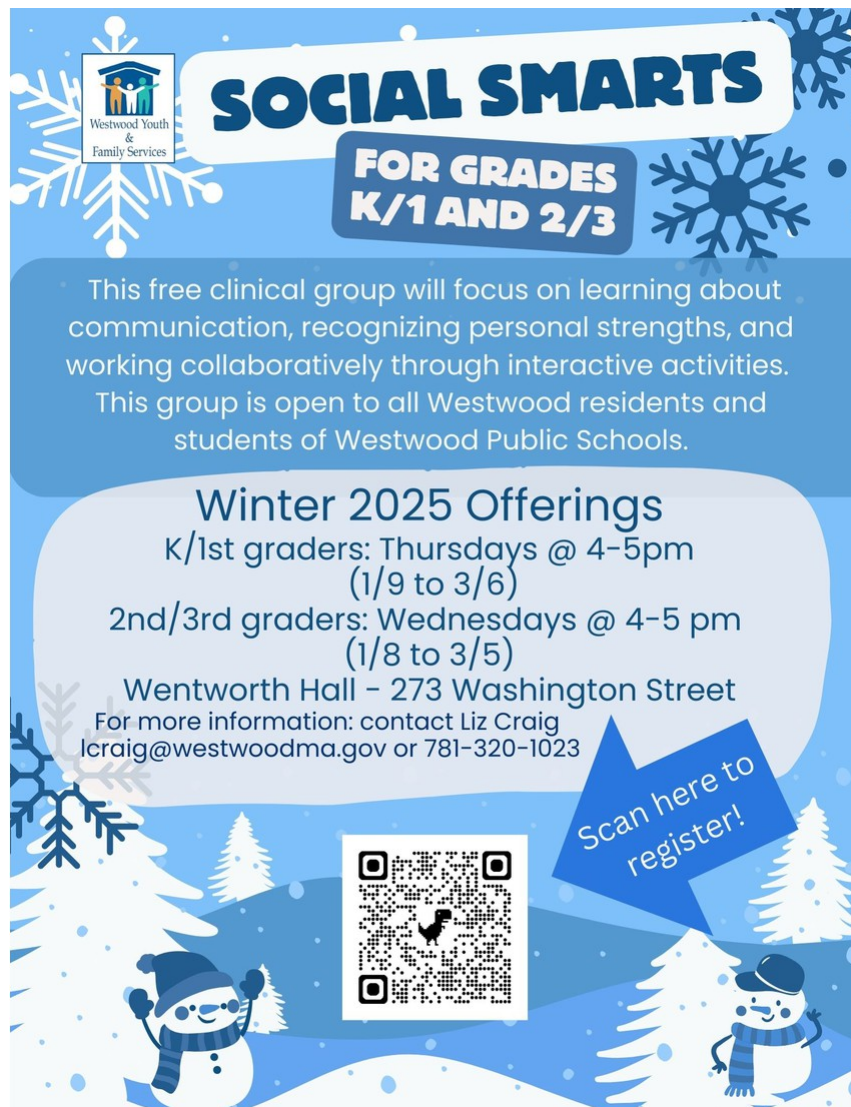
Scan here to register!



**Group will meet Tuesdays from 4-5pm
From Tuesday 1/7 to Tues. 3/4
(no group during February vacation)
Wentworth Hall - 273 Washington Street**

**For more information: contact Liz Craig
lcraig@westwoodma.gov, or 781-320-1023**

www.townhall.westwood.ma.us/departments/youth-family-services



School Calendar

[Click the link](#) for the Westwood 2024-2025 school calendar.

Westwood Public Schools does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, religion, disability, national origin, or sexual orientation.

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1346 или по электронной почте запрос на lprouffe@westwood.k12.ma.us Спасибо.



Matthew Kuklantz

Matthew is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

