



Growing by Leaps and Bounds

Martha Jones School - Westwood, MA

Matt Kuklantz, Principal

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

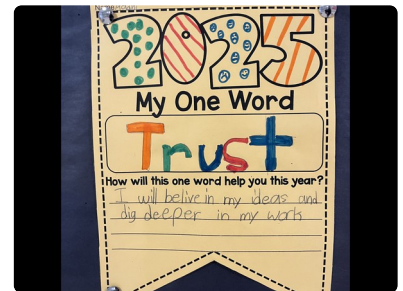
[Westwood Public Schools](#) | [Martha Jones School](#) | [Martha Jones PTO](#)

Issue 9 - January 10, 2025

Principals Message

MJ Community,

I often say this, but I truly love my job and feel fortunate to work at Martha Jones. This sentiment was reaffirmed on Thursday. As I prepared to write this message, I found myself procrastinating by walking around the building—a habit that often reminds me why I love being here.



The start of each day at our school is marked by morning meetings in every classroom. These gatherings set a positive and welcoming tone, helping students prepare socially and academically for the day ahead. During my walk, I was continually struck by the skill, flexibility, and intentionality our teachers bring to their classrooms.

Each morning meeting I visited was engaging and effective, but what stood out to me was the remarkable range of experiences across the different grade levels in our building. In a Kindergarten classroom, for instance, a student proudly took on their "classroom job" of announcing what day it was yesterday, today, and tomorrow. As they read aloud, it became clear that another student had forgotten to update the days on the chart, which still reflected Wednesday. The teacher gently allowed the moment to unfold, asking the class if anyone noticed anything unusual. The student

who had forgotten quickly realized the mistake, corrected it, and moved on. It was a wonderful example of how our students are encouraged to embrace mistakes and recognize the interconnectedness of their roles.

In a fifth-grade classroom, I joined a morning meeting where students were sharing their shoe sizes. The teacher cleverly used this casual conversation to segue into an introduction to graphing fractions, a concept they would delve into later that day. In just five minutes, I witnessed students practicing mathematical habits of mind that will serve them well as they move on to middle and high school.

The thoughtfulness our teachers bring to their work is evident everywhere I look. Their ability to build meaningful connections with students and seize teachable moments is truly inspiring. As a community, we are incredibly fortunate to have such dedicated and skilled professionals shaping our children's learning experiences.

Matt Kuklantz
Martha Jones School
Principal

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!

Same and Different Like Me - Parent Volunteer Opportunities

The district has kicked off a parent read aloud program designed to promote education around disabilities and medical conditions. This is an extension of the "Same and Different Like Me" program. Megan Brenk is the parent volunteer coordinator for Martha Jones and she also created the sign up genius for the whole district. Please consider volunteering as a guest reader. You don't have to read in your child's class. You can read in any class at any level at any school as long as you have an active CORI with the district. We are taking things one month at a time. If you see a class or book you'd like to read on the sign up but the time doesn't work for you please let Megan know and she can find a better time. You can email her at mbrenk@gmail.com.

Here is the letter from Sue Maselli, Director of Student Services, and here is the Sign Up Sheet.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1tzblfS-B30iX8r2etapqUkztJhsKS8LcFMzT1PY7n94/edit?usp=sharing>

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E0D45ADA82BABFB6-53338339-parent>

Martha Jones Food Drive

The Martha Jones Student Council and other Westwood Elementary Schools have partnered with the Westwood Food Pantry, an all-volunteer, non-profit organization serving approximately 100 families and senior citizens in Westwood to hold a food drive this winter. The WFP often hears 'Is there really a need in Westwood?' The short answer is yes, even if that help is only temporary.

The Food Pantry's annual November town-wide Collection Day was a resounding success (if you contributed, thank you!), but they still need help. Unfortunately, they are still projecting some bare shelves by February 2025. The MJ Student Council is coordinating this event, please consider donating. Students will bring in their donations to the classroom and they will be collected there.



MJ Girls on the Run

We are excited to announce that we will be hosting another season of Girls on the Run for girls in Grades 3, 4, and 5. Registration opened today and our first practice will be March 31st. See below for more details and information.

MJS GOTR Registration Begins on 1/7 and Starts on 3/31

This is a wonderful opportunity for our girls to build self-confidence and make new friends.



Conversations with Caregivers

As part of our Conversation with Caregivers series, Steve Ouellette, Director of Technology, Learning, and Innovation, presented on Digital Citizenship and Safety. Some of you, who were not able to attend, have asked for copies of the presentation and the resources for protecting your kids online that were shared that evening. The presentation and resources are linked here for your convenience. [Slide Presentation \(Empowering Caregivers to Provide a Safe and Balanced Digital Experience\)](#) and [Resource Links](#)

Math Newsletter - Winter Edition

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

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

School Dismissal Manager reminder

PTO Mini Courses will be starting soon (registration opens on Tuesday, January 21). If you have changes in dismissal routines due to changed Extended Day enrollment or participation in a Mini Course please be sure to update SDM. And remember... you should



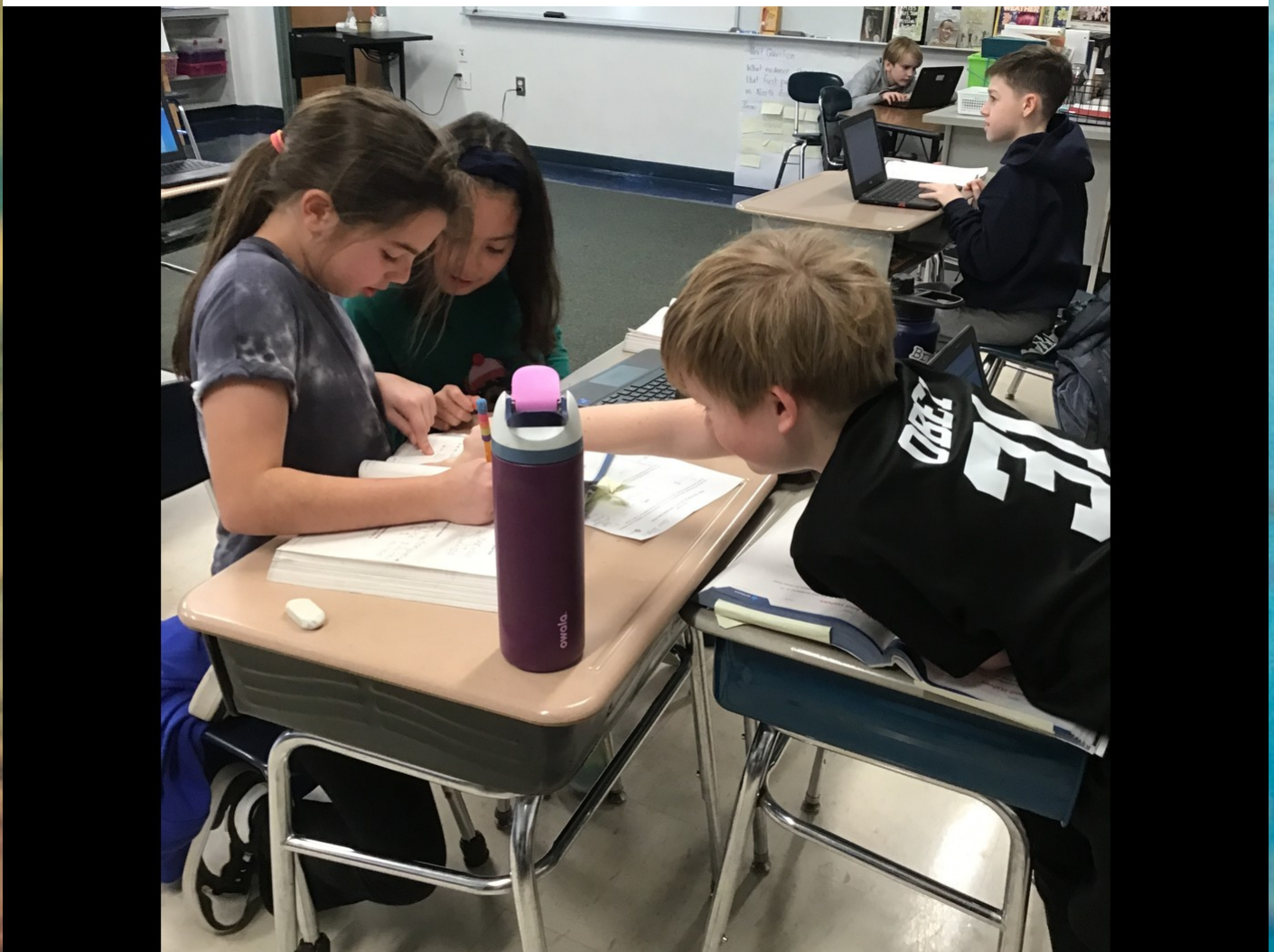
also use SDM if your child will be late, absent, or is being dismissed early. TY

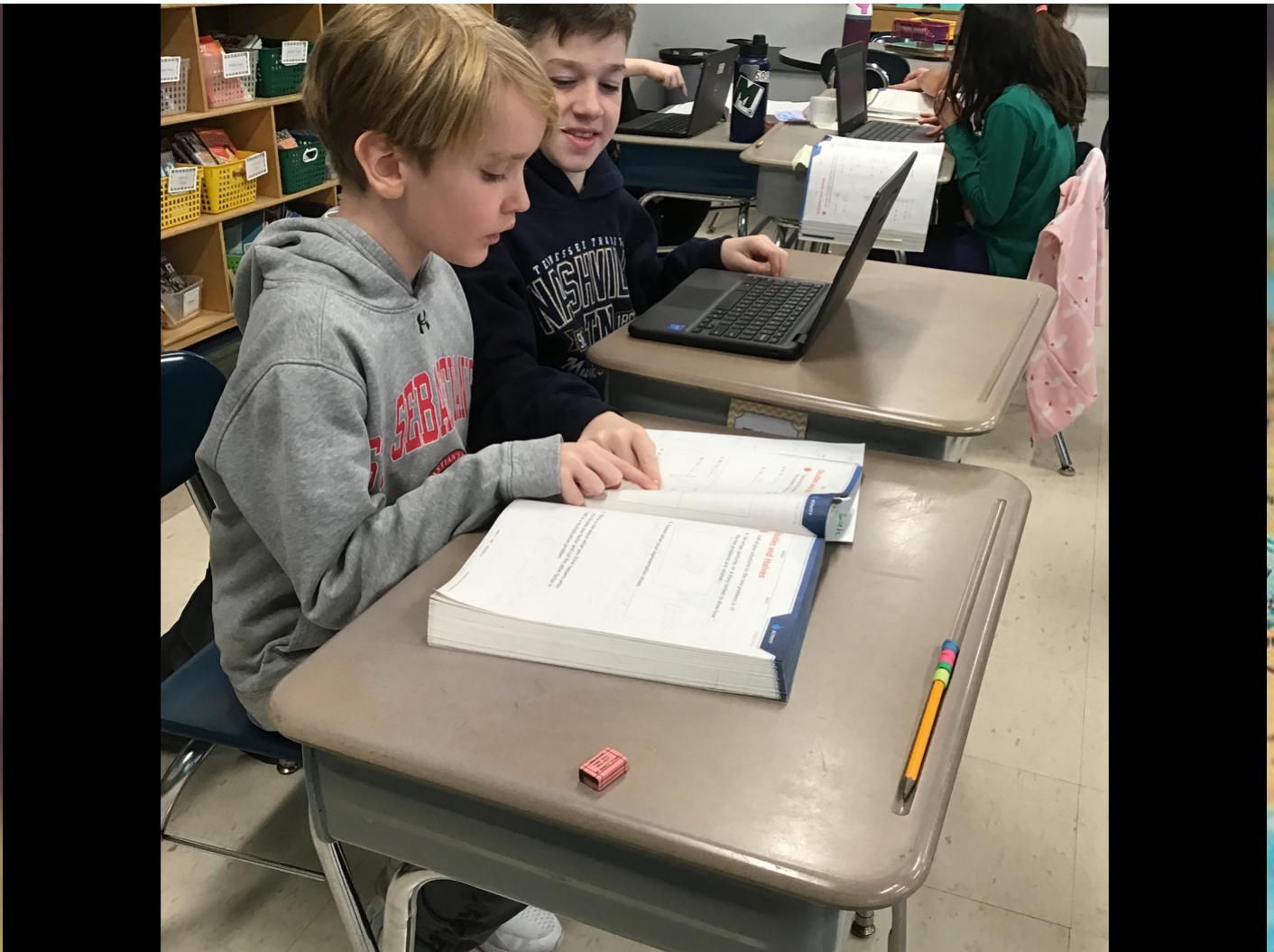
Lost and Found

With the cold weather upon us children are coming in with hats, mittens, coats, etc. Please be sure your child's items are labelled with a name or initials - I do my best to get labelled items back to their forever homes. Items without labels get sent to the donation bin after 4 weeks. TY



News from the MJ Classroom's News from 4B (Ms. Bass)





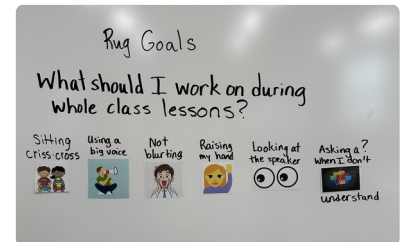
In fourth grade, students have been learning to multiply larger number sets using a range of strategies. One common method involves finding partial products and adding them together. Another strategy, called "doubling and halving," is often solved mentally. For example, instead of solving 24×4 directly, the expression can be adjusted to 12×8 , which is easier to compute. As shown in the pictures, students frequently work in pairs to solve multiplication word problems and check each other's work for accuracy.

News from KM (Mrs. McDonough)

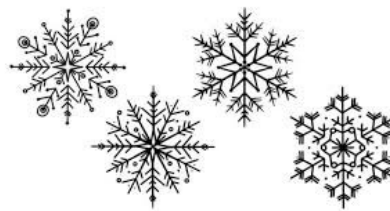




Many people make resolutions in the New Year. In KM we learned about setting goals. We are setting goals that we want to work on in many areas. We met with our reading buddies to create a goals bulletin board about places we would like to go, a person we would like to meet, a topic we would like to read about, something we would like to learn, and something we would like to make in the New Year. We have also been setting goals for participation in whole group lessons and morning meeting.



News from the Library (Mrs. Swinning)

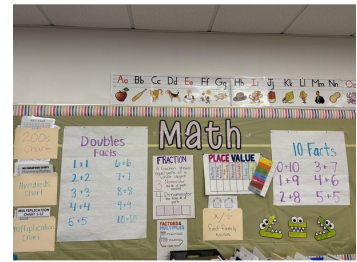


Click the graphic to watch a short video

Winter has arrived in the Martha Jones Library! We celebrated our annual tradition of Jolabokaflod from Iceland. You can see pictures [HERE](#) on the library Facebook page. Students also made our yearly snowflakes to decorate the library windows. You can see a slide show of them [HERE](#).

To start the year off on the right foot, students are reviewing library rules by playing and creating board games designed around the library and things we can do to help things run smoothly for everyone and allow us time for more reading and fun!

News from Ms. O'Brien



In the PEER room we are working on addressing the sensory needs of our students. Students have experimented with different tactile sensations such as water beads, pompoms, sand, and foam beads. Additionally students are working towards self regulating in the calm corner in a safe environment. Many students choose to use the sensory sack when they are dysregulated. Students are working very hard on their emotional intelligence!



MARTHA JONES SCHOOL

PTO

Be Kind. Be Curious. Be Courageous.

PTO News - Happy New Year

WINTER/SPRING MINI COURSES

The Martha Jones Mini Course Committee has been hard at work to create an exciting mini course lineup for the Winter/Spring months. Mini Courses will start the week of February 3rd and are held directly after school at Martha Jones until 4:25 PM. This session we will be offering Hip Hop, Mini Chefs, Fun and Games, Snapology, Biloball, Talent for a Cause, Yoga, Chess, and Minecraft. Please watch for an email from the PTO with the course descriptions and schedule on Tuesday, January 14th. **Official Registration will be sent via email by Mr. K at 7:00 AM on Tuesday, January 21st.** Registration will close on Tuesday, January 28th at 5:00 PM. In order to make this program a success we do ask for one parent/caregiver volunteer for each day to take attendance and help with dismissal. If you would like to volunteer please reach out to Mjminicourse@gmail.com . We are currently looking for a volunteer for Tuesday, Thursday, and Fridays. If you would like to volunteer, we will guarantee a spot for your student in a course of their choice on the respected day.

FAMILY BINGO NIGHT

The fifth grade class is proud to host their annual Family Bingo Night on Friday, January 24th from 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM in the Martha Jones cafeteria. This is a free event for all students and families. The PTO will provide light snacks, drinks, and there will be prizes for winners! We hope that you will join us! Please contact Kristen Donahue with questions Kristen.M.Richman@gmail.com.



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!](#)

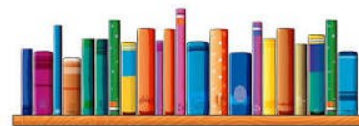


PTO BOARD MEMBER 25/26

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!

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!



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.

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!](#)

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/BTomGB7cjRyQGtTe7>

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

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

A colorful flyer titled "Attention ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FAMILIES!" in a large, stylized font. The flyer is divided into sections for "Social Smarts", "Social Solutions", and "Friends Network". It includes QR codes for registration, a snowman illustration, and contact information for Liz Craig. The background is light blue with white snowflake patterns.

**Attention
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
FAMILIES!**

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.

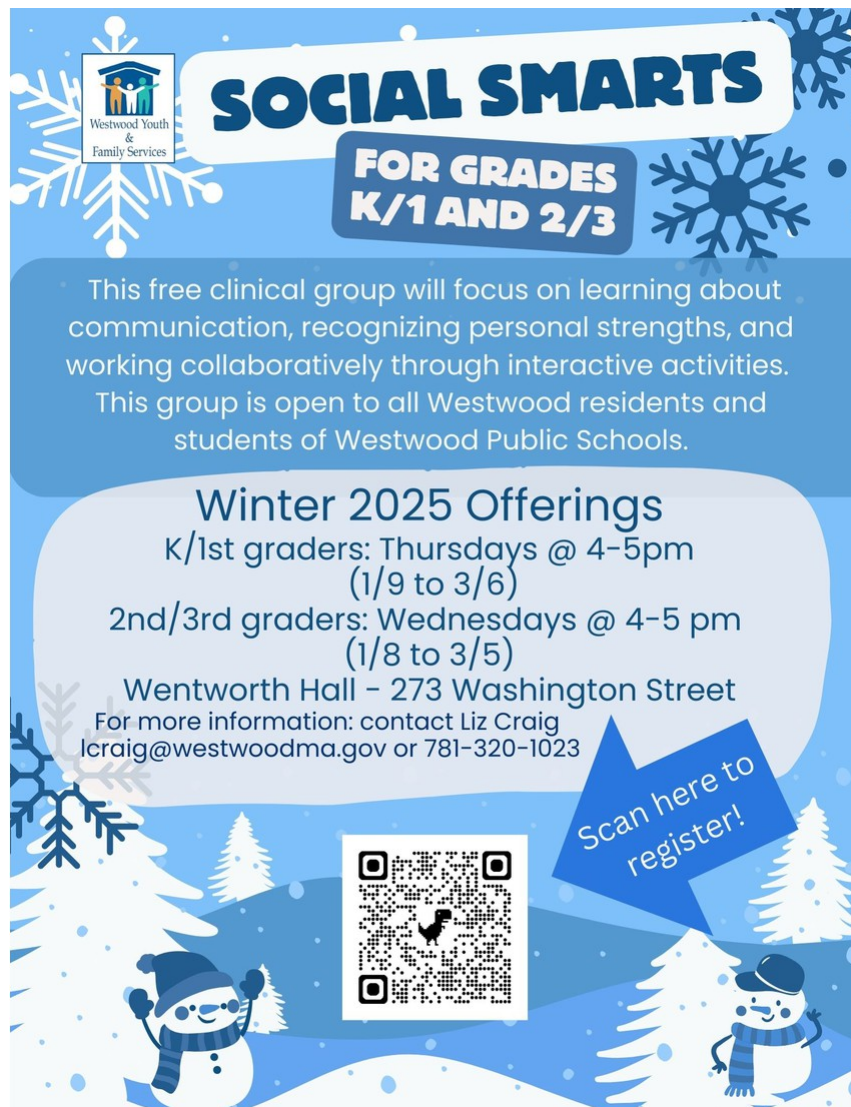
Scan here to register!



**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.

If you need this document translated, please call the Westwood Public Schools' Student Services Department at 781-326-7500 ext. 1346 or email your request to lprouffe@westwood.k12.ma.us. Thank you.

如果您需要翻译本文档，请致电Westwood的公立学校的学生服务部在781 326-7500 ext. 1346 或电子邮件您的要求 lprouffe@westwood.k12.ma.us 谢谢你。

ext. 1346 اذا بحاجة الى هذه الوثيقة المترجمة ، يرجى الاتصال على إدارة المدارس العامة ويستود 'الخدمات الطلابية في 781-326-7500

لك. لطلب كنتشكر lprouffe@westwood.k12.ma.us أو على البريد الإلكتروني الخاص بك 1346

Если вам нужен этот документ переводится, пожалуйста, позвоните

Вествудгосударственных школах "Студенческие службы Департамента по 781 326-7500 ext.

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



Matthew Kuklantz

Matthew is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

