



Growing by Leaps and Bounds

Martha Jones School - Westwood, MA

Matt Kuklantz, Principal

Martha Jones Motto:

Be Kind. Be Curious. Be Responsible. Be Respectful.

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

Issue 2 - September 19, 2025

Principal's Message

MJ Community,

It was great seeing everyone at last week's PTO sponsored Back to School Picnic and last night's Curriculum Night. If you were unable to join us last night, I highlighted the WPS Portrait of a Graduate work that was completed last year by bringing together students, families, teacher, and administrators to develop a shared vision of the skills, knowledge, and traits that students need to succeed as they graduate from our schools. This helps inform the work that we do here at Martha Jones as we continue to provide a high quality educational experience for our students.

I also spoke about some of the work that we are doing specific to Martha Jones. This year, we will be having all school community meetings to understand and live our MJ core values:

- Be Kind
- Be Curious
- Be Responsible
- Be Respectful

Finally, I believe strongly that a successful and vibrant community is built on communication. If you ever have a question or concern, please reach out to me. I can be reached at 781 326 7500 xt

Matt Kuklantz
Martha Jones School
Principal



Massachusetts Curricular Standards

While your child's classroom teacher gave an overview of the grade level curriculum last 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.

Resources for Students

Throughout the school year, there may be family, community, or broader world events that are impacting your family and child(ren). If you need some support with how to talk with your child about violence, loss, or scary events, please reach out to your child's teacher, me or our School Psychologist, Ms. MaryKate Stimpson. Additionally, I have found the following resources to be valuable:

How to talk to children about violence ([1 page](#)), ([full](#)) - NASP

[How to talk about natural disasters and help children cope](#) - NASP

[Helping children cope with terrorism](#) - NASP

[Interface Referral Service](#) is like a match.com for counseling providers. You contact them with insurance and presenting problem and they try to match you with an available provider.

[Westwood Youth & Family Services Website](#) has been supporting and advocating for the children and families in our community since 1986.

Important Upcoming Events

- Tuesday, September 23rd - No School - Holiday
- Wednesday, October 1st - Early Release, 12:00pm
- Thursday, October 2nd - No School - Holiday
- Monday, October 13th - No School - Holiday
- Wednesday, October 15th - Early Release, 12:00p
- Wednesday, October 29th - Early Release/Parent Teacher Conferences, 12:00pm

- Tuesday, November 4th - Picture Retake Day
- Wednesday, November 5th - Early Release/Parent Teacher Conferences, 12:00p
- Wednesday, November 5th - SEPAC Community Meeting, 10:00-11:00am - Neroli Mercato
- Tuesday, November 11th - No School - Holiday
- Wednesday, November 26th - Early Release
- Thursday, November 27th - No School - Holiday
- Friday, November 28th - No School - Holiday
- Monday, December 1st - No School - Professional Development
- Wednesday, December 10th - Early Release, 12:00pm
- Tuesday, December 23 - Early Release
- Wednesday, December 24 - Friday, January 2nd - No School - Vacation
- Monday, January 5 - School Resumes
- Wednesday, January 14th - SEPAC Community Meeting, 7:30-8:30pm - Westwood Library/[Zoom](#)

School Breakfast and Lunch

Your school menu can be viewed at [Menus / Westwood Public Schools \(nutrislice.com\)](#). Please check daily as the menu may change.

News from the Front Office

Picture Retake Day

Another successful MJ Picture Day is in the books. Pictures should be delivered to MJ by the end of October so **Picture Retake Day** has been scheduled for **Tuesday, November 4**.

Message from CoffeePond:

If families have any questions regarding portraits, payments, or ordering images, please contact the CoffeePond Customer Care department directly. They will have faster answers for any question about ordering. Contact Customer Care at Lifeguards@coffeepond.com or 508-907-6633 ext. 0.



Dismissal Changes (SDM & MiniCourses)

MJ PTO MiniCourses will begin next week. If you have signed your child up for a MiniCourse please be sure you are updating your child's dismissal in SDM.



For dismissals directly to MiniCourses:

You can set up all dates automatically by using the "Recurring Dismissal" feature. Follow these directions:

1. Click on Recurring Dismissal
2. Select student name
3. Select "Mini Courses" under Dismissal Instructions and add the Mini Course name in the "notes" field
4. Select your mini course day(s)
5. Apply to: Every Week
6. Include the Start Date & End Date

For dismissals to MiniCourses from Extended Day:

Please note if your child is going to MiniCourse from Extended Day the [Release Form for Extended Day](#) needs to be completed and the only dismissal note in SDM should be EXTENDED DAY. If your child is **not** returning to Extended Day at the end of a MiniCourse you must change the dismissal instruction in SDM to reflect MINI COURSE (as listed in the "dismissals directly to MiniCourse" instruction)

Please understand we are all striving for student safety, delineating a clear chain of custody for your child.

All children will be dismissed per the parent instruction in SDM.

More Dismissal Questions - MJ Buses

It is District policy that children do NOT switch buses. All bus numbers are listed in SDM so parents can select the appropriate bus for their child but switching buses is still not allowed.



Below please find the link to bus registration and information on the district website along with the section noting the non-switching of bus policy.

http://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/district/district_administration/business-office/bus-transportation.cfm#11

Can children be dropped off at a different stop on the way home?

Students may only ride their assigned buses. Transporting students to an alternative, yet existing, stop on the student's same route may be granted if done so on a regular basis (example: three days per week). Requests for alternative stops should be made in writing to Scherie Ciarrocchi, Bus Coordinator (sciarrocchi@westwood.k12.ma.us) and sent to Westwood Public Schools, 220 Nahatan Street, Westwood, MA 02090. Transporting students for play dates, lessons, or other reasons is not permitted.

Lost and Found

Please be sure your child's items are labelled with a name or initials. Here in the office we do our best to get labelled items back to their forever homes. Items without labels get sent to the donation bin after 4 weeks. *(For those who remember Ms. Santangelo uses the old Filene's Basement method - date and check 😊)*



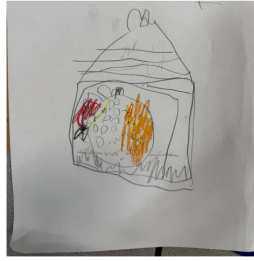
Student Safety and Vehicle Traffic

Student safety is one of our utmost concerns. We kindly ask that you are mindful in the carline and parking areas when you are coming to MJ to collect your child. **The safety of all students depends on all drivers obeying the rules and speed limits.**

Thank you



News from KF (Mrs Fader)



KF began their year-long science experiment! Students found a pumpkin that had fallen off the vine in the outdoor classroom. We put the pumpkin in a jar with some soil and put it on the windowsill. A week later, we started to notice some changes! Ms. Goosen assisted us with our first observation drawing in our science journals. Students were so excited to come up to the board to share what they observed and how they drew it in their journals.

News from 5B (Mr Bartlett)



During the first week of school, students in 5B were divided into three 'clans' and took part in a series of individual and collaborative games to review academic concepts, develop teamwork skills and help build classroom community. In one of these games students were pitted against each other in a jigsaw competition as part of a collaborative learning activity. Three teams raced to make the exact same 100 piece puzzle using their communication and teamwork skills. Teams made a game plan, divided the tasks and listened to each other to successfully build the puzzle in the shortest amount of time. It was great to see each team succeed with their puzzle and demonstrate how to work successfully in groups. Congrats to the 'Mario' team for winning!

News from Mrs. O'Rourke



In the Learning Center, we have been setting our yearly goals. Students discussed why they chose their particular goals and the steps they plan to take to achieve them. They also shared their hopes for the year ahead. I am excited to continue working with the students in the Learning Center and to support them as they work toward reaching their goals.

Already halfway through September there is so much going on. We had a great turn out at the Family Picnic. A special thanks to Kristen Donahue (Donahue Real Estate) for the frozen treats. **Membership toolkit** is live and is the place to check out all the ways to support MJS over the coming year. Want to learn more about what's happening? Our first PTO meeting is coming up on Sept 30th.

Full of Fall Energy,
Your PTO

SAVE THE DATES

PTO Meeting - September 30th

Haunted Hallway - October 24th

SEPAC Coffee Meet Up - November 5th ([details](#))

ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION DRIVE

We aim to raise **\$7,500** from our [annual PTO drive](#). 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! We recommend a contribution of \$50 for families with one student and \$100 for families with two or more students.

Donate based on what feels comfortable for your family and your financial situation. Every amount, big or small, is greatly appreciated.

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.

HAUNTED HALLWAY October 24th, 6pm

One of the highlights of the year, the annual Haunted Hallway is quickly approaching. A great way to celebrate the spooky season with friends and get more than one use out of that Halloween costume. The first half hour (6-6:30pm) will be sensory friendly with no lights, smoke, and music. Don't forget to please bring a donation for the Westwood Food Pantry. VOLUNTEERS are ALWAYS needed.



Even if haunting is not your thing, there's plenty of room to share snacks or join the clean up crew. Sign up [here](#).

BIRTHDAY BOOKS

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.



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!

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.



MJ PTO General Information

Martha Jones PTO Meeting Dates 2025-2026

September 30, 2025 7pm

November 18, 2025, 7pm

March 3, 2026, 7pm

May 5, 2026, 7pm

PTO CONTACT FOR EVENTS, NOTICES:

If you have an event or notice for our PTO update, please email it to:
PTO Co-Secretary - [Jenn Katsilieris](#), [Erika Gauthier](#)

Martha Jones PTO Board 2025-2026

[Ally Pavlic](#), Co-President

[Lisa Lennon](#), Co-President

[Abbe Lynch](#), Co-Treasurer

[Monisha Dabek](#), Co-Treasurer

[Jenn Katsilieris](#), Co-Secretary

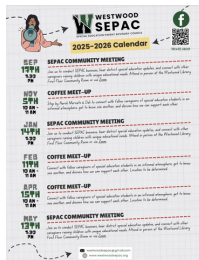
[Erika Gauthier](#), Co-Secretary

District & Community News

SEPAC News

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>. Please see their [informational video](#).



Westwood Youth and Family

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 lpouffe@westwood.k12.ma.us. Thank you.

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Matthew Kuklantz

Matthew is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters

