



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 7 - December 19, 2025

Principal's Message

MJ,

This time of year is filled with celebration for many and I wanted to highlight some student achievements. Martha Jones had the top 2 elementary finishers in Massachusetts for the Stock Market Game. The team of Ethan O. and Yaqub R. finished in 1st place and Owen B. and Joanna C. finished in 2nd place. Their financial acumen and collaborative spirit were truly impressive. It is inspiring to see our students applying classroom math to real-world scenarios with such success. We can't wait to see what these future financial whizzes achieve next!"

The 5th grade play was also a rousing success! Congratulations to our cast and crew! Thank you to MJ Directors Kris McDonough and Karen Lane and the all the parent support.

I wish everyone a relaxed, refreshing, and safe break.

Matt

Fall 2025 Massachusetts Stock Market Game Winners!

We are excited to announce the official winners of
The Stock Market Game for the Fall 2025 game session!
Drumroll, please...

Fall 2025 Competitive Session

Elementary School Division
1st & 2nd: **Martha Jones School, Westwood**
\$110,743.44 and \$110,481.22

Middle School Division
1st: **Derby Academy, Hingham**
\$120,900.72
2nd: **Wellesley Middle School, Wellesley**
\$112,465.92

High School Division
1st: **Braintree High School, Braintree**
\$178,011.45
2nd: **Peabody Veteran's Memorial High School, Peabody**
\$133,967.31

Congratulations to the winners and all the
participants in the Fall session of The Stock Market Game!



Gift Season and Technology In Schools

As we enter a time of year when we think about gifts for children, I want to remind families of the elementary expectations from our [student handbook](#) specifically about smart watches.

Mobile Phones, Smart Watches, Electronic Devices (iPad, Laptops, Gaming Devices)

These items are NOT allowed in school as they are a distraction to the learning environment. If a student brings these items into school the classroom teacher will ask them to turn off their device and place it in their backpack. If a parent needs to send a communication to their child during the school day, parents should contact the school's main office and leave a message with the administrative assistant

Math Newsletter

Please see the [Math Newsletter](#) from our Math Curriculum Coordinator, Molly Singh, and Math Specialist, Erin Aaron.

Special Olympics Massachusetts

2026 Winter Westwood Young Athletes Program

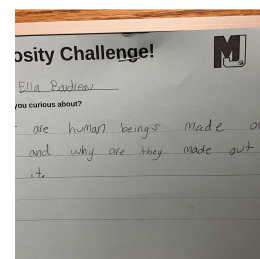
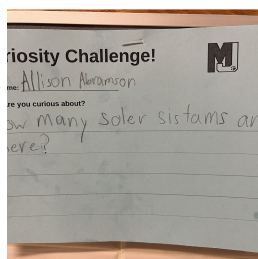
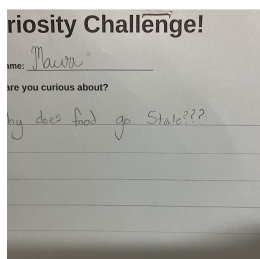
Young athletes program for ages 2 to 7 in Westwood focusing on fine motor skills and activities. Program will be occur on Sunday mornings from 9:30 am to 10:15 am, starting January 11th

through March 15th.

Thank you for your interest in registering for this program. Please [click here](#) to begin registration.

Core Values

At our second All Community Meeting, we focused on the Core Value of Curiosity. Students have been challenged to think about their own curiosities and questions. Here's a sampling of those lining our hallways.



Student Council

This Tuesday Student Council has planned a Spirit Day!
Wear your best festive attire! Let's see everyone sparkle and shine.

Our Student Council Advisors this year are:

MaryKate Stimpson mstimpson@westwood.k12.ma.us and

Katharine Fader kfader@westwood.k12.ma.us



Important Upcoming Events

- Tuesday, December 23 - MJ Spirit Day - Festive Attire
- Tuesday, December 23 - Early Release at noon
- Wednesday, December 24 - Friday, January 2nd - No School - Vacation
- Monday, January 5 - School Resumes
- Wednesday, January 7 - Early Release
- Friday, January 9 - MJ PTO Bingo Night
- Monday, January 19 - No School - Holiday
- Wednesday, January 14th - SEPAC Community Meeting, 7:30-8:30pm - Westwood Library/[Zoom](#)
- Wednesday, January 21 - Early Release
- Wednesday, February 4 - Early Release
- Monday, February 16-Friday February 20 - No School - Vacation
- Monday, February 23 - School Resumes
- Wednesday, February 25 - Early Release
- Wednesday, March 4 - Book Fair
- Monday, March 9 - Enrichment
- Wednesday, March 11 - Early Release

- Thursday, March 12 - MJ PTO STEM Fair
- Monday, March 16 - Enrichment
- Wednesday March 18th 2-3 pm (cafeteria), Combined Rehearsal All 5th grade
- Thursday March 19th 10:00 am (cafeteria), Concert
- Wednesday, March 25 - Early Release
- Friday, April 3 - No School - Holiday
- Wednesday, April 8 - Early Release
- Thursday, April 9 - Art Show
- Friday, April 10 - ELA MCAS (Gr. 3, 4, 5)
- Monday, April 13 - ELA MCAS (Gr. 3, 4, 5)
- Tuesday, April 14 & Wednesday, April 15 - ELA MCAS (Gr. 3, 4, 5) Make-Ups
- Monday, April 20 - Friday, April 24 - No School - Vacation
- Monday, April 27 - School Resumes
- Wednesday, April 29 - Early Release
- Tuesday, May 12 - Math MCAS(Gr. 3, 4, 5)
- Wednesday, May 13 - Early Release
- Thursday, May 14 - Math MCAS (Gr. 3, 4, 5)
- Friday, May 15 - Math MCAS Make-Ups (Gr. 3, 4, 5)
- Monday, May 18 - Science (Gr. 5)
- Tuesday, May 19 - Science (Gr. 5)
- Wednesday, May 20 - Science (Gr. 5) Make-Ups
- Wednesday, May 27 - Early Release
- Wednesday, June 3 - Early Release
- Tuesday, June 16 - Student Last Day (Tentative with no make-ups)

School Breakfast and Lunch

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

News from the Front Office

Student Safety and Vehicle Traffic

Student safety is one of our utmost concerns. We kindly ask that you are extra mindful 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



School Dismissal Manager

Thank you to everyone for embracing the technology! SDM is designed to give you, the parent/guardian control over your child(s) dismissal, late arrival, early dismissal, and absence. This is just a quick reminder to please be sure to update SDM should you have any changes to your child(s) normal or default attendance or dismissal preferences. Changes must be made before 11:00AM.



Bus Reminders

For those families who have signed up for bus services this is just a quick reminder that students may only ride his/her assigned bus. Transporting students to alternative, yet existing, stops 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 and sent to: Westwood Public Schools, 220 Nahatan Street, Westwood, MA 02090. Transporting students for play dates, lessons, or other reasons is not permitted. A full list of [Transportation FAQs](#) can be found on the [WPS District website](#).



CORI Forms

Thank you to all our wonderful MJ Community Members for volunteering. Please note all volunteers **must** have a completed CORI background check before volunteering or chaperoning of any kind. People who have completed a CORI through another town department (ex. Parks & Rec) must still complete a CORI for the School Department.

WPS is implimenting an updated CORI policy whereas **all volunteers must complete a CORI annually**. If you did **not** complete a new form when school started in September you WILL BE REQUIRED to complete a new form starting in the next calendar year (from January.)

Also note the CORI Form submission is not considered complete until it is also accompanied with a copy of your current picture ID (License or Passport).

Thank you for adhering to the District Safety practices.



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 😊)*



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 rundown of the activity timing in the front office first thing in the morning.

8:00AM 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 start bell at 9:00AM).

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.



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 four 5th grade volunteers! 9:03 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 9:30AM.

And... 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 out ☺

Message from the Extended Day Office

Holiday Break Hours

Please note **Tuesday December 23rd** is an Early Release. Elementary students will dismiss at 12:00pm.

Extended Day will open at dismissal and will **close at 3:00pm** for the Winter Break. A cafeteria lunch will be available for Extended Day students.

News from 2M (Ms. Mundy)



This month in Social Studies, 2M has been on an exciting journey to become Geography Experts! We've been using maps and globes to explore the biggest features of our planet: the seven continents and five oceans. We have recently been learning about the differences between two major types of maps. Earlier this month, students learned that **physical maps** use different colors to show the elevation (how high or low the land is), helping us to find mountains, valleys, and plains. This week, we shifted focus to **political maps**. Students discovered that political maps show us the man-made boundaries that divide the world into countries and help us locate important cities like



national capitals. The students have enjoyed learning about all that maps and globes can teach us about our world! They are developing a strong understanding of how to use these tools to locate, describe, and compare places on Earth.

News from KL (Mrs. Layton)



CVC words (consonant, vowel, consonant) are foundational for Kindergarteners to begin

building reading skills. They help Kindergarteners with:

- *Decoding- They teach the simple skill of sounding out individual letters and blending them into a word

- *Phonemic Awareness- Helps children hear and manipulate sounds within words

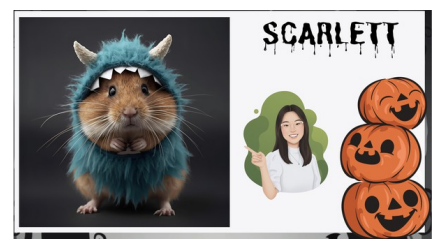
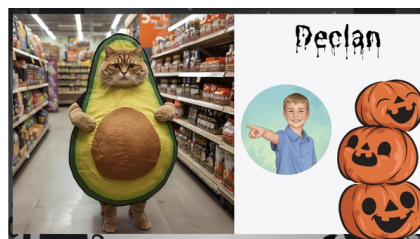
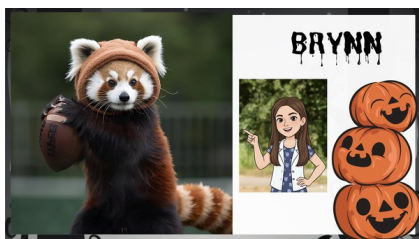
- *Building Blocks- Essential for moving on to consonant blends (i.e.- gr, bl, sm), digraphs (sh, ch, th, wh), and longer words

Our class has been practicing blending CVC words using hands-on methods like magnetic

letters, magnetic letter chips with swipe wands, picture cards and sound boxes. We have been focusing on one short vowel at a time and making it multi-sensory and fun!



News from Dr. Murphy - Technology & Mrs. Swinning - Library



After spending October learning about AI during **Tech** classes, 5th graders finally got a chance to try out a Generative AI tool in Canva called Magic Media. First, they listed as many Animals, Costumes, and Activities as they could, then they got a chance to ask AI to generate some pretty cool Halloween images!



In **Library** classes, students in grade 4 also used AI in lessons surrounding the history of Thanksgiving by having a conversation with "Squanto" using Magic School AI. Their questions and responses were very thoughtful and led to some great thinking.

As we get closer to the end of 2025, we wanted to pause and just say thank you to everyone who makes Martha Jones the wonderful community that it is! We can't imagine a better place for learning and growing. Don't forget to follow us on IG and Facebook to get all the latest and greatest happenings.

Spreading Cheer,
Your PTO



SAVE THE DATES

SEPAC Community Meeting - January 14th ([details](#))

Valentine's Dance - February 6th

Join the PTO!

We are actively looking to fill board positions for next year. A board seat is a two year commitment, with a "shadow year" to learn the ropes. Questions? Reach out to Ally or Lisa to learn more!

DO YOU FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK OR INSTAGRAM

Love the reminders about all things MJ when you're scrolling? Take a minute and like or comment to keep us showing up in the feed!

[Join our Facebook group](#) or follow us on [Instagram](#)

@marthajonespto



Martha Jones & Westwood Gear Store is OPEN!

We're thrilled to announce that the [Martha Jones Store](#) is officially **open!** This year, we're offering **brand new products** for both **Martha Jones** and **Westwood**.

Orders typically take about **two weeks** to process. You can choose to have your order **shipped directly to your home** or **pick it up at Amerasport in Holliston**.

Be sure to **place your orders soon** so your items arrive in time for the holidays! Proceeds from all purchases will **benefit the Martha Jones PTO**, helping support our students and school community.



ANNUAL CONTRIBUTION DRIVE

We are sooooo close!! 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.

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.



MJ PTO General Information

Martha Jones PTO Meeting Dates 2025-2026

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

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

[Gina Ciampolillo](#), Co-Social Media

[Lauren Fortin](#), SEPAC

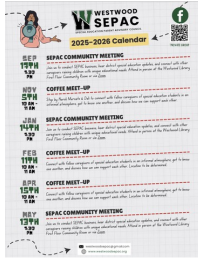
District & Community News

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 Recreation Department

The Westwood Rec Department sent along the bellow flyer about an inclusive recreation program they will be running on upcoming no-school days around the winter break.

Resources for Families and 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

[Talking to Children about hate crimes and anti-semitism](#) - National Child Traumatic Stress Network

[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.

[Westwood Community Chest](#) is a 501(c)(3) Public Charity dedicated to helping Westwood residents in need through temporary financial assistance. Single parents in need of safe summer activities for their children through our "Campership" program. Children who need school supplies or medical treatment. Families who have experienced job loss or other financial crisis and are struggling to make ends meet.

The [Westwood Food Pantry](#), located in Westwood, Massachusetts, is committed to providing essential provisions to individuals and families in our community who need temporary assistance.

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 plouffe@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 lplouffe@westwood.k12.ma.us 谢谢你。

ext. اذا بحاجة الى هذه الوثيقة المترجمة ، يرجى الاتصال على إدارة المدارس العامة ويستوود 'الخدمات الطلابية في 781 326-7500
لك. لطلب كنتشكرا lplouffe@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 lplouffe@westwood.k12.ma.us Спасибо.



Matthew Kuklantz

Matthew is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters