



Growing by Leaps and Bounds

Martha Jones School - Westwood, MA

Matt Kuklentz, Principal

Martha Jones Motto:

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

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

Issue 8 - January 16, 2026

Principal's Message

MJ,

This week, our school community gathered for an energizing All-School Meeting focused on one of our most important core values: Responsibility. It was wonderful to see our students and staff together, reflecting on how our individual actions contribute to the success of our entire school community.

During our time together, we focused on two specific ways we are practicing responsibility right now:

1. Stewardship of Our Spaces

We challenged students to take greater responsibility for their personal belongings. By keeping track of coats, water bottles, and backpacks, and ensuring they are stored properly, our students play a vital role in keeping our hallways and classrooms safe and orderly. When we all do our part to manage our "gear," it shows respect for our school environment and the people who share it.

2. A Legacy Decision: Our New School Mascot

I am also thrilled to announce that we are officially beginning the process to determine our school mascot! We discussed with the students that choosing a mascot is a great responsibility—not just to ourselves, but to all the students who will walk these halls in the future. We want a symbol that represents our spirit and values for years to come. Over the next few weeks, students will have the

opportunity to participate in a thoughtful selection process, practicing the responsibility of having a voice in their community.

How you can help at home:

- Ask your child what they think makes a great school mascot.
- Help them label their belongings to make "taking responsibility" for them a little easier!

We are so proud of the leadership our students are showing. Thank you for partnering with us to raise responsible, thoughtful citizens.



MJ Stock Market Game 1st

Place: Ethan and Yaqub, 2nd

Place: Joanna and Owen

Math Newsletter

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

Student Council

Martha Jones Food Drive

The MJ Student Council has 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 MJ Student Council is coordinating this event, please consider donating. Students will bring donations to the classrooms where they will be collected.

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

- Monday, January 19 - No School - Holiday
- Wednesday, January 21 - Early Release
- Wednesday, February 4 - Early Release
- Monday, February 16-Friday February 20 - No School - Vacation

Food Drive

We're looking for people to donate non-perishable food items.

Each grade has been assigned items to collect.
Dates: 1/14/26-2/6/26

Kindergarten	Sugar, Flour, Cake Mix, Syrup, Cookies, Body Wash
Grade 1	Peanut Butter, Jelly, Cereal, Crackers, Shampoo
Grade 2	Salad Dressing, Salsa, Olive Oil, Vegetable Oil
Grade 3	White Tuna, Cans of Chicken, Canned Carrots, Soup, Bars of Soap
Grade 4	Boxed Pasta, Pasta Sauce, Baked Beans, Mayonnaise
Grade 5	Toothpaste, Toothbrushes, Paper towel, Toilet Paper

Each classroom will have a box to put the cans in. These will benefit the Westwood food pantry!

Student Council is excited to partner with our families to support the community!



- 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
- Monday, April 6 & Tuesday, April 7 - Grade 5, Our Changing Body Program
- 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 5 - Gr. 3 to Fisher School
- 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 \(nutrislice.com\)](http://Menus / Westwood Public Schools (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



CORI Forms

And thinking about student safety... **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 for this calendar year.

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.



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. For the change to take effect in the system it should 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](#).



WINTER/SPRING Mini Courses

Be on the lookout for information from the MJ PTO regarding the new session of MiniCourses. Registration will open on the 27th. We'll have more instructions in the next Leaps with regards to updating SDM if your child is registered. In the meantime here is the preliminary course [descriptions](#) and [schedule](#).





How do we keep things warm or cold? Our second-grade scientists are finding out! With Ms. Goosen this week, we explored the properties of insulation and conduction. Through hands-on testing with aluminum foil, cloth (socks), and styrofoam cups, students compared how different materials handle heat. They then used this information to determine which material would make the best insulator. This ties into our current unit, which is focusing on the properties of different materials.



News from 5P (Mr. Parkhurst)



Students in Mr. Parkhurst's class are wrapping up a math unit on adding and subtracting fractions. As part of this unit students play a lot of games such as Fraction Track. Fraction Track is a math game where students advance on a number line by adding fractions, reinforcing how fractions relate to one another and to whole numbers. The game supports visual understanding of fraction equivalence, magnitude, and fraction addition.



News from Mrs. Crimmings

The Story Grammar Marker is a visual tool we use to help children understand, tell, and write stories in a clear and organized way. Many children struggle to know what to include in a story and in what order. This visual gives them a concrete roadmap to follow.

Each symbol represents an important part of a story:

- Character – Who the story is about
- Setting – Where and when the story takes place
- Initiating Event – What problem or event starts the story

- Feeling – How the character feels about the problem
- Plan – What the character decides to do
- Action – What the character does to carry out the plan
- Resolution – How the problem is solved or how the story ends

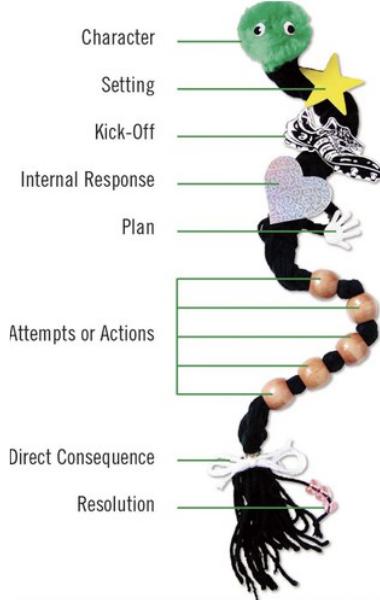
By using this visual, children learn to:

- Retell stories more completely
- Organize their thoughts before speaking or writing
- Improve story comprehension and memory
- Build stronger narrative and writing skills

You can support your child at home by asking questions that match the icons, such as:

- “Who was the story about?”
- “What went wrong?”
- “What did the character do to fix it?”
- “How did it end?”

This shared language helps children become more confident storytellers and writers.



We are trying not to get ahead of ourselves but it's already half way through January! Lots of things coming like the Valentine's Dance and STEAM Fair Registration. A friendly reminder, it's also never too late for MJ Gear. Perfect for birthdays, there's always an opportunity to represent MJ spirit. It's also never too late to contribute to our annual campaign and get that corporate match. Every little bit counts and helps fund all the great enrichments (and fun) that make MJ what it is. Enjoy the long weekend!

Bundled up by the fire,
Your PTO

SAVE THE DATES

Dine Out Jake n Joes - January 21st

Valentine's Dance - February 6th

SEPAC Coffee Meet Up - February 11th ([details](#))

PTO Meeting - March 3rd

DINE OUT

Gather your friends and family and head to Jake n Joes (Norwood, rt 1) on **Wednesday, January 21st**, lunch, dinner or take out to support Martha Jones. Make sure to mention “Fundraiser” if you are dining in person. If you order online, select “Fundraiser” from the menu to add to your cart. 20% of sales will go directly to MJ.



VALENTINE'S DAY DANCE

The Martha Jones PTO is excited to welcome our school community to the Martha Jones Valentine's Dance on Friday, February 6th. This special evening will be a fun celebration of friendship and school spirit, featuring a DJ, photobooth, crafts, snacks, and sweet treats. This event is designed for MJS students and their caregivers to enjoy time together in a festive, welcoming space. Please note that this is not a drop-off event, and attendance is limited to

students who attend MJS and their caregivers. We kindly ask that siblings who do not attend MJS not attend.

This year, families are also invited to spread a little extra love through an optional donation to the Westwood Youth & Family Services Birthday Giving Program. Donations may be made by bringing an item from the Amazon Wishlist or purchasing directly from the list and having it sent to WYFS.

Amazon Wishlist: <http://bit.ly/3LvJzw4>

We look forward to celebrating with you! ❤



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](#).



2025-2026 Liaison for the
Martha Jones School

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 "Campsership" 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 Iplouffe@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 Iplouffe@westwood.k12.ma.us 谢谢你。

اذا بحاجة الى هذه الوثيقة المترجمة ، يرجى الاتصال على إدارة المدارس العامة ويستورد "الخدمات الطلابية في 781 7500-326 او على البريد الالكتروني الخاص بك Iplouffe@westwood.k12.ma.us لطلب كنترل.

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 Iplouffe@westwood.k12.ma.us Спасибо.



Matthew Kuklentz

Matthew is using Smore to create beautiful newsletters