

# Growing by... & Leaps & Bounds

Martha Jones School - Westwood, Mass.  
Issue 2 - Sept. 17, 2021



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

## Important Dates

|                      |                                                    |
|----------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Thu. Sept. 23</b> | Picture Day<br>-----<br>Curriculum Night - VIRTUAL |
| <b>Wed. Sept. 29</b> | Early Release 11:50AM                              |
| <b>Wed. Oct. 6</b>   | Early Release 11:50AM                              |
| <b>Tue. Oct. 12</b>  | PTO meeting - 7PM                                  |

### Martha Jones School Telephone Extensions:

Office 781-326-7500, ext. 6321

ext. 6261: [Diane Santangelo](#)

ext. 6262: [Donna Tobin](#)

ext. 6263: [JoEllen Doyle](#)

We want to make sure that all Martha Jones families are aware of the upcoming Special Town Meeting on **October 18** and Special Town Election on **October 26**.

The only topic and vote being addressed at both the Town Meeting and Town Election is the Elementary Schools Building Project. If you are not familiar with this project, we encourage you to learn more at:

<https://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/district/superintendents-office/elementary-building-project.cfm>

## Message from the Principal



We've had a wonderful start to the school year; Labor Day weekend and religious holidays have allowed us to gradually get back into the swing of things. With School Picture Day, Curriculum Night, and a full week of school ahead for next week it finally feels like the school year is fully underway. The weather has been mostly cooperative and we have been able to spend time outside for snack, lunch, recess, and mask

breaks.

**Picture Day is Thursday, September 23rd.** You should have received your order form last week. Please be sure to complete it and return the order form, along with payment, to the school on or before September 23rd (Picture Day). You can also order and pay at [mylifetouch.com](http://mylifetouch.com). Our school ID is EVT8DSD9S.



**PTO** - The First PTO meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 12th at 7:00 pm. PTO memos come from the email address: Martha Jones School PTO. Be sure to check out their emails for important PTO updates and information. Also check out PTO updates in Leaps and Bounds each week.

**School Site Council** - Each school in Massachusetts has a school site council made up of parents, staff, and community members. The School Site Council helps review and provide input into the school improvement plan and school budget items. Parent members are voted in by the PTO. This year we are looking for 3 parent members. If you are interested, please contact Julie Menendez, [julimenendez@yahoo.com](mailto:julimenendez@yahoo.com) or Lauren Bent, [laurenbent@gmail.com](mailto:laurenbent@gmail.com) prior to the first PTO meeting. The council meets three times per year.

# MJ & District News

## [IMPORTANT STUDENT COVID TESTING SIGN UP INFORMATION](#)

### Curriculum Night

CURRICULUM NIGHT will be held Virtually on Thursday, September 23, 2021.

- Principal's Opening Remarks 6:30
  - All Parents are invited to log into the Principal's Opening Remarks at 6:30 PM. In addition to kicking off curriculum night, Dr. Tobin will be sharing her goals and aspirations for the school year, introducing the PTO chairs and SEPAC liaison, and sharing other important information. Early next week you will be receiving an email with the link to the Opening Meeting as well as short videos introducing our specialists, support staff, coaches, and other important school community members. Feel free to view these videos at your own convenience.
- Classroom Presentations - Teachers will provide information about the grade level curriculum, their individual classrooms, and best ways to communicate with them throughout the year. We split the time to allow families with younger and older children to have the possible opportunity to attend two sessions.
  - Parents of students in grades Kindergarten through Grade 2 will meet virtually with their children's teachers from 7:00 to 7:30.
  - Parents of students in grades 3-5 will meet virtually with their children's teachers from 7:30 to 8:00.

Prior to Curriculum Night, classroom teachers will share their individual curriculum night links with you.



Do you have a student with an IEP or 504 accommodation? Would you like to connect with other Westwood families who have children receiving special education support services? Check out Westwood Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC). [The Westwood SEPAC](#) is hosting a family popsicle social to kick off the year on Sunday, September 19th from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM on the Sheehan School Playground. Visit the events page of the website

for more details and feel free to contact [Megan Brenk](#), ([mbrenk@gmail.com](mailto:mbrenk@gmail.com)) SEPAC liaison to Martha Jones. <https://www.westwoodsepac.org/events>



With the school year underway, Westwood Youth and Family Services wants to make sure you are all aware that registration is now open for **Westwood Youth & Family Services Friends Network Program**.

**The Friends Network program matches 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> graders with high school aged residents in 1:1 pairs that meet weekly on Thursday evenings from November – April to engage in games and activities in a relaxed setting. This is a great way for children to engage with a positive role model while forming a special friendship and having fun! We think of it like a big sister/big brother type program.**

At the end of this newsletter you'll find a flyer. Registration is currently open and will close on **September 27<sup>th</sup>**. Here is the online registration link: <https://forms.gle/n4vQdx9aAhx3xdDK8>

# Classroom Happenings

## News from 5B (Mr. Bartlett)



Mr Bartlett's class is currently studying space science and grappling with the guiding question; why is the sun so bright in the sky?

Most students start by suggesting that the sun is bright because it is really big and really hot. We address this misconception by learning about the Sun compared to other stars. Is the

Sun big? Yes, it's huge. A million Earths would fit inside the Sun! Is it really hot? Yes, incredibly hot. It's temperature is about 5,000 degrees celsius. But... lots of the other stars are even bigger and even hotter! So why does our sun look bigger and feels hotter than the other stars?



To fully understand this, students have been trying to wrap their heads around the huge distances in space, and trying to build an understanding of how close the Sun is compared to the other nearest stars. Student's learned that the Sun is 8 light minutes away from Earth, but the nearest other star, Proxima Centauri is 4.2 light years away. All the other stars are even further away than that. So compared to the other stars, the sun is basically right next to us.



But .. how can the sun be so close to us when Google says it is 93 million miles away? How can the sun be so far away, yet so close? Building a conceptual understanding of the astronomical distances involved in space can be challenging for anyone. To help better understand, students built scale models of the nearest five stars to Earth using inches or cm to represent light years.



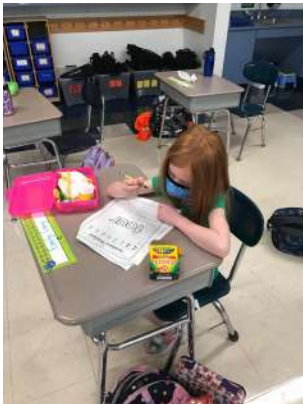
### **News from 4B (Ms. Bass)**

In 4B, we have officially launched our reader's workshop! Our first unit of study focuses on reading works of fiction and building ideas about characters. To do this kind of work, the fourth graders have to lay the groundwork for a successful reading environment. We started the unit by reflecting on the "best and worst of times" as readers. Students asked questions of themselves: *what tells me that I'm engaged in a book? Where is a space in the classroom that feels conducive to reading? If I'm not understanding or enjoying a book, what are my next moves?* By thinking about times when reading felt uplifting and absorbing (and when it didn't feel that way), students were able to evaluate their habits as readers and make adjustments as necessary. Now every student in 4B has a book in their hands, and is ready to dig into their first unit of fiction!



### **News from 1B (Ms. Brock)**

First graders in Ms. Brock's class have been enjoying learning about their classmates, new classroom routines, and building a positive community! Students have learned the structure of math workshop and are building independence as they rotate through math stations in small groups. First graders have had opportunities to explore math tools such as pattern blocks, geoblocks, and snap cubes. We will be using these tools throughout the year so students are becoming familiar with how they can use them. We are also practicing counting and comparing quantities. We counted on number lines and also counted the total number of objects in "mystery boxes." First graders have lots of strategies for counting and are remembering how important it is to check their work. One fun way to practice comparing quantities is through playing math games. So far a class favorite is a game called "double compare dots" where each player turns over two cards at a time from their deck of dot cards to compare who has more. We are excited to start working on addition and to grow as mathematicians in first grade!



## News from the Library (Mrs. Swinning)

It is SO GREAT to have the library up and running again! I am so happy to see all of my old friends at Martha Jones and meet all of the new ones!



We are already reading together, checking out books, laughing, singing and having a lot of fun!

Our library theme this year is **STORYTELLING**. We will be learning about the art of storytelling and the many ways it is used to share messages as well as practicing the art of storytelling ourselves!

**Kindergarten and Grade 1** will be learning all about the library, how to pick a great story and how stories are different in different areas of the library. Each week they will be introduced to a new section and format!

**Grade 2** is getting ready to start their travels around the world! We will be learning about, reading stories from and singing music from places all over the globe this year!

**Grade 3** will be learning about storytelling, elements of writing, and all about our state of Massachusetts as we spend the year exploring and reading the story "Nicholas: A Massachusetts Tale".

Along with checking out some great stories from the library, **Grades 4 and 5**, will be gearing up to evaluate information from many different sources this year and learning how to spot the purpose behind storytelling whether it's fiction or nonfiction.

**District Professional Development** - Teachers are also continuously learning. At our PD sessions this week, principles, coaches, coordinators, and teachers spent time in grade level teams reflecting on and planning with our content curriculum maps.



# PTO News

## 9/14/21 Update

### **KICKING OFF THE YEAR**

The PTO started off the school year by showering the Martha Jones staff with Kind(ness) bars and messages to thank them for their unwavering support of our students as they embark on another unprecedented school year. We are so lucky to have such a dedicated and caring team!

### **FIRST PTO MEETING: October 12<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.**

This meeting will be held Tuesday, October 12th at 7 p.m. TBD if in-person or via Zoom. A link for the meeting will be sent out closer to the date. We hope you can join us!

### **WELCOME TO THE MARTHA JONES SCHOOL DIRECTORY**

We are excited to share with you that the Martha Jones PTO will continue to use AtoZConnect (also known as Membership Toolkit) as our school directory. We have our own unique website this year at <https://mjspto.membershiptoolkit.com/>

Please register as a NEW USER when logging in for the first time. Don't forget to bookmark the site for quick and easy access. Each year, parents must register for the new school year. **Therefore, the log-in information you used last year will no longer work.**

AtoZConnect is a secure web-based system that allows parents to verify and edit their own directory listings. This will replace the printed directory we have provided in the past. With AtoZConnect you will be able to update your own information if it changes. With the AtoZ Membership Toolkit app, you will also be able to access the directory on the go and always have it at your fingertips.

To ensure we have the most up-to-date information for your family, please [click on this link](#) to register and verify your data. You can also add information such as an email address and a phone number for a second parent who would like to have his/her own access to AtoZConnect. This will only take five minutes of your time. Please note: This needs to be done annually so even if you did it last year, please take the time to re-confirm.

If you have not yet verified and updated your information in the Aspen system this year, you will need to request access to AtoZConnect and it will take up to 24-48 hours until you will have access to the system.

### **Join the Martha Jones PTO**

After you have verified your information on AtoZ, you will also be invited to join the Martha Jones PTO. The cost of a PTO membership is \$45 for families with one child and \$55 for families with two or more children. A PTO membership gives you access to the full Martha Jones directory on AtoZConnect. If you do not sign up for PTO membership, you will not have access to the directory. However, you will still have an AtoZConnect account and the ability to update your information and receive all PTO notices.

Support of the PTO through a PTO membership helps fund events, special projects, and educational programs throughout the year. The PTO Board is already working on ways to convert many of our traditional in-person highlights to social distanced events this year. Now more than ever we want to make sure we provide fun, engaging activities to help our Martha Jones families feel connected.

### **Volunteer as a Room Parent and for a PTO Committee**

Once you have logged in and confirmed your information, you also will have the opportunity to volunteer for the various PTO committees that help support the school throughout the year and to volunteer to be a room parent in your child(ren)'s classroom. Please click on the buttons on the left-hand side of the AtoZ homepage to learn all of the ways you can be involved. There is something for everyone!

If you have any questions or problems accessing the AtoZ program, please email Mary Jason (maryjason06@gmail.com) or Amy Amatangelo (amyamatangelo@yahoo.com).

## **SAVE THE DATE: TOWN MEETING AND TOWN ELECTION FOR THE WESTWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS BUILDING PROJECT**

We want to make sure that all Martha Jones families are aware of the upcoming Special Town Meeting on **October 18** and Special Town Election on **October 26**.

The only topic and vote being addressed at both the Town Meeting and Town Election is the Elementary Schools Building Project. If you are not familiar with this project, we encourage you to learn more at: <https://www.westwood.k12.ma.us/district/superintendents-office/elementary-building-project.cfm>

**October 18:** Special Town Meeting to consider the Hanlon-Deerfield Article

- Location: Outside at Flahive Field at Westwood High School, 200 Nahatan Street
- Time: 5:00pm - There will only be one article on the agenda so please arrive at the start.
- Must attend in-person to vote.
- Free babysitting will be available

**October 26:** Special Town Election to Vote for the Debt Exclusion to Fund the Building Project

- Polls open: 7:00am to 8:00pm
- Poll locations: Westwood Senior Center; Sheehan, Hanlon, and Downey Schools—just like any other election
- This is the only question on the ballot
- Mail-in voting will also be available
- Last day to register for the Special Town Election: October 6, 2021

Please feel free to email Suzanne Tessier at [stessier@gmail.com](mailto:stessier@gmail.com) with any questions.

## **ADDITIONAL WAYS TO SUPPORT MARTHA JONES**

### **Westwood Gear**

Coming soon: Westwood Gear will be launching in the coming weeks with updated favorites and fresh, new items for the whole family. Get your holiday gift list ready, more info to come.....

### **MARTHA JONES PTO FACEBOOK GROUP**

Did you know Martha Jones PTO has its own Facebook group page?

Join the Facebook group to get the latest PTO news and updates delivered right to your news feed! Click [here](#) to join!

### **PTO CONTACT FOR EVENTS, NOTICES:**

If you have an event or notice for our PTO update, please email it to:  
PTO Co-Secretary Cat Sonis at [catkell23@yahoo.com](mailto:catkell23@yahoo.com)

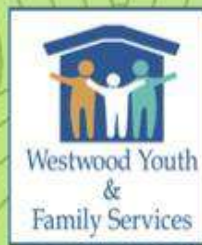
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# Friends Network



## 2021-2022 Program Description

The Friends Network program matches Westwood 3rd - 5th graders with Westwood High School Mentors in 1:1 pairs that meet weekly to engage in games and activities in a relaxed setting. This is a great way for children to engage with a positive role model while forming a special friendship and having fun! This popular program is free of charge and open to all residents.

### Who:

Westwood residents in 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades

### When:

November 2021- April 2022

Thursdays from 5:15-6:15pm OR 6:30-7:30pm

### Where:

Location Wentworth Hall - 273 Washington Street

Contact: Mary Ellen LaRose

781-320-1006 or mlarose@townhall.westwood.ma.us

**Deadline: Monday, September 27th - Register online at:**

<https://www.townhall.westwood.ma.us/departments/youth-family-services>