

**SY23-24**  
**Issue 4**  
**November 1, 2023**



# MAINE VIRTUAL ACADEMY NEWSLETTER

LEWISTON  N

## DR. MELINDA BROWNE HEAD OF SCHOOL

We are thankful that you have joined us at Maine Virtual Academy (MEVA), and we want you to take full advantage of everything that MEVA offers. We started the new school year by asking all our students two Individual Learning Plan (ILP) questions:

What do you do or want to do with your time?

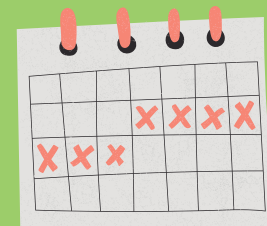
What can MEVA offer you to match your interests?

We want to use this information to help students develop career readiness skills and to make MEVA a great fit via engaging activities, including employment, internships, virtual job shadowing, volunteering, clubs and organizations, portfolio projects, and Early College and AP4ME courses. Reach out to your guidance counselor if you would like more information about how to participate.

Within this month's newsletter we highlight opportunities for students to develop their artistic talents and to practice project-based scientific learning. These extension activities promote students' individualized, educational experiences outside virtual classrooms.

### SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

- November 11:  
Veterans' Day  
*Observed November 10*
- November 22-24:  
Thanksgiving Vacation
- December 21 -  
January 1: Winter Break
- January 15: Martin Luther King Day



### IMPORTANT DATES

- Semester 1: August 28, 2023 - January 11, 2024
- January 9-11: Winter NWEA, Grades 7-11

Dear MEVA Families:

Following the tragedies in our state, we wanted to share some helpful tips for our students.

As always, please reach out to your guidance counselor for support.

Grades 7, 8, 9: [dpierce@mainevirtualacademy.org](mailto:dpierce@mainevirtualacademy.org)

Grades 10, 11, 12: [htyler@mainevirtualacademy.org](mailto:htyler@mainevirtualacademy.org)

Helpful Tips Provided by American Psychological Association:

- Talk about it: Connect with someone you trust on how you are feeling. Receiving support and reassurance can help with the overwhelming emotions that are coming up.
- Strive for balance: This extremely hard event can make things feel hopeless. Try to find a balance between talking about this and finding ways to think of what is meaningful and comforting to you.
- Turn off and take a break: Over exposure to this event can cause a lot of stress, please take breaks from all of the difficult information to process.
- Honor your feelings: It is normal to feel a range of emotions after a traumatic event, you may start to physically feel your stress by being exhausted and sore.
- Take care of yourself: Eat, get rest, drink water, try breathing exercises.
- Help others to do something productive: Sometimes focusing on tasks and helping others can help us feel better as well.
- If you have recently lost friends or family in this or other tragedies: Grief is a process...for some it will be staying home, for others it will be getting back into a routine, there will be many ups and downs. Give yourself time and grace to process and heal.

## STUDENT SHOUTOUT!

Nyleigha Lupercio was recently recognized at a Portland Sea Dogs game for winning the 'Nice Catch' Award!

Additionally, Nyleigha was recently elected President of the National Honor Society for the 2023-2024 school year!

Great job, Nyleigha!

## STUDENT HELP

HS HelpDesk and MS Study Hub provides you with a direct line to your teachers across all subjects. They are readily available to assist you with questions, homework, concepts, and concerns.

HS HelpDesk meets  
everyday  
10:30am-11:20am  
2:00pm-2:50pm

MS Study Hub meets  
Tuesdays - Fridays  
10:30am-11:20am  
2:00pm-2:50pm

For more information please check the Students Corner in Brightspace.

HS HelpDesk  
[Ms. Hart](#)

MS Study Hub  
[Mr. Sherwood](#)



# Science IS INNOVATIVE

At MEVA, we strive to continue to innovate, putting our students' best interests first and foremost. For SY23-24, some of our teachers are piloting an innovative new grading policy. The policy allows you, the student, to build your grade! Every student starts with 0 points; as you complete assignments and they're graded, your point total will increase. One of the biggest benefits of this way of grading is that your grade will never decrease; it only has the opportunity to increase as you complete assignments, building knowledge, mastery, and skills. As with any changes, if questions arise, please reach out to Mrs. O'Grady if you have any questions.

Our high school self-paced courses offer an amazing interdisciplinary opportunity. These courses allow you to explore a topic of your interest. We design an interdisciplinary project-based learning opportunity around your interests. The projects are designed to be completed virtually. However, there is also the opportunity to work with members of your community offline. Mr. Sherwood and Mrs. O'Grady are certified science teachers who are available to guide you through the projects. Real-world connections allow you to explore your interests and cover a variety of content area concepts. Please reach out to Mrs. O'Grady if you are a high school student and would like more information.

## DISCOVERING EVERY LEARNER'S POTENTIAL: MEVA'S CHILD FIND INITIATIVE

We are excited to introduce you to our school's Child Find program—an initiative dedicated to identifying and supporting learners who may benefit from special education services or targeted interventions. Every learner's potential is unique, and we are committed to ensuring that each student receives the necessary support to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.



You may be asking, “What is Child Find?”

Child Find is a proactive approach to identifying children, from birth through age 21, who may have learning differences or disabilities. Child Find is designed to ensure that every learner, regardless of their abilities, receives an appropriate education that meets their individual needs.

At MEVA, we believe that every learner has the potential to shine. By participating in the Child Find program, we ensure that no child's needs go unnoticed. Our goal is to provide a nurturing and inclusive environment that fosters growth, independence, and self-confidence. Together, we can create a foundation for lifelong success.

We encourage parents and guardians to actively participate in their student's educational journey. If you suspect that your student may have learning differences, delays or interfering factors, or if you simply have questions about the Child Find program, please reach out to Lena Vitagliano, Special Education Administrator ~ by email: [Lvitagliano@mainevirtualacademy.org](mailto:Lvitagliano@mainevirtualacademy.org) or by calling/texting: 603-785-2021. Your insights and collaboration are invaluable in helping us provide the best possible educational programming and support to your learner.

We are committed to fostering a learning community where every learner's potential is nurtured and celebrated. Thank you for entrusting us with your student's education.

# FAFSA

Seniors and any juniors graduating early should complete the FAFSA to be considered for financial aid at any post-secondary institution. This is required for free community college as well. The 2024-25 FAFSA will be released in December. You can be ready by creating your Federal Student Aid Account as soon as possible as it is a process that takes some time. More information can be found [here](#).

## SENIORS AND EARLY GRADS

\*Please reach out to your guidance counselor to set up a time to meet to work on your plans for after high school. [htyler@mainevirtualacademy.org](mailto:htyler@mainevirtualacademy.org).

\*Students applying to college will need to complete the FAFSA in December. What can you do to get ready? Create your account now! More information can be found here:

<https://www.famemaine.com/affording-education/pay-for-school/get-financial-aid/fafsa/filing-the-2024-2025-fafsa/>

Important links:

External Credit <https://forms.gle/GrAFU8DAKp9ypgM17>

Early Grad <https://forms.gle/gpjDVUK62Rf5vajr6>

## COLLEGE SPEAKER SERIES

Nov. 27 1:00-1:50 UMO -confirmed

Dec. 4 1:00-1:50 FAME with Mila Tappan

Dec. 11 1:00-1:50 UMA with Jeremy Bouford

Dec. 18 1:00-1:50 UMF (Joe McShane)- tentative

This is a Virtual Zoom presentation during our regularly scheduled advisory time at 1:00-1:50 provided by an admissions counselor from the respective school as a way to share more about majors, residential life, applications, and more. Students may join the session through the Zoom link (provided on their Brightspace calendar for the day). Any student that is not 12th grade advisory or is absent on that day will still receive recordings and follow up information after each session.



## MEVA CONTACTS

Use these emails for a quick response to your questions:

[Attendance@MaineVirtualAcademy.org](mailto:Attendance@MaineVirtualAcademy.org) \* [Guidance@MaineVirtualAcademy.org](mailto:Guidance@MaineVirtualAcademy.org)

[Tech@MaineVirtualAcademy.org](mailto:Tech@MaineVirtualAcademy.org)

To submit your pet photos, shoutouts and newsletter ideas for the newsletter, please email the [Newsletter](#).



## TEACHER FEATURE

*My traveling “wolf pack”, we go everywhere together. They even camp with me. L-R Beans, Sprout, Floki*



## Alicia Uth- Visual Arts

### Working at MEVA:

I have always gravitated towards unique, independent thinkers; the “not so typical” individuals. MEVA is filled with them! I absolutely love to teach at a school that dares to do things differently. Our students and families are the #1 priority and teachers are given the freedom to educate in a way that works best for each student. MEVA is FULL of creative, talented, and most importantly KIND students. I would not want to be anywhere else.

### A few fun facts:

-I started working at MEVA in the Fall of 2016. I thought it was going to be temporary because I could never picture myself NOT teaching in person. I also did not expect to meet such amazing students and never want to leave. 8 years later, here I am! I brag about our students everywhere I go.

-I am extremely competitive and cannot pass on a challenge regardless of what it is.

I played soccer, basketball, softball, and competed in various track events in high school. I still play soccer. It keeps me sane.

-I have severe ADHD, anxiety and depression. I used to hide this fact, but I want my students to know that I understand the struggle and it is nothing to be ashamed of. We are in this together.

## STUDENT FEATURE



Hi, I am Bridget Kusturin, one thing about me is that I enjoy anime, Star Wars, dragons, and cats. I am 17 years old and have been attending MEVA since 2017, when I was in the 7th grade. My favorite subject is art class because everyone has a good time and I can be as creative as I want.

My tip for anyone joining MEVA would be to check out morning assembly because it is a good time to socialize and get to know your classmates. Also, there are a lot of clubs that make it easy to find people in school who like the same things as you do. I look forward to going to clubs and getting some time with my friends.

My experience as a G&T Art student has been very nice. We have a lot of art challenges, which helps me improve my art skill. The G&T art program is also very fun. I look forward to sharing my ideas and art every Wednesday in class.





# PAW-SITIVITY

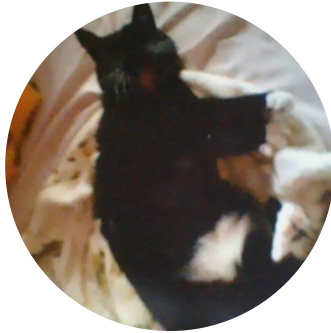


Left: Owen Tebbets' dog, Akua, enjoying some sunshine and fresh air.



Right: Sydney Sparlings cat, Meows, just chilling.

Patty, Rayven Ferry's cat, snuggled up on her bed.



Elias Drayton's pup, Athena, looking regal.



Sophia Mercogliano's squad, Coco Bear (AKA Moose), Freya, and Dobby.