



**F. A. Day Middle School**  
**Newsletter**  
*March 2, 2020*

**Days of the Cycle Week of 3/2/20**

**Day 3, Day 4, Day 5, Day 6, Day 1**

**Quote of the Week**

“Middle school is a time of seismic shifts- everything is changing from friendships and relationships to hormones, expectations and not to mention the physical, intellectual, moral, social and emotional growth your child is experiencing in just a short amount of time. “

---- Dr. Robyn Silverman

**THIS WEEK'S QUOTE**

Today as my husband and I were in our favorite Sunday breakfast spot, a cluster of energetic, clearly middle school-aged basketball players entered the restaurant. I estimated that they were in 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Like the almost independent teens they were, they maturely asked for a table for 9, and then entertained themselves with selfies and Snap Chat as they waited. What struck me was what they did when they were seated. Each of them flipped over their paper placemats and asked for crayons so that they could color as they waited to order. I turned to my husband and smiled. This was such a metaphor for middle school. In that ambiguous place between independence and childhood, they had one foot squarely in each stage of their development and were evolving right before our eyes.

As I began to think about it, metaphors for this unique stage of early adolescence were everywhere. Just before February vacation a member of the Day Community gave my assistant Donna a plant. This little green thumb of a plant, just barely eeking through the dirt was so odd looking, I had to ask Donna was it was. She told me it was an

Amaryllis plant. I was curious since to be truthful it did not look like any potted plant I had seen before. I had to of course “Google it”, and to my surprise I saw pictures of a gorgeous, blossoming plant with stunning bright pink flowers. There was certainly no evidence of this in the little green nub that peered out of the soil in the pot on Donna’s desk. I was so struck by the excitement of the plant’s potential I could not wait to see it grow. I took a picture of it so I would not forget what it looked like in its early stages. As a middle school person, this resonated with me. Here was this undefined shape of a plant, with just a promise of what it was to become.

For the next 10 days, the plant caught my eye as I passed Donna’s desk. With her care and attention, it began to tower over its origins in the soil and broaden its leaves. I took several more pictures of it to mark its journey as I was shocked at how quickly it was growing. Right before February break, it seemed to be just waiting to blossom. I was drawn in by the anticipation of its growth and the fulfillment of its promised beauty, which seem to occur with just a little care and nurturing.

Last week’s welcome back message to our faculty included a reminder that if we pay close attention, we are witness to the exponential growth that so characterizes our middle school students this time of year. The productive struggle of the early months so often yields personal breakthroughs and accomplishments. It is a glorious time of year to be an adult in the life of a middle school child, our own amaryllis plants, just bursting with the expectation of growth and fulfillment.

It is also a somber reminder of the importance of recognizing the potential in each of our middle school children no matter where they are in their development and growth. Sometimes it is a challenge for them to imagine their potential as they are mired in their struggle. They need our nurturing and encouragement at every step of the way. They also need, as I was reminded this morning, opportunities to stay connected to the passions and joys rooted in their childhood as they begin on that pathway to adulthood. While known for its time of struggle and complexity, middle school is also a time for the excitement of growth and exploration that will be missed if we are not looking for it. The beauty of that growth and fulfillment is everywhere if you are paying attention.

### **NNHS PRINCIPAL’S COFFEE**

This Wednesday, March 4, 2020 at 8:15 a.m., Dr. Henry Turner, Principal of Newton North High School, will host a parent coffee in the Day Middle School library. The event is open for all Day parents and guardians, and is a unique opportunity for 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents to ask about their child’s upcoming transition to high school.

### **TERM 3 PROGRESS REPORTS**

Term 3 student progress reports will be made available to parents the week of March 2<sup>nd</sup>. Teachers will communicate with you about how they will be sharing information about student progress.

### **LOCKS IN PE CLASSES**

We would like your support in ensuring that every child at Day has a lock for their Physical Education locker. Most of our students carry valuables such as cell phones with them during the course of the day, and leave those items as well as expensive clothing items in our locker rooms unsecured during PE classes. Although we expect that no student at Day will go into a locker is not their own, it is good practice for students to secure their property with a lock. If your child is unable to obtain a lock for their PE locker, please have them touch base with their PE teacher or guidance counselor.

### **SAFETY ON MINOT PLACE**

As part of our safety protocols and as indicated on posted signs, cars are not permitted to drive down our Minot Place driveway to the front of the school during school arrival and dismissal hours in order to protect the safety of our students entering the building and to allow easy access for our vans. Those hours are: 7:30 – 8:30 a.m. in the morning and 1:45 p.m.- 2:45 p.m. in the afternoon.

The role of the crossing guard is to safely cross students, and not to direct traffic, so he or she will not stop you from entering Minot Place. That does not, however, mean that entering Minot Place during these restricted times is allowed. I am asking parents to please respect these guidelines in order to protect the safety of our students who are not looking out for or expecting cars on Minot Place during these hours. We also need to get our vans quickly in and out of Minot Place without traffic as they are committed to transporting students at other schools and will be delayed if they have difficulty navigating Minot Place.

The ONLY exception to this policy are parents who are transporting a student with a physical impairment. If our child is on crutches, or has another reason that they need to be dropped off directly in front of the building, you need to ask the front office for a special pass.

This has been the ongoing policy for for arrival and dismissal at Day, but unfortunately has not been followed by many parents as of late, so I ask for your assistance in resetting this expectation. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

## **ROUNDTABLE LESSONS THIS WEEK**

This week in Roundtable groups our students will learn more about our Unified Basketball program and the importance of creating an inclusive school environment at Day. Our hope and expectation is that our conversations will lead to school-wide support for our Unified Team during its season as well as the other initiatives as part of our participation in the Special Olympics Champion Schools Program. See more information about the Unified Basketball Team below.

### **UNIFIED BASKETBALL TEAM**

Day Middle School is a proud new addition to the Special Olympics Champion Schools in Massachusetts. As part of that we have created a Unified Basketball Team. See the description of the program from the Special Olympics web site below:

*Special Olympics is dedicated to promoting social inclusion through shared sports training and competition experiences. Unified Sports joins people with and without intellectual disabilities on the same team. It was inspired by a simple principle: training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding.*

*In Unified Sports, teams are made up of people of similar age and ability. That makes practices more fun and games more challenging and exciting for all. Having sport in common is just one more way that preconceptions and false ideas are swept away.*

The Day Unified Basketball team consists of athletes from our Reflections Program and their student champion partners. At our Student/Faculty Basketball games on the Friday before vacation, we held pep rallies for our new Unified Basketball Team. This is the first time that many of the students will have had the opportunity to represent their school as part of a sports team as they compete against surrounding schools. It would mean a great deal to all of our students if we had a large crowd cheering them on at their home games. The days and times of the games are below.

We will be sharing more information with our students about the program through Roundtable lessons in the coming weeks. In the interim, please help us by encouraging your child to attend the games.

We look forward to having the full support of the Day Community behind our Day Dragons Unified Team. Please see the schedule below:

1. Thursday, March 12th - HOME GAME #1 vs Wilson, 3:30 start time, likely 4:30 end time.

2. Tuesday, March 17th - AWAY GAME #2 @ Pollard (Needham) 3:30 start time, likely 4:30 end time
3. Monday, March 23rd - HOME GAME #3 vs Bird, 3:30 start time, likely 4:30 end time.
4. Thursday, March 26th - JAMBOREE at 3:30. Location TBD but likely @ Day. 3:30 start time, students play 2 games and have closing ceremonies and award. My best guess is at least a 5pm end time.

### **DAY FORJ (FAMILIES FOR RACIAL JUSTICE) PARENT EVENT**

Special thanks to our Day FORJ Parents for their participation in Wednesday evening's first-ever FORJ event at Day. There was a great turnout and the discussions around race, diversity and inclusion were quite powerful. I would like to extend a special thank you to Renande Loayza for her presentation and for organizing this event. Stay tuned for information about another FORJ event at Day this year.

### **7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE MUSICAL: *Fiddler on the Roof* TRADITION!**

Day's production of the classic Broadway musical, *Fiddler on the Roof*, will run Thursday through Saturday March, 12, 13 and 14 at 7 PM in the Day Auditorium.

### **IF I WERE A RICH MAN!**

Tickets are on sale at all lunches beginning this Wednesday. All tickets are \$10, and all seating is reserved.

### **SUNRISE, SUNSET...**

With nearly 100 students involved in the production, we expect shows to sell out, so we strongly recommend that you coordinate your family's plans early for best availability. We recommend that if two families are buying tickets together, that the students purchase tickets at the same time, as we cannot offer exchanges for seating.

### **MATCHMAKER!**

Please be advised that there is staged theatrical violence in this production. Characters find themselves in stressful situations that may not be ideal for every audience member to experience.

For a full plot synopsis and other helpful background and context, please go to:

<http://fiddlermusical.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/FIDDLER-Study-Guide-Sept-21-Final-spread.pdf>

## **MARCH MADNESS - FACULTY FOUL-UPS**

The Day PTO has announced that the annual Day Faculty Foul-Ups will return as part of March Madness at Day Middle School on Friday, March 20, 2020. This is an event where students stay after school to cheer on their teachers in a foul shooting competition. Prizes are available to students who pick the faculty winner of the competition. Food and beverages will be for sale by the PTO and the event will end with a student half-court shot competition.

## **DAY SCHOOL COUNCIL**

The next meeting of the Day School Council is on Wednesday, March 11, 2020 at 3:00 p.m.

## **INTERNATIONAL POTLUCK DINNER**

**SAVE THE DATE:** The next event sponsored by the Day Diversity Club is the International Potluck Dinner on Thursday, April 2<sup>nd</sup>. This is not an event to miss. More information to follow..

## **SAVE THE DATE: *Middle School Matters***

We are pleased to share that again this year, we will hold an informational community forum for NPS families. This year, **we are excited to announce that our keynote speaker will be Phyllis Fagell**, licensed clinical professional counselor, certified professional school counselor, journalist and **author of the best selling book *Middle School Matters: The 10 Key Skills Kids Need to Thrive in Middle School and Beyond—and How Parents Can Help.***

Community Forum details are as follows:

### **Wednesday, May 6, 2020**

7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Newton North Auditorium  
457 Walnut St.

*Thank you to the Newton PTO Council for their generosity in sponsoring this event.*

RSVP is not required, but is helpful to plan for space and materials. Please follow this link to let us know if you plan to attend:

<https://forms.gle/TQeSxdZTQgsi6yTB9>

We know middle school can be a challenging time for students and families. Ms. Fagell's insight and expertise, coupled with her engaging delivery, will provide you with helpful information to support your student (and your family!)

More information will be sent in the coming weeks. We look forward to seeing you on the 6th.

## **PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED INFORMATION**

### **UPCOMING PRINCIPAL'S COFFEE**

#### **March 4, 2020 at 8:15 a.m. in the Day Library**

*Q&A with Newton North High School Principal Dr. Henry Turner about the transition to high school. Particularly geared toward 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents*

#### **April 16, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. in the Day Library**

*Q&A with Superintendent David Fleishman and members of the NPS School Community. This is a wonderful opportunity for a small group gathering with our district's leadership team.*

#### **May 21, 2020 at 8:00 a.m. in the Day Library**

*Topics TBD*

### **ABSENTEEISM TEAM**

This year, one of our school goals is to decrease student absenteeism and tardiness. School attendance greatly influences student success in school. Chronic absenteeism results in missed instruction with teachers that is difficult to make-up and may severely compromise a student's academic and social growth. When students are frequently absent, it is difficult for them to form strong connections with adults and peers in the school community.

A new initiative by the state now classifies students who miss school more than 10% of the time, for any reason, as chronically absent. This negatively impacts Day's state

rating, and more importantly, it has serious implications for individual children and their learning.

As a result, Day has formed a team to identify and support students who are chronically absent. It is our hope that we can work collaboratively to help all children be present for their education. We will be contacting individual families who have children whose accumulated absences negatively affect their growth. We will work with parents, students, and families to overcome obstacles that may be keeping children at home. We will also be working internally to continue to make Day a welcoming and safe place for all students.

## **UPCOMING 8<sup>th</sup> GRADE PARENT EVENTS**

**Thursday, February 27<sup>th</sup>:**

### **8<sup>th</sup> GRADE PARENT NIGHT AT NEWTON NORTH**

8<sup>th</sup> Grade parents will be invited to an evening orientation at Newton North High School about the transition to high school **on Thursday, February 27<sup>th</sup>**. More information will be emailed directly from NNHS Assistant Amy Winston, but for now, please save the date.

**Wednesday, March 4, 2020 at 8:15 a.m. in the Day Library**

### ***Presentation by Dr. Henry Turner, Principal of NNHS***

*Q&A with Newton North High School Principal Dr. Henry Turner about the transition to high school. Particularly geared toward 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents*

## **SAVE THE DATE:**

Week of March 2, 2020: Term 3 Progress Reports Shared

March 4, 2020: Principal Coffee with NNHS Principal Dr. Turner

March 7, 2020: Middle School Tenacity Challenge Competition

March 7, 2020: PTO Progressive Dinner

March 11, 2020: Phoenix Field Trip

March 11, 2020: Day School Council at 3:00 p.m.

March 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020: 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Musical, *Fiddler on the Roof*

March 17, 2020: Day Orchestra Performance at Care One in Newton

March 19, 2020: 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Global Goals

March 20, 2020: Faculty Foul-Ups at 2:35 p.m.

March 26, 2020: Incoming 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Orientation at 7:00 p.m.

March 31 and April 1, 2020: 8<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA MCAS

April 2 and April 3, 2020: 7<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA MCAS  
April 6 and April 7, 2020: 6<sup>th</sup> Grade ELA MCAS  
April 3, 2020: End of Term 3  
April 6, 2020: Beginning of Term 4  
April 9, 2020: Term 3 Report Cards Available  
April 10, 2020: Good Friday – No School  
April 20 – 24, 2020: April Vacation

All the best,  
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