



F. A. Day Middle School
Newsletter
August 9, 2020

Quotes of the Week

“The greatness of a community is most accurately measured by the compassionate actions of its members.” ---- Coretta Scott King

“Alone, we can do so little; together we can do so much.” ---Helen Keller

THIS WEEK'S QUOTE

A Note from Ms. Mann

Dear Day Families,

I hope the summer has brought you a chance to rejuvenate and relax with your children despite the incredibly challenging circumstances. Those of you who have been at Day know that by now, I would have typically sent out a July newsletter to families checking and announcing dates for the fall such as an ice cream social for our incoming students and dates for familiar fall events such as the sending out of team placements and the September Open House.

While we know that this is not a typical year, every time I see a commercial from a local department store prompting you to purchase school supplies for the coming year, I can feel the uncertainty you must have about not being able to make concrete plans for your family in September. These are certainly unprecedented times.

It is my expectation that this week some of your questions about the plans for the fall will begin to be answered. As you are likely aware, Superintendent Fleishman will be

presenting the NPS proposal for the opening of this 2020-2021 school year to our School Committee tomorrow evening, Monday, August 10th, and the School Committee is scheduled for an additional meeting on Wednesday, August 12th followed by School Committee office hours on Thursday, August 13th and Friday, August 14th. Below is the link to the information about this timeline included in Dr. Fleishman's most recent letter posted on the Newton Public Schools website:

[Superintendent Fleishman's Letter August 7, 2020](#)

Because the district is taking the lead in communicating next steps, I will not be reaching out in the coming week, but beginning the week of Monday, August 17th, I will be planning my first of what will be weekly Principal Office Hours to discuss how the NPS decisions will impact the Day Community and your children specifically. Because I know that many of you are relying on the specifics of how the NPS Reopening Plan will impact the Day Community and specifically your child, I will continue to hold weekly Principal Office Hours in addition to sending out weekly newsletters beginning the week of August 17th.

For the incoming families to Day Middle School, our 6th graders and families new to Day, we welcome you to our community! Day is an amazing place, and I am honored to be its principal. As you will get to know, I like using quotes in my weekly newsletters to highlight our shared values and connect to the middle school experience. In this first newsletter of what is already a challenging year, I chose the quotes of Coretta Scott King, the wife of Dr. King, leader of the Civil Rights Movement, and Helen Keller, leader of a disabilities rights movement. Both of these prominent women lived through the trials of overcoming barriers, and yet they understood the importance of leaning on a compassionate community. The strength of our community, with its deeply rooted values of equity and compassion, will guide us through the challenges of this year as we come together to support the children of Day.

I know this is quite an unusual year to join a new community, so please know that we are already busy devising ways to orient and welcome you and your children in creative ways that will help support you in that transition. More information will follow... but in the interim, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly with any question you might have.

Best,
Jackie Mann

PRINCIPAL OFFICE HOURS AND ONGOING COMMUNICATION

While typically we do not schedule Principal “Coffees” or meet and greets with middle school parents until late August, this is certainly not a typical year. I hope many of you were able to attend or watch asynchronously the presentation by Superintendent Fleishman and our middle school administrative team that highlighted where we are in the process of determining the educational model in the fall. As a parent, I know the level of detail and planning that goes into making arrangements for your families in September and throughout the school year, and so in light of these unusual circumstances, I would like to restart our weekly principal virtual office hours so that I can open the lines of communication between the school and families as we partner to prepare our students for the year ahead in whatever form it takes.

Given that our new incoming 6th grade families have likely many more and perhaps different questions, I would like to offer a separate time for incoming 6th grade parents.

Although our central administrative team will be the source of messaging around the plans for the fall, I am happy to answer any questions or address any concerns specific to the Day Community.

I will be launching weekly virtual Principal Office Hours **every Wednesday morning from 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. beginning on Wednesday, August 19th**. While all are welcome for the whole hour, I will be reserving the first 30 minutes specifically to prioritize questions from our new incoming 6th grade parents.

We will use the Zoom link below every Wednesday morning at 9:00 a.m. beginning on August 19, 2020:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://newton-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/96244477834>

Meeting ID: 962 4447 7834

Passcode: 964953

Norms for virtual Principal Office Hours:

- To join, please click on the Zoom meeting link below at the designated time.
- When you enter, you will be muted so that we can hear all participants one at a time. Please keep your microphone muted unless called on for a question.
- The video sessions will be recorded for those who cannot attend at the designated time.
- You need to use the chat feature to write questions.

- Please post your name on your screen in your Zoom settings as I will ask you to unmute so that we can have a dialogue about your question.
- This is not a “drop in office hours”. It is disruptive to add members while the session is going on, so I will only admit participants up to 3 minutes past the start time of the meeting.
- Please refrain from asking specific questions about your child or a faculty member out of respect for confidentiality. Any questions of that nature should be directed to me via an email so that a personal conversation can be schedule.

PARKING LOT

To make this hour most productive, I have again created a virtual “parking lot” for your questions. Please follow the link below to submit questions you might have for the coming year. I will do my best to answer them periodically right in the parking lot, but will also use the parking lot questions to frame our weekly discussions during office hours. Please note that this document will remain live, and you can also use it to add your own questions. I will check it periodically to respond. The benefit of using this format is that many parents have similar questions, and you are able to view all of the responses.

[Day Parent/Guardian Question Parking Lot August 2020](#)

In order to respect the privacy of you and your child, I ask that you do not put any questions about any individual student issue into the parking lot but rather email me directly for an appointment.

Please know how much I value your partnership and input as the Day team prepares for the fall.

VIDEO MESSAGE TO OUR STUDENTS

I will be sending out a video message to students within the next two weeks via their school issued Gmail just to check in on them. Their Gmails are their LASID@newton.k12.ma.us. Their LASID number is the same as their lunch numbers. Their passwords are the same as their Google accounts. They can access their Gmail from the student tab of the NPS website.

No worries if you are new to using Gmail. I will send the video message out to parents as well at the same time in case your students has difficulty in access their Gmail account.

Student Gmail

As you have been notified by our Technology Director, Steven Rattendi, last week, NPS students now have access to a student Gmail account. As teachers and students learn how to access these accounts, we will explore more direct communication with students about distance learning resources. In the interim, please have your child become familiar with their Gmail account. Instructions for doing so are linked below:

[Gmail Instructions](#)

The links have been added to the district [COVID-19 Technology Support](#) page, and to the district [Student Resources](#) page.

SCHOOL SUPPLY LISTS

Typically we have sent out school supply lists to families by now in anticipation of families' interest in purchasing school supplies when they are on sale throughout the summer. As we are all aware, this is not a typical year so we will not be sending out supply lists until later in August once the educational model for the year has been finalized. We will get that to you as soon as possible.

TECHNOLOGY

No matter which educational model is identified by the district, each middle school student will be issued their own Chromebook for use, essentially transforming us into a 1:1 school in the coming year. This will support our ability to flexibly move between instructional models with students depending on the public health landscape.

SUMMER READING

In times of uncertainty, there is something reassuring about the consistency of summer reading. This year our Day Middle School Summer Reading Committee has done an exceptional job of selecting books that have a common theme of resilience, which is a concept that we will be discussing frequently throughout this school year as we look to develop our students' ability to navigate a challenging landscape. Below is information about each grade level's summer reading expectations.

[Day Summer Reading 2020](#)

YEARBOOKS

We have received a lot of inquiries about when last year's yearbooks will be distributed. It is my understanding that the printing of the yearbooks was delayed due to the shutdown of the production factory during the pandemic. It is currently operational, and we expect delivery some time this month. I will be in touch once the yearbooks have been delivered with a plan for distribution to those families who pre-ordered and purchased one.

CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

Currently the school offices remain close. In the next week, we will be publishing our school-based availability. In the interim, please email the following front office staff with questions:

Ms. Donna Fisher or Ms. Maria Vitone for general school questions:

fisherd@newton.k12.ma.us
vitonem@newton.k12.ma.us

Ms. Michelle Barry or Ms. Maria Vitone with questions about registration:

barrym@newton.k12.ma.us
vitonem@newton.k12.ma.us

Mr. Mike Thurm with questions about IEPs or 504s or any questions related to student services:

thurmm@newton.k12.ma.us

And of course, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at my email below.

My best to you and your families, and I will be in touch again soon.

Jackie Mann
F. A. Day Principal
jacqueline_mann@newton.k12.ma.us
(617) 559-9100
On Twitter: @JMannNPS