

F.A. Day Middle School Newsletter

December 7, 2020

PINK WEEK

Quote of the Week

“I have been searching for ways to heal myself, and I have found that kindness is the best way.” --- Lady Gaga

THIS WEEK'S QUOTE

Lately the adults sharing the responsibility for the care and guidance of the children of Day Middle School, awake each day confronted with the grim realities of a public health crisis that appears to have no end. Although intellectually we know that growing opportunities for testing and vaccinations are just around the corner, as we approach what is the holiday season for many, we really have to dig deep to find hope and inspiration for the children counting on us.

Every day I am grateful to lead a community that is centered around the needs of children, and yet lately I too have been struggling to find the light that can inspire the caregivers so that we can pass that hope on to our children. This morning, I found a glimmer of that hope in a quote by an unlikely source- performance artist Lady Gaga. She wisely identified one way we can embed joy and hope in a time when it is hard to come by.

I am guessing that many of you have already stumbled upon this idea now or in times of past struggle. I know, for example, that our morale elves at Day who leave encouraging notes and chocolates to greet colleagues after a long day at school understand the power of kindness; And our teachers who are involving students in service projects or parents who are helping families in need in the Day Community all fully understand the healing power of giving.

While it seems there is so little in our control as of late, from where we can go to whom we can be around, we do have control over how we choose to focus our time and energy. At a time when many are

concerned about how much our children are learning, I challenge all of us, to take the opportunity to teach them the most important skill - that of giving to others, particularly in times of need. Whether it is tipping your server an extra few dollars, donating to your favorite charity, or helping a neighbor in need, involve our children in your acts of kindness. The healing that comes from giving and the examples you set by demonstrating empathy and kindness during tough times, will offer a lesson that will live on in them forever, helping to develop their sense of responsibility to the community and most importantly develop future leaders of a world we can be all proud of in years to come.

UPCOMING DATES:

Monday, November 30, 2020: Classes resume

Monday, December 14, 2020: Term 2 Progress Reports Share This Week

Wednesday, December 16, 2020: First Day of Parent Conferences

Monday, Dec. 21 and Tuesday, Dec. 22: Cohort B in Person Learning (Instead of Cohort A)

Thursday December 24, 2020 – Friday, January 1, 2021 Winter Recess

Monday, January 4, 2021- Classes Resumes

Wednesday, January 6, 2021: Parent conferences

Wednesday, January 20, 2021: Parent Conferences

Friday, February 5, 2020: Term 2 Report Cards

COHORT A AND SWITCH DECEMBER 21st and 22nd

As Superintendent Fleishman indicated in his communication last week, we will be inviting Cohort B students to learn in person on Monday, December 21st and Tuesday December 22nd instead of

Cohort A in order to create equity in the number of opportunities for each cohort to learn in person.

Your children's teachers will communicate with the students about how this switch impacts their calendar links that week. They will include specific directions for students who are distance only as their classes will vary depending on their team. Please reach out to your child's teachers with specific questions.

For all students, the last day before December vacation will be Wednesday, December 23rd. Similar to every Wednesday, this will be a fully remote day for all students except for those who are in school typically for service delivery needs. Dismissal on December 23rd will be at the typical time for all students on Wednesdays – which is 1:30 p.m.

CHARGERS AND EARPHONES

Please help your child create a routine around charging their computer the night before school, and remembering to bring their charger to school every day. For safety reasons, teachers are not allowed to shift student seating to move them closer to an outlet, which makes charging computers during classroom time very challenging. We are finding that students are arriving to school with a computer already low in charge. They should be charging their computers at home after their last class in the afternoon, and ready their computers for the next day.

Also, we only have a limited number of headphones to lend to students. We ask that you remind students to bring their headphones to school every day. If you are able, it is helpful to purchase a back-up pair. Headphones with embedded microphones are particularly helpful for the study of world languages if you are able to purchase them for your child. As always, we will provide headphones for your child, but cannot continue to replace them after the initial time.

FLEX BLOCK OFFERINGS

We are please to announce that we are expanding our enrichment offerings for the Wednesday flex block time – 9:35 – 10:00

a.m. Please see the links below. These offerings are open to all students:

ART CLUB with Ms. Horner

Time: This is a recurring meeting 9:35 – 10:00 a.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://newton-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/87063822745>

Meeting ID: 870 6382 2745

Passcode: Horner

Mrs. Horner's Art Club Zoom Link

Drawing Studio with Ms. Edwards

Sherry Edwards is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://newton-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/87404802656>

Meeting ID: 874 0480 2656

Passcode: studio

Running Club

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://newton-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/85176774380>

Meeting ID: 851 7677 4380

Passcode: Dayrunners

Yoga

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://newton-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/82496144264>

Meeting ID: 824 9614 4264

Passcode: church

Sports Talk with W and the Lunin

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://newton-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/81314429803>

Meeting ID: 813 1442 9803

Passcode: sportstalk

Strength and Conditioning Training

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83409037427?pwd=ZXFaN1NETXVhVjVPRVFoa1lPLogoQTo9>

Meeting ID: 834 0903 7427

Passcode: powell

SAVE THE DATE: PTO PARENT FORUM

The Day PTO will be holding a Parent Forum on Thursday, January 14th at 7:00 p.m. Join the PTO to offer feedback and learn more about how you can become involved.

STUDENT REQUEST FOR DISTANCE ONLY

As indicated in the letter to the Day Community on Friday, November 20nd linked below, we can only honor a transfer of a student to “distance only” from hybrid if there are circumstances related to health.

[Parent Letter on Requests for Distance Only 11-20-20](#)

I ask that you do not put your child in the position of asking their teacher to join distance only classes as the teacher will have to deny this request, and it places both the students and teacher in a challenging position. I continue to ask that all of these requests be directed to me at mannj@newton.k12.ma.us

FORJ HAPPENINGS

Families Organizing for Racial Justice (FORJ) is a group of diverse Newton families helping our children learn about issues of power and inequality and **how to stand up for racial justice.**

We seek to generate **understanding** and **curiosity** about the differences in our society, and to work together towards **racial equity**.

If you are interested in getting involved with FORJ at Day Middle School, please email FORJ@daypto.org.

Please see the upcoming FORJ events listed below:

LISTEN:

Nice White Parents- A five part podcast about building a better school system, and what gets in the way. <https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/introducing-nice-white-parents/id1524080195?i=1000485298545>

DO:

Celebrating the Legacy of METCO: Raise Your Voice for Racial Equity, Friday, December 11, 4-6pm

Featuring a virtual tour of the new METCO HQ in Nubian Square, and a panel of METCO storytellers who are bringing the unique perspective of the nation's largest voluntary school desegregation program to a wider audience: Mike Mascoll (METCO alum/filmmaker, *On The Line: Where Sacrifice Begins*), Dr. Susan Eaton (*The Other Boston Busing Story*), Jennifer De Leon (*Don't Ask Me Where I'm From*), and moderator Shelly Hinds (METCO alum, Board member, and Lincoln/Sudbury METCO Director). [Register here.](#)

READ:

WATCH: Adam Ruins Everything - The Disturbing History of the Suburbs <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e68CoE7oMk8>

ADVISORY THIS WEEK

This week in advisory, we will continue exploring the theme of where we live, focusing on the values we bring from our home community

into our school community. We'll discuss the elements that make a community feel like "home" and from parallels between the values of our home community and our Day Middle School community.

PRINCIPAL OFFICE HOURS

This week's Principal Office Hours will be on Friday, December 11, 2020 at 9:00 a.m. Please see the Zoom link below:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://newton-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/83693181380>

Meeting ID: 836 9318 1380

Passcode: 614045

Questions can continue to be added to our Parent Questions Parking Lot linked below:

[Parent Hybrid and Distance Only Questions](#)

Norms for virtual Principal Office Hours:

- To join, please click on the Zoom meeting linked above at your 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 un-mute 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 scheduled.

PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED INFORMATION

PARENT CONFERENCES

See important information about this year's parent conferences below:

[Parent Teacher Conferences 2020](#)

November 29, 2020

Dear Day Families:

This letter outlines this year's plans for parent conferences. The purpose of conferences is to offer parents and teachers an opportunity to share and discuss student achievement and progress. At the middle school level across Newton, conferences are held once per year in December and January. Please take time to read this letter to be sure you have the information you need to schedule your teacher conferences.

Here at Day we have a series of Wednesdays available for these conferences. This year's parent/teacher conferences will be held virtually via Zoom due to public health considerations. The conferences are designed as 10 minute check-ins with teachers to discuss your child's progress. **You must choose either your child's Science and English Teacher Pairs or the Math and Social Studies Teacher Pairs, not both.** Unfortunately, given the number of conferences requested, we can only accommodate a meeting with one of the team's pairs. The teachers that you will be meeting with will be prepared to talk about your child's progress in all team subjects. If you book a conference with all 4 team teachers, one

pair will be chosen for you, no exceptions. You also will have the opportunity to meet one on one with any of your child's special education teachers and/or multi-team teachers (e.g. world language, fine arts, music, physical education, etc.).

We view parent/teacher conferences as a unique opportunity to support the prioritizing of our home/school partnership and communication between you and the teachers. If you need any assistance or if the conferences prove to be unacceptably limiting given your child's needs, please do not hesitate to call your child's Guidance Counselor.

How To Sign-Up For Parent-Teacher Conferences

Sign-ups will begin on Friday, December 4th at 8:00 p.m. and will end on Wednesday, December 23, at 8:00 p.m.

Parent Conference Dates are Wednesday, December 16, Wednesday January 6, and Wednesday, January 16th. 10 Minute meeting time slots including a link for your zoom conference.

Log online

to: <http://www.virtualparagon.com/day/conference/>. Enter the Password: **Daydragons** (case sensitive).

Follow the instructions on how to create your own account and to choose a conference time. If you need further assistance, please call your child's guidance counselor at 617-559-9123 or the main office at 617-559-9100.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Mann
Principal

WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE ON CONFERENCE DAYS

We will be scheduling parent conferences on Dec. 16, Jan. 6, Jan, 20.

We have adjusted the schedule for students on these conference Wednesdays so that students will still see all of their classes, just earlier in the day. See the adjusted Wednesday schedule below JUST on the parent/conference Wednesdays listed above:

8:05 - 8:15 - Team Homeroom

8:15 - 10:00 a.m. - Team Classes- Teams will see all 4 sections

THERE WILL BE NO FLEX TIME/OPEN GYM

10:00 - 12:10 p.m. Multi-Team Grade Level Blocks and Lunches

No Student Classes after 12:10 p.m. on Conference Days.

CHROMEBOOKS

- **8th Grade:** Unfortunately, Chromebooks will not be ready for distribution to our 8th graders this week. We ask that any 8th graders with a device at home bring it to school for use. Students without a device will be provided with them.

8th Grade Students Without a Personal Computer to Use

- **6th and 7th Grade:** All 6th and 7th grade students should have already received their NPS Chromebooks. We have some that have yet to be picked up. If you have not picked up your child's device, please email Ms. Vitone at : vitonem@newton.k12.ma.us

A FEW REMINDERS ABOUT THE WEEK AHEAD

- This week students revert to a typical schedule and begin their day with their period 1 class. For 7th and 8th grade this is an on-team class (math, ELA, history or social studies), for 6th grade it is a multi-team class (world language or arts rotation) (Faculty will be available to help students locate their classes)

- The first class begins at 8:05 a.m. Student walking to school **WILL NOT BE ADMITTED TO THE BUILDING BEFORE 7:55 a.m.** Please plan accordingly as students also should not wait outside of the building.
- Students taking the bus will be greeted and escorted into designated waiting areas before school begins.
- Grab and Go Breakfast is available for ALL students at no cost. Students choosing breakfast must enter through the Cafeteria Door #6 on the left of the building.
- This week Cohort A is in person on Monday and Tuesday morning from 8:05 – 11:20 a.m., while Cohort B will engage in asynchronous assignments provided by their teachers during the same block of time.
- The afternoon session on Mon., Tues, Thurs, and Friday is from 12:35 – 2:40 p.m. It is all remote for both cohorts and both distance only and hybrid.
- Wednesday is a fully remote day for all students except those students who are in school every day due to service needs.
- Grab and Go Lunches are also available for all students at no cost, even those leaving for the day, but food cannot be eaten on the bus.
- Please make sure your child brings their NPS Chromebook to school with a charger and their headphones. They should charge their computer the night before. **** 8th grade students do not have their NPS device as of yet. They will be allowed to bring in their own computers to school until they receive the NPS Chromebooks**
- Please have your child bring two masks to school. Masks should be worn at all time.
- Below is a copy of the health self-assessment (I was informed that the link was not working last week). Every family should help their child complete this self-assessment before entering the school building every day:

If you or your student is experiencing any of the following, please stay home and contact your health provider and notify the school:

- Fever greater than 100 degrees, chills, shaking chills
- New or worsening cough (not chronic)
- Shortness of breath/difficulty breathing
- Sore throat not related to allergies
- New loss of taste or smell
- Nausea/vomiting/diarrhea
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches *
- Fatigue *
- Nasal congestion or runny nose*

*When in combination with other symptoms

REPORTING ABSENCES

If your child is out sick due to the above symptoms or for another reason, please contact Ms. Lori Gandolfo in the front office by phone or email first thing in the morning: 617-559-9102

gandolfol@newton.k12.ma.us

Our nurses, Ms. Ann Garvin or Gayle Larson, will follow up with a phone call if you have reported that your child is out due to illness.

HOLIDAY AND VACATION TRAVEL

We have heard from some hybrid families who would like their child to change to “distance only” because they are traveling for the holidays. As indicated earlier, we cannot make this change as it creates class sizes for distance only cohorts that are not manageable.

We can ONLY transfer a child to distance only from hybrid if your child is ill and needing to quarantine. We cannot accommodate a request for a transfer to distant only due to a quarantine related to holiday or vacation travel. This is a districtwide policy because of the planning that went into creating both distance only and hybrid sections that are safe and manageable.

Also, I ask that you please review the guidelines sent out earlier by our public health nurses:

[MA COVID-19 TRAVEL ORDER](#)

Also please review the letter I sent out to Day families on Friday, November 20, 2020 regarding requests for distance only linked again below:

[Parent Letter on Requests for Distance Only 11-20-20](#)

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AT DAY WEBSITE

We are in the process of updating our club and after school activities website. On the link below you can find a list of our current in person and virtual clubs as well as the link to paying your club fees or apply for financial assistance. The club fees are \$60 for the school year which covers unlimited participation in Day clubs. The drama fee is \$100 but also includes unlimited participating in any clubs at Day for the year. The information on how to enroll is included in the above-linked slideshow.

[Extracurricular Activities at Day](#)

How does your child sign up for a club? They should email the club adviser listed on the slides linked below. The adviser will share a Schoology Group link with your child to join the club.

[Day Middle School Clubs Fall 2020](#)

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB:

The Newton Boys' and Girls' Club is offering a program called "Out of School Time Program" which offers enrichment programs for middle

school students and compliments the schedule of NPS middle schools. See the link below:

<https://www.newtonbgc.com/outofschooltimeprogram>

Best,

Jackie Mann

F. A. Day Principal

jacqueline_mann@newton.k12.ma.us

(617) 559-9100

On Twitter: @JMannNPS