



**F. A. Day Middle School**  
**Newsletter**  
*June 15, 2020*

***A Note From Ms. Mann...***

This has been such an unusual ending to our school year, so I thought it would be best if my final words were mine rather than a quote...

First, I want to acknowledge the struggle of our families and students. When we walked out of school on that Thursday in March, none of us could have predicted that the lives that we once knew would be altered for quite some time. As adults, we worried about our children – their academic progress and most importantly their mental well-being. We scrambled to uproot our family routines and schedules, adjust our practice and expectations to create a new learning community and daily reality for our children that while not perfect, did its best to meet their educational and social emotional needs in a way that aligned with our core beliefs and goals of academic excellence, equity and social emotional support.

As we began to settle into this new reality, however imperfect and just, the ugly head of racism, always disproportionately impacting our families of color, surfaced through violence and hatred that even those not impacted by it on a daily bias could not ignore. As a community the unhealed wounds of divided experience and inequities were reopened as white members of the community grappled with the grotesque realities of the racism confronting our families of color every day. We reached for ways to talk about race in racially diverse groups and continue on that journey to tap into our outrage created when the basic right to life was denied because of race. As adults struggle with how to talk about race, our children are demanding more. They are demanding concrete, specific actions that will fulfill our school and district's mission of knocking down the remaining institutional structures of inequity to create a better version of our schools and communities.

As the year comes to an end, our conversations about how we will support our children and create a more just, inclusive, equitable and caring community are just beginning. As your children's principal and the leader of the Day Community, I commit to you all today that I will work tirelessly in the coming months with my district colleagues to continue to build our adult capacity to support all of our children as we welcome them back to what likely will be another new normal in the fall. I will be available to all of you and your children throughout the summer for support, communication and updates so that you can prepare for what will likely be more changes to come.

Finally, let me end on the upbeat note that inspires me even in the most challenging moments, and that is the belief that I know deep in my core that our children will be ok. Surrounded by adults who care about them and with whom they are connected, they will learn to develop the resilience necessary to navigate any crisis that arises and agency to create a more just and equitable world.

It is my privilege to partner with all of you and the gifted faculty of Day Middle School in guiding our children through this moment in time. Thank you for your continued trust and support. Please know that I will not ever take that for granted.

Be well. Enjoy your families this summer, and I will be in touch soon.

All the best,

Jackie Mann

## **RESOURCES FOR TALKING ABOUT RACE AND NEXT STEPS FOR DAY**

As we continue our conversations about race as a school community, I have created a shared document with link to resources on articles, videos and books that have been recommended to build our capacity and understanding about the impact of racism on our community.

We will continue these conversations through the summer with groups of parents and faculty with the goal of identifying action steps for the Day Community including the expansion of our Day Race and Achievement Team to include parent and community members as well as strengthening our partnership with FORJ (Families Organizing for Racial Justice).

Here is the link to the resources:

[Resources for Talking About Race](#)

## **PRINCIPAL OFFICE HOURS**

I would like to thank the wonderful parents who continued to show up every week to dialogue with me about the needs of our children and our school community. I could not have navigated the complexities of the past few months without you.

I anticipate holding periodic Principal Office Hours over the summer to keep Day families up to date about our plans for the fall as they evolve. Although our school remains closed for now, I will be available all summer via email and my NPS cell phone

listed below as we work with the central administrative team to create a plan for our students in September.

Jackie Mann Email: [mannj@newton.k12.ma.us](mailto:mannj@newton.k12.ma.us)

Jackie Mann Cell: 857-523-8230

### **LAST DAY OF SCHOOL**

The last day of school for students in Thursday, June 18, 2020. It will be a half day and all school sessions will end by 11:30 a.m.

### **8<sup>th</sup> GRADE MOVING -ON CEREMONY**

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade Moving -On Ceremony will be a live-stream event for the entire Day Community and students' families and friends to enjoy together **on Thursday, June 18, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.** The recording will be available after this date and time to view for those who cannot watch on June 18<sup>th</sup>. **THE LINK TO THE LIVESTREAM EVENT WILL BE SHARED OUT THIS WEEK ONCE IT IS AVAILABLE. STAY TUNED!!**

### **SURPRISE RETIRMENT PARADE FOR MR. DEMAREST**

The beloved Mr. Jamie Demarest, 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and Director of the Cabaret and 6<sup>th</sup> grade musicals, is retiring this month after over 30 years of service dedicated to the children of Newton Public Schools. In honor of his retirement, we are planning a surprise farewell parade of cars. See the details below and feel free to share the flyer linked below with anyone interested. But Shhhh!! It's meant to be a surprise, so please don't let on to Mr. Demarest.

### **[Surprise Farewell Parade for Mr. Demarest](#)**

**Jamie Demarest's**  
**“Surprise” Retirement Celebration Parade!!**  
**Join the parade of cars to thank Mr. Demarest for over 30 years of**  
**dedication to the children of**  
**Newton Public Schools**

**Date: Friday, June 19, 2020**

**Time: 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

**Location: 21 Minot Place**

**Mr. Demarest will be in front of F.A. Day Middle School from 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 –p.m. It is a surprise for Mr. Demarest, so please make sure that you do not let him know in advance that you are attending. Participants can drive by the school with posters and other well wishes for Mr. Demarest to bid him farewell and thank him for his years of service and dedication.**

**\*\*We ask that participants remain in their cars to maintain social distancing.**

**VIRTUAL DAY MIDDLE SCHOOL CHORUS CONCERT:  
An Invitation from Dr. Smith, Choral Director, F.A. Day Middle School**

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you all to the capstone concert presentation of the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade annual Spring Chorus Concert!

**Day Middle School Virtual Chorus Concert**

**Wednesday, June 17th, 7 pm**

We will livestream via zoom an audio concert with video and close captioning for 8 of our 13 songs planned for the concert that should have taken place on Friday, June 5th.

For those that are not able to join the ZOOM Livestream, the video will be accessible via a google drive link that is accessible with an NPS account.

The members of the Day Middle School choruses have been hard at work preparing, learning, and recording their individual performances that were combined to create this version of our annual concert!

Our singers worked during these unprecedented times to keep making music and stay connected with their peers. I am very proud of all of the students that contributed their voices individually to make this collective endeavor a success!

The calendar event is here ----> [Virtual Day Middle School Chorus Concert!](#)

Please click the link above to put this on your calendar! If you need the zoom link and password in another form it is here:

Virtual Day Middle School Chorus Concert!

<https://newton-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/97642094976>

Meeting ID: 976 4209 4976

Password: 263909

As always, if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out!

With Pride,

Dr. Micheal Lee Smith jr

## **NEWTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS FINE ARTS SPRING 2020 VIRTUAL SHOWCASE**

### **Newton Public Schools Fine Arts Department Spring 2020 Virtual Showcase**

During this unprecedented spring of 2020 when our students were away from the music, drama, and visual art classrooms, many students were able to stay engaged in their artistic pursuits.

Here are some examples of how K-12 students were able to stay engaged in their creative and expressive endeavors this spring.

In addition to the budding talents of our students, these slideshows and performance videos were created by a few very capable teachers, staff, students, and volunteers. We are grateful for their contributions to making this virtual showcase happen.

Check back through June 19th for the latest additions to our showcase. The virtual showcase will remain on the NPS website into the 2020-21 school year.

**View Virtual Showcase [Here](#)**

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HTz4nNAghy\\_9DjOVsw5ZJyczQTQ4sjKCXfx3SfXgubU/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1HTz4nNAghy_9DjOVsw5ZJyczQTQ4sjKCXfx3SfXgubU/edit?usp=sharing)

### **PARENT PICK UP BELONGINGS**

If your child still has unclaimed items or belongings not yet picked up in school, we ask that you reach out to Maria Vitone at the email below to schedule a 10-minute appointment this week to look through our unclaimed items.

[vitonem@newton.k12.ma.us](mailto:vitonem@newton.k12.ma.us)

***THIS IS THE LAST OPPORTUNITY TO CLAIM STUDENT BELONGINGS BEFORE THEY ARE DONATED UNLESS YOU MAKE OTHER ARRANGMENTS.***

## **PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

### **SPACE CAMP THIS SUMMER**

NPS's Virtual SPACE is a four -week enrichment program specifically designed to enable campers to explore, learn, and connect with their peers under the guidance of highly qualified educators. Our staff is excited and motivated to be working with small groups of campers and provide them with engaging and enriching activities.

Learn more about this year's [Virtual SPACE Camp here!](#)

### **TERM 4 REPORT CARDS: NG/P**

At the end of the term in June, we will post report cards, but no letter grades will be assigned. In alignment with the other middle schools, students will instead receive either a “P”, “Pass”, indicating that a student has submitted enough work to fairly assess progress given the current circumstances, or a “NG”, “No Grade”, indicating that **“there was not enough work submitted during this term to fairly assess progress.”**

If your child receives an “NG” for the term, it will in no way impact his or her ability to transition to the next grade. Each student and family has experienced the distance-learning model in a different way based upon their circumstances, and an NG grade may be the result of a proactive plan to modify a student’s work or to account for a family’s circumstance during this public health crisis.

If you have any questions regarding your child’s progress, as always, reach out to their guidance counselor or teachers.

On behalf of the Day Faculty, I would like to thank you for your partnership as we guide your students through learning in a challenging and unprecedented environment.

### **STUDENT SUMMER READING**

This year, a Day Summer Reading Committee put together an exciting list of books for our students to choose from for their grade level summer reading. I have linked the

summer reading letter and flyers put together by the Day Summer Reading Committee below:

### [Day Summer Reading 2020](#) (REQUIRED SUMMER READING)

Each student will be asked to select one of the required reading books in addition to 3-5 books of their own choosing. The shared theme for all of the required books is resilience, and given the current challenging times, we will look to use this theme as a way for students to talk about their experiences as a connection to their shared reading experiences. Along those lines, I encourage and invite parents to choose from among the student summer reading selections. While this is not required, shared reading is a way to strengthen community bonds, particularly in challenging times such as these. If we have enough parents participate, then we will look to do community-wide book discussions in the fall.

I would like to take a moment to thank Jess Steel and the members of the Summer Reading Committee for their work: Kathy Maher, Kathy Lobo, Hallie Armstrong, Brenda Abramovich, Jamie Lightfoot, Linda Kincaid, Michael Pfaff, Michelle LaRochelle.

### **NPS LIBRARY SUMMER READING**

As mentioned above, students are required to choose at least one of their grade level summer reading books, but also need to read 3-5 additional books. To help with student selection, Jamie Lightfoot and her colleagues at the middle school level have once again created a website with booklists of suggested summer reading for our middle school students choice books. Here is a link to her website:

### [Middle School Summer Reading Recommendations](#)

The Library Summer Reading suggested titles are available in Sora, our ebook/audio book platform. Ms. Lightfoot has linked the books to the Sora record, so students (or adults!) just need to click and will be prompted to check the book out in Sora. The required reading/assigned titles for each grade level are also on there. From the colorful menu just choose the option you want to browse. Feel free to begin promoting this site to students.

<http://mslibraries.newton.k12.ma.us/faday/summer2020>

### **COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR NEWTON FAMILIES**

During this pandemic, we know that many families have been negatively impacted in different ways. We wanted to be sure that all families are aware of some important resources in our community.

1. **Pandemic-EBT Card:** Eligible families can receive funds on an EBT card (like a pre-paid gift card) which can be used to purchase food while schools are closed. Pandemic – Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) is a crisis response nutrition program that has been activated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. How to apply online: The [online application](#) is easy to complete and is the quickest and most efficient way for you to confirm your eligibility and to enroll your student(s). How to call for assistance: Please leave a message at 617-559-9038 with return phone # and a representative will reach out to assist you in completing an application. Additional information on P-EBT can be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/pandemic-ebt-p-ebt>  
**THE DEADLINE TO APPLY FOR P-EBT BENEFITS IS WEDNESDAY, JUNE 5th**
2. **Grab and Go Meals-** Monday-Friday from 10am-noon, children and adults can pick up a “grab & go” bag containing breakfast and lunch from one of these locations: Newton North (theater entrance), Newton South (front entrance) and 150 Jackson Rd. (parking lot).
3. **SNAP Program-** Do you need help buying fresh nutritious foods? You may be eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as food stamps. [Apply online here.](#) or Call 877-382-2363. Emergency SNAP benefits are for recipients who need food within 7 days. [Click here for an informational video on how to apply for SNAP](#)

These are just a few of the resources available for Newton residents. To find out more, or to talk to your child’s school social worker, or call 617-559-6021.

### **BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP: *Middle School Matters***

There will be one more book discussion group prior to the end of the school year. The date is yet to be determined. I will update you by the next newsletter.

### **[Middle School Matters Parent Discussion Guide](#)**

My best to you and your families,

Jackie Mann  
F. A. Day Principal

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