



F. A. Day Middle School
Newsletter
March 27, 2020

Quote of the Week

[Day Stays Active](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yWrb6lYeg94&feature=youtu.be>

THIS WEEK'S QUOTE

In the spirit of our new virtual world, I share with you a video instead of a quote. Mr. Landau and Ms. Lightfoot, our beloved Wellness Teacher and Librarian, enlisted the support of the Day Faculty to model for our students how to stay healthy and active during these challenging times.

A WORD ABOUT NEXT STEPS.....

March 27, 2020

Dear Day Families,

Thank you for your patience and understanding as we all adjust to new circumstances.

My colleagues and I across the district are hearing a range of feedback that reflects the wide variety of circumstances our families are facing. This feedback is useful as it informs our plan for the extended school closure. We know our plan must include an acknowledgment and respect for the diversity of situations our NPS families are experiencing, including the time and resources they have available to them.

While we just learned on Wednesday of Governor Baker's plan to keep schools closed until May 4, we had already been planning for a longer closure. Our planning process was outlined in David Fleishman's [March 22nd email](#) to the community.

By the end of next week, you can expect a structured plan that includes opportunities to connect with teachers and classmates as well as content specific work. This schedule will include the opportunity to connect with adults and peers, and to practice, process, and reflect on learning.

In preparation for the rollout of this plan, this week we have been focused on the following:

- **Practice** - our teachers and staff are reaching out to students with technology tools to see what works best in a remote learning environment. Practicing with technology tools, both for connection and learning, allows us to understand what will work in our second phase of school closure. Teachers in our school and throughout the district are trying different approaches, but they are all still operating under the same guidance originally laid out by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.
- **Collaboration** - we have teams working within our school and across the district to develop a school and systemwide approach. At the district level, we continue to collaborate with our neighboring districts, including Brookline, Needham, and Wellesley, who have developed plans similar to our own. We will continue to do so in the coming days, as well as working to interpret guidance from the DESE.
- **Technology deployment** - as a public school district, it is essential that we ensure that all of our students have access to the learning that can occur. One aspect of this is access to a device. We are continuing to identify families who need a device and delivering it to them.

Here are some of the exciting things that happened in our school this week:

- Ms. McGettrick and Dr. Smith have scheduled several virtual office hours and opportunities for group connections each day with their music, chorus and drama sections. I joined a chat the other day and could hear the joy in students' voices about reconnecting with classmates and teachers.

- Ms. Lightfoot, our school librarian, continues her Lit Lunch Book Chats, while Ms. Marx, 7th grade Ruby has met with students to connect and play Kahoot.
- Our 8th grade math GLD is challenging students to create art through graphing using the DESMOS program and our 6th grade ELA teachers are challenging their students to use the world around them as inspiration for creative writing such as bio-poems, personal narratives and short stories.
- Our Reflections Teacher, Mr. O'Donnell, has scheduled daily connections and chats with guest speakers in the school community. I am looking forward to my cameo appearance next week.
- And let's not overlook our faculty's imaginative use of Schoology to create virtual communities such as the grade level groups created by Mr. Fiske for our guidance counselors, and the "Roundtable At Home" website created to offer advisory activities that support student and family connections such as dinnertime conversations and activity challenges.

Our Day Faculty are finding creative ways for students to transform their home environment into opportunities to connect and learn. They have collaborated as a faculty to not only create meaningful enrichment activities, but to sustain connections with students during this challenging time.

We will be back in touch with you next week with our updated plan to support learning during this extended school closure. In the meantime, please encourage your student to participate both in the opportunities for connection with their teachers and the enrichment activities. This will serve them well as we prepare for the next phase of our remote learning plan.

[Principal Message About Next Phase](#)

PRINCIPAL'S COFFEE TODAY

We had over 100 parents and guardians join our first virtual Principal's Coffee this morning. For those who could not attend, you can find the link to the video below:

[Principal Coffee Video 3-17-20](#)

https://drive.google.com/file/d/17hHCssr9YG9TpxmCb2hV_6_rzRRPOrsW/view?usp=sharing

PRINCIPAL OFFICE HOURS

As a follow up to today's Principal Coffee, I am scheduling "Principal Office Hours" for the next week based upon the schedule below. To join, please click on the Google Meet link at the designated time:

meet.google.com/aed-kkmt-qur

Grade 6: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 from 9:00 – 9:30 a.m.

Grade 7: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 from 9:30 – 10:00 a.m.

Grade 8: Wednesday, April 1, 2020 from 10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

PARENT ACCESS TO SCHOOLGY

At this morning's principal's coffee, I showed parents what Schoology pages look like. Many teachers at Day are using Schoology to post resources as they have used them in the past to post assignments.

The best way to view learning activities is by looking at your child's Schoology page through their log in. That said, there is a way to access Schoology by emailing the teacher for their course code. The parent access is not the exact same as student access so again, it is best to view Schoology through your child's log in.

ROUNDTABLE ADVISORY AT HOME

Our Roundtable Advisory Planning Group has created a website with resources for families to access activities from home including team building, fun challenges, conversation starters at the dinner table and wellness activities that all foster a sense of connection, community and social emotional and physical wellness. The web site is linked through the Day Middle School site, or can be found below:

<https://sites.google.com/newton.k12.ma.us/roundtablehome/home>

DAY LIBRARY RESOURCES

See the update below from our school librarian, Ms. Lightfoot:

Hello Day Students,

I hope you are all doing well during these difficult and uncertain times. I really miss seeing you and having conversations with you each day. Our Library website offers many great resources; one page that will be particularly helpful to you is our Ebooks & Audiobooks Page. This can be found on the library's website under the top navigation bar.

I have created and will update a Library Schoology group for each grade where you can find links to optional activities that you may enjoy exploring/contributing to. I will also communicate ways that we can continue to build community and connection through these groups. If you have never attended one of our Lit Lunch groups, now is the time! You can expect a video of me reading a few chapters every few days on the Schoology group. Feel free to listen during your lunch time, or whenever.

Grade 6 Schoology Code M2QC-RTPG-MXWPF

Grade 7 Schoology Code QMZG-QM4Q-HKF7Z

Grade 8 Schoology Code 6GPM-J4F6-96DXR

I update the Library's Instagram daily ([_daymiddleschoollibrary_](#)) and my professional Twitter account ([LightsInTheLibs](#)) with what I am reading, fun activities I come across and, of course, cute pictures of my cats! The stream for these accounts is also available on the library's website. If you need anything, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Reach out if you need anything,

Ms. Lightfoot

GUIDANCE SCHOOLOGY COMMUNITIES

Each of your students should have received access to a grade level community created by the guidance counselors. This community includes resources for students on self-

care topics from mindfulness to nutrition and stress reduction. Please reach out to your child's guidance counselor with any questions or if you are in need of any support.

VIRTUAL CLUBS

Over the next week your child may be hearing from club advisors about creating a virtual version of their afterschool club. The Diversity Club, the GSA Club and the Math Team will be the first to be piloted. Stay tuned for more information.

COMMUNITY SERVICE OPPORTUNITY

Today I met virtually with Team IV student, Alexander Elvin, who is sponsoring an amazing community service project that I hope you will support. Alexander's family works in the medical field, and he is asking that our Day students and faculty write cards and encouraging words to the health care workers and their patients who are hospitalized with COVID19 and unable to see family or friends. Here is the information from Alexander that I will also be sharing with Day parents:

Hello students, faculty and parents of our community, my name is Alexander. Our doctors in Cambridge Health Alliance are working hard to get rid of this virus one step at a time, during this hard journey our doctors and the patients in these annex wards would appreciate a card or a craft that could bring them joy, confidence, and hope. We only ask if you would like to send cards to the doctors and to the sick. We remind you that this is not something that you must do but if you could make someone happy or hopeful by sending a card. Would you?

If so, write a card and drop it off at 125 Beaumont Ave Newton, MA.

WASHINGTON D.C. TRIP

Please see the letter to 8th grade parents about the trip to Washington D.C. linked below and attached at the end of this email.

[8th Grade Parent Washington D.C. Letter](#)

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

In order to maintain connectedness among our parent and faculty communities, we will be launching a book discussion group on the book, ***Middle School Matters: The 10 Key Skills Kids Need to Thrive in Middle School and Beyond—and How Parents Can Help by Phyllis Fagell***. Phyllis, as I have mentioned before, is a Day graduate and a practicing school-based clinician in the Maryland area as well as a writer for the *Washington Post*.

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.

All the best to your families. Be well, and I will be in contact soon.

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