



**F. A. Day Middle School
Newsletter**

September 14, 2020

Quote of the Week

**“Anyone who has never made a mistake has never learned anything new.”
- Albert Einstein**

THIS WEEK’S QUOTE

I shared this quote with the Day Faculty this week. It is certainly an unusual one for the beginning of the school year, but this year, more than most, I think it captures an important sentiment for all of us.

This year is not the same. It is different and our students know it. From the responses that your children shared with me a few weeks ago about their hopes for the new school year, I know that many of their hopes would ring true for the beginning to any school year. They hope to make new friends, to be in classes with familiar faces, to do well in school, to be liked by their teachers and peers and to have joy and fun in their lives. As middle school educators, we share their hopes and will continue to work with them to fulfill them.

But also hidden in the student responses were some that were less typical for the beginning of a new school year. Our students are afraid they might not be engage by virtual learning or figure out how to do well in this environment and many are worried for their own safety and that of their family when they return to school in November. The world around them has unduly placed an added layer of anxiety and worry that we wish we could easily peel away.

Over the past few weeks, we have worked as a faculty to create some sense of normalcy and joy for your children by scheduling safe connections in person when possible and providing a sense of community, thanks to the PTO, who are helping us provide some pretty awesome Day Swag Bags. But as the year begins, we can give our students one, even more important gift, and that is to model for them how to navigate an imperfect world with resilience, empathy and humor. When technology does not work one day and they cannot log into a class, or perhaps when they do not understand how to use

their Google Calendar or how to ask a teacher for help using Zoom or Google Chat, we have to model for them a response that is calm and patience, perhaps even interjected with a little bit of humor to give them perspective. They are watching us and how we respond. It is new to all of us as well. We have to show them that we are all going to make mistakes every day, and model for them how to problem solve to overcome barriers and navigate challenges. We have to help them by showing them that failure and mistakes are part of the learning process, particularly when you find yourself confronted with a new environment and overloaded with new information.

With every challenge, there is an opportunity, and as the adults in our students' lives we need to grasp this opportunity to show our children that they will learn more some days from solving how to overcome their barriers than they will from the actual lessons they are being taught. This new educational setting is a virtual laboratory to instill a growth mindset, resilience, empathy and humor in our children if we handle it right.

I know that on the eve of a new school year in this very strange virtual world you might also be chock full of anxiety, so please know that the Day faculty and staff are your partners in this work. Our children are watching us all. Let's provide them that model of calm, resilience and flexibility in response to failure so that they know that mistakes and missteps are just part of the struggle of learning. As difficult as it is to see it now, our children will benefit from the lessons of this unusual and somewhat challenging year with the support of their parents and the talented faculty at Day who have worked tirelessly to prepare your child and orient them to this new educational environment while continuing to recreate the pillars of a middle school education that are so familiar to all of us.

SUGGESTED SUPPLY LISTS

Below is the F.A. Day Middle School Suggested School Supply List

[F.A. Day Middle School Recommended School Supply List](#)

Please know that students will receive some school supplies in their swag bags this week, so wait until you receive the bags before purchasing any times.

Students will not be required to have school supplies the first week of school.

These are only suggested supplies. If a family is unable to get the supplies, the school will help your child access them. Please reach out to your child's guidance counselor for additional support.

6th GRADE “Safely Distanced” WELCOME SOCIA:

When: Monday, September 14, 2020 at 12:00 - 3:30 (*each team will meet for 30 minutes)

Greetings 6th Graders,

We are excited to welcome you to Day!

We invite you to join us for a socially distant event. Although this year is unlike any other school year, we want to celebrate and connect with you before your first day of school. During our social (socially distant) event, you will have an opportunity to meet your homeroom teacher/advisor, connect with peers in your homeroom, have a Popsicle and get your 6th grade SWAG bag. We will welcome you by team and you will meet by homeroom for a half hour.

What: 6th Grade Socially Distant Social

When: Monday, September 14, 2020

Where: Albemarle Field (Behind the school- Walk towards one of the check-in tables, maintaining the 6 feet distance, and you’ll be directed where to go)

Time:

12:00-12:30- Sky Team

1:00-1:30- Cobalt Team

2:00-2:30- Indigo Team

3:00-3:30- Ocean Team

- ***We ask that parents/guardians park along Albemarle Rd. on the Horace Mann side when dropping off students and REMAIN on-site for the 30-minutes as we have to exit each team of students prior to welcoming the next due to safety reasons.***
- Student check-in tables will be between Gath Pool and the Murphy Field.
 - There will be four tables so students can check-in and be socially distant
- Parents will remain in their cars while students participate.

- All students are required to wear a mask.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible. If you have any questions, please reach out to Betty Bernier bernierbe@newton.k12.ma.us or Jenn Murphy murphyj@newton.k12.ma.us

7th and 8th Grade Swag Bag Materials Pick-Up: Tuesday, September 15th

Every student at Day will be receiving a “swag bag” with some curricular materials and important documents such as a student schedule template.

We have designated a time for students on every team to pick up their swag bag. See the schedule below:

7th Grade:

9:00 – 9:30 a.m.: Cardinal Team

9:30 – 10:00 a.m. Fire Team

10:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. Phoenix Team

10:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. Ruby Team

8th Grade:

12:00 – 12:30 p.m.: Emerald

12:30 – 1:00 p.m.: Evergreen

1:00 – 1:30 p.m.: IV

1:30 -2:00 p.m.: Mint

We ask that families drive down Minot Place, circle around the backside of the building, and stop on the far side of the building at the cafeteria door (same door that we used to pick up locker belongings in June). We will give each student a swag bag. Please let us know if you purchased a yearbook from last year, and we will distribute them as well.

We ask that you arrive during your designated 30-minute block of time. If you cannot, we ask that you try to stay within the hours for your grade level – 7th grade from 9-11 a.m. and 8th grade 12- 2:00 p.m.

** Note: 6th grade students will receive their swag bags at their social on Monday, September 14th.

*** If you cannot pick up your bag by Tuesday, September 15th, we have made arrangements for pick-up of bags for limited hours on Wednesday, September 17th through Friday, September 19th between 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. or 1:00 – 2:30 p.m.

Please reach out to Maria Vitone with any questions: vitonem@newton.k12.ma.us

LEADING UP TO THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

The first day of school for your middle school students is Wednesday, September 16, 2020. The school day is from 8:30 a.m. – 3:05 p.m. Your students will be accessing their classes virtually except for a small group of students who will access the building for service delivery.

The details of the distance-learning model was shared with you at the Parent/Guardian Orientation last week. The video and presentation are again linked below:

[Recording of Day Distance Learning Parent/Guardian Orientation](#)

[Day Distance Learning Parent/Guardian Orientation Slides](#)

Leading up to the first day of school on Wednesday, you can count on the following events:

Monday, September 14th: 6th Grade Social and Pick-up of Swag materials (see information below)

Monday, September 14th: Advisors will send the Zoom link to all students for the first day

Tuesday, September 15th: 7th and 8th grade pick-up of Swag Bags (See the schedule below)

Monday and Tuesday, September 14th and 15th: Welcome Back Phone Calls from Advisors

EMAIL WITH THE LINK TO THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

Your child will receive an email on Monday (tomorrow, September 14th) from the faculty advisor with an important Zoom link to the first class on the first day of school.

If your child does not receive that Zoom link, please email the homeroom teacher listed for your child in ASPEN. The team configuration chart is below if you only have a room number.

2020-2021 Team Configurations and Advisory Pairing 9-9-2020

Grade 6	Cobalt	Indigo	Sky	Ocean
English	Pfaff 309	Maher 115	Larochelle 301	Hartzel 114
Social St.	Ford 310	Kincaid 109	Comings 302	Alegbeleye 111
Math	Besse/Mastrangelo 312	Kronish 103	Conron 311	Becker 116
Science	Kobyashi 307	Gresser 101	Genier 304	Kerner 104
SPED	Abramovich Bridge	Flaherty, ELL	Nemer	Moran/EDCO
Counselors	Murphy/Bernier	Murphy/Bernier	Murphy/Bernier	Murphy/Bernier
AP	Harding	Romeo	Harding	Romeo
Additional Advisors	Ross, Edwards/Keblin, Bernier	Brown, Ashton/Lobo, Friedland	Lightfoot, McGettrick, Dolan	J. Murphy, Church, Dunn

Grade 7	Phoenix	Cardinal	Fire	Ruby
English	Healy 201	Scott 228	Monahan 227	Marx 229
Social St.	O'Connor, J 209	Bolger 207	Wiese 223	
Math	Barry 202	Johansson 220	Burnett 218	St. Clair 230
Science	Lynch 214	Gritter 215	Baack 216	
SPED	Millos	Bridge, Zappulla	ELL, Wulsin	Quackenbush/EDCO
Counselor	Thompson/Bryant	Thompson/Bryant	Thompson/Bryant	Thompson/Bryant
AP	Harding	Harding	Harding	Harding
Additional Advisors	Mao, Fournier, Panero	Hibbard, Tague, J. Thompson	Jimenez/Peterson, Smith, Spittel	Bryant, Quackenbush

Grade 8	Emerald	Evergreen	Ivy	Mint
English	Campbell 331	V. O'Connor 326	Dames 322	Armstrong 332

Social St.	Barr 314	Brennan 317	Moffitt 211	
Math	Heffernan 315	Green 325	Brierly 330	McGinnis 333
Science	Rossier 319	Adamson 320	Murphy 318	
SPED	Fahlbeck/ELL	Conrad, BRIDGE	Sheehy	Massey/EDCO
Counselors	Calabro/Burke/Deweese	Calabro/Burke/ Deweese	Calabro/Burke/ Deweese	Calabro/Burke/ Deweese
AP	Romeo	Romeo	Romeo	Romeo
Additional Advisors	Trapasso, Horner, Powell	Deweese, Linde, Wachtelhausen	Steel, Landau, Burke/McKenna	Lunin

WHAT WILL MY CHILD'S FIRST DAY LOOK LIKE

1. Your child will begin and end their first day in their advisory class, which will be led, by their homeroom teacher and their advisor for the year. They will engage in some team building and ice breakers so they can meet and get to know their advisory group which is where they will begin their day in distance-learning. The Zoom link to this first class will be sent to your child using their NPS Gmail on Monday, September 14th. The advisory teachers will help students access links to the remainder of their classes on the first day of school.
2. Your child will spend a great deal of time with on-team teachers who will review with them how to fill out their schedule template, read their Google Calendar with Zoom invitation links for each of their classes as well as other important logistical information.
3. Your child will attend a World Language Open House (if they are taking a world language- if they are not, they will meet with their academic support teacher). In World Language Open House they will learn about the curriculum and meet the teachers they will have this year. Each teacher will reach out in advance to let their students now which World Language teacher they have.
4. Your child will meet with their arts rotation teacher. Each child will have an arts rotation class which may be art, drama, tech ed, health, PE, music, depending on their grade and the quarter. These classes change every quarter or term. The arts rotation teachers will reach out to their students in advance so that your child knows which class they have.
5. Your child will meet the PE and Health and Wellness staff who will also reach out to your child in advance.
6. Your child will return to advisory at the end of the first day to ask any questions and prepare them for Day 2. They will begin their next day (Thursday) in advisory as well.
7. All advisory and other class Zoom links will remain the same throughout the year.

** A note about student schedules. We are in the process of finalizing student schedules in ASPEN. My hope is that they will be available to students by Monday, September 21st. In the interim, we will use Google Calendar to share Zoom invites to your child's classes. On the first day of school, teachers will show students how to fill in an individualized schedule template using their Google Calendar invites.

***Also, your child may already be receiving Google Calendar invites to their first classes, as teachers are busy setting up the calendars for the term. Teachers will explain how to use Google Calendar on the first day of school.

THIS WEEK IN ADVISORY

This week's advisory lessons will focus on welcoming students to the new school year and beginning to form connections with the new advisory group. We'll get to know each other, explain the schedule and structure of the year, and engage in some fun team building activities.

FIRST WEEK OF SCHOOL HELP DESK

Our guidance counselors will be sending you an email with information on what to do if you child is "lost" virtually on the first day of school or is having trouble accessing any classes. They will share their contact information as well as a Zoom session, which you can join throughout the first week of school to ask any questions.

SCHOOL WORK EXPECTATIONS

Our distance- learning model this year, like all others at the middle school level in NPS, is set up in a highly structured way so that students will engage in learning with their teachers from 8:30 – 3:05 p.m. in 65-minute class sessions. It is expected that a majority of your child's schoolwork and learning will take place during school hours with the exception of independent reading, which should take place EVERY evening. Your child will have three, 65- minute extension blocks during each week in which to finish any school work that they were not able to complete during class. Team Extension time is also a time for students to access teachers for extra help or work independently.

As a result of the fact that there will be little to no asynchronous work assigned, we will not be using Weekly Learning Plans this year. Class meeting links will be shared via Google Calendar with students and curricular materials via Schoology. Students will be trained in the use of both. There will be a technology orientation for parents as well in the coming week.

ATTENDANCE

For the first three weeks of school, teachers will take attendance only at the beginning of each day. Beginning the week of September 21st, teachers will be taking attendance every period. A child must attend at least three of the five classes in the school day to be counted as “present” for the day. You will likely hear from your child’s teacher, guidance counselor and then Assistant Principal if your child has a lot of absences. We take a supportive approach to working with you on engaging your child in learning as each child and each family experiences virtual learning in a different ways and each has unique potential barriers.

If your child is having difficulty in engaging in school in this virtual environment, please reach out to guidance counselors or teachers. We are here to support you and your child in this new learning environment.

PARENT TECHNOLOGY ORIENTATION- SAVE THE DATE

I have scheduled a technology orientation for parents and guardians tentatively for Wednesday, September 23rd at 6:30 p.m. to offer you an introduction to Google Suite and Schoology in order to help you support your child. More information will follow, but for now please save the date.

SOCIAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR DAY STUDENTS AND LUNCH

For the next two weeks we will focus on getting school started successfully. By October 1st, we will look to add extracurricular virtual and perhaps in person clubs for our students, so stay tuned for more information.

In the interim, every day (except Wednesdays when lunch varies) students will have lunch from **12:50 – 1:15 p.m.** You may want to help your child arrange for virtual lunches with friends as a way to connect. Lunches have always been an important way for our middle school students to connect during the day with friends they may not see in classes. Our guidance counselors will be happy to support your child in doing this after the first week of school.

PRINCIPAL VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS THIS WEEK

As promised, I am continuing with our weekly Principal Virtual Office Hours to answer any questions you might have about the first week of school. This week's Office Hours information is below:

Date and Time: Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.

Zoom Invitation Below:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://newton-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/91337915616>

Meeting ID: 913 3791 5616

Passcode: 441819

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://newton-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/91337915616>

Meeting ID: 913 3791 5616

Passcode: 441819

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 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 scheduled.

PARKING LOT

To make this time 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 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.

INDEPENDENT READING AT DAY

Independent reading is critical to your child’s academic growth. Our goal at Day is to create a community of readers. ELA teachers and our librarian Ms. Lightfoot will be working with your children on establishing the habits of becoming an avid and fluent reading and experimenting with a variety of different genres. We ask your support in reinforcing the importance of independent reading with your children.

EBOOKS FOR STUDENTS

Below is a message from Jamie Lightfoot, our fabulous Day Middle School Librarian:

The Newton Public School district is a subscribing member of the MLS Commonwealth eBook Collection. This robust collection gives our community access to over 20,000 eBooks and audiobooks shared with other schools and small libraries across the state. The collection includes texts with curriculum connections and many high interest titles for independent reading.

Sora is a powerful digital reading platform that is used to access the collection. It is a very intuitive and user-friendly platform, available online and as an app. Students are able to see and borrow titles in Sora based on their assigned school level and may connect to other digital collections using a public library card -- all with their familiar school login and password.

Getting started with Sora is easy, but we want you to be as successful as possible and take advantage of all that it has to offer. The NPS K-12 Library Department has provided a rich support site with both video and print based guides to using Sora, which you can access from the Day Library website. If you need additional guidance, including help troubleshooting or reader's advisory to help you find just the right title in Sora, contact me at the email listed below.

Happy Reading!

Jamie

lightfootj@newton.k12.ma.us

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](#)

VIDEO MESSAGE TO OUR STUDENTS

I will be sending out a video message to students via their NPS Gmail accounts on Tuesday, September 15, 2020 to welcome our students back to a new school year. Please have them practice using their school-issued NPS Gmail accounts, as this will be an important skill in the new school year. 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.

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.

If your child does not remember their LASID number or if they are new to Newton Public Schools, please add your contact information to the document linked below, and we will have Ms. Fisher, my assistant get in touch with you.

STUDENTS IN THE BUILDING ORIENTATION THIS TUESDAY

A small cohort of students has been identified due to their needs to attend school in person beginning on September 16th. Families of students who were identified for this instructional model have already been notified.

We have scheduled an orientation for the students who will be learning in the building and their families on Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

Mike Thurm, our Assistant Principal for Student Services has already emailed families involved directly, but if you have any questions, please email him at

thurmm@newton.k12.ma.us

YEARBOOKS

Students who purchased last year's yearbooks will be able to pick them up on their designated date of materials pick up (9/15). Rising 9th graders (last year's 8th graders) will pick up their yearbooks this coming week. A separate email will be going out to them through the NNHS listserv.

CONTACTING THE SCHOOL

Our school offices are now open from 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. The general school number is: 617-559-9100.

Contact Ms. Donna Fisher or Ms. Gandolfo for general school questions:

fisherd@newton.k12.ma.us
gandolfo@newton.k12.ma.us

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

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

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

thurmm@newton.k12.ma.us

Contact Deborah Romeo or Michael Harding for team, cohort or course placement questions:

romeod@newton.k12.ma.us
hardingm@newton.k12.ma.us

Contact your guidance counselors for questions about your child's transition to school:

6th Grade: Ms. Bernier and Ms. Murphy

bernierbe@newton.k12.ma.us
murphyj@newton.k12.ma.us

7th Grade: Ms. Bryant or Mr. Thompson

bryantm@newton.k12.ma.us
thompsonj@newton.k12.ma.us

8th Grade: Ms. Calabro, Ms. Burke, Mr. Dewees

calabros@newton.k12.ma.us
burkem@newton.k12.ma.us

deweesd@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. I look forward to seeing everyone at our parent orientations this Wednesday.

Jackie Mann

F. A. Day Principal

jacqueline_mann@newton.k12.ma.us

(617) 559-9100

On Twitter: @JMannNPS