

F.A. Day Middle School

Newsletter

October 19, 2020

Quote of the Week

ORANGE WEEK

THIS WEEK'S QUOTE

“Healing centered engagement uses culture as a way to ground young people in a solid sense of meaning, self-perception, and purpose. This process highlights the intersectional nature of identity and highlights the ways in which culture offers a shared experience, community and sense of belonging.” --- Shawn Ginwright

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

This week there are two unique opportunities for us to strengthen our home/school partnerships in a way that is both authentic and impactful on the success and well being of the children in our care. The first opportunity is the more obvious - the Back to School Nights. Every year Back to School Night offers us an opportunity to meet and discuss our plans, expectations and hopes and dreams for your children over the coming school year. This year like with everything else, we are challenged by the virtual world in which we are now functioning to forge the same depth of connection and trust. However, with every challenge there is an opportunity, and I see this week's Back to School Night as an opportunity for the Day Faculty to engage and connect with all of you in the same skillful way they have learned to do with your children in this first month of school.

The second, less obvious opportunity to strengthen the home/school partnership this week is through an advisory activity that is scheduled

to begin this Wednesday. We are asking your children to interview you about your values around education and your hopes and dreams for them as well as your own personal experience with school. This opportunity may in fact be even more impactful than Back to School Night in creating trust and authentic connections between home and school because when done well, it creates the space for students to share part of their family identity in the other community in which they spend a great deal of their time, connecting home and school in a meaningful way. Professor Shawn Ginwright quoted above was invited by our district to speak with the NPS Faculty at the end of the last school year about how we will, in these challenging times, create opportunities for what he calls “healing centered engagement”. Each of us, and our families have experienced this unprecedented time in different ways, and by sharing our stories and aspects of our identities, we begin that process of forging authentic connections based upon trust. So thank you in advance for your willingness to be interviewed by your child in the coming week ahead. The impact on their sense of belonging in our school community and as a result, their engagement in learning will be immeasurable. We are looking forward to beginning that partnership together this week.

Advisory This Week

This week in advisory we will be continuing to dive deeper into the importance of our identities. On Monday, we'll set the tone for the week, but also feel free to catch up on any conversations from last week. On Tuesday, we will do an activity where we will discuss how it might feel to hide or even lose an aspect of our identity.

Family Interviews:

On Wednesday, we will create structures for an exploration into family values and the importance of school in shaping our life story. These conversations will continue into the week that follows. Your students will be asked to interview a parent or guardian about their own school experiences and hopes and dreams. Thank you in advance for supporting your child in participating in this advisory lesson. As part of our goal to create a connected community, it is

important that we invite students to share their stories as part of their identity in the school setting. The sharing of family stories begins to create an authentic trust and connection that is hard to replicate, so we thank you in advance for your support.

UPCOMING DATES:

Tuesday, October 20, 2020: Back to School Night for 6th Grade 6:45 -

Wednesday, October 21, 2020: Back to School Night for 7th Grade

Thursday, October 22, 2020: Back to School Night for 8th Grade

Friday, October 23, 2020: Term 1 Progress Reports

Monday, October 26, 2020: Parent Information Session on Hybrid Model at 7:00 p.m. (change in date)

Wednesday, November 11, 2020: No School – Veterans Day

Friday, October 23, 2020: Mid-Term Progress Updates (change in date)

Friday, November 13, 2020: End of Term 1

Monday, November 16, 2020: Beginning of Term 2 and Projected Transition to Hybrid Model at the middle school level

BACK TO SCHOOL NIGHT THIS WEEK AT DAY

This week, Day Middle School will be hosting virtual Back to School Nights by grade based upon the schedule below:

All of the events are from 6:45 - 8:30 p.m.

*There is a Meet and Greet for Boston Families each of before each of these events at 6:00 p.m.

6th Grade Parents/Guardians: Tuesday, October 20, 2020

7th Grade Parents/Guardians: Wednesday, October 21, 2020

8th Grade Parents/Guardians: Thursday, October 22, 2020

Your child's team should have already sent you a Zoom link to the event. You will only need this one meeting link for the entire evening. The team-based presentations will include:

- Presentations from each of the on-team teachers: ELA, Math, Science, Social Studies and Special Education
- An overview of our multi-team classes presented by two multi-team teachers with an opportunity to view asynchronous videos prepared by your child's multi-team teachers. *(These Multi-Team Class videos will also be available on the Day website after the Back to School events)*
- A Question and Answer session.

If you have not received the Zoom link from your child's team, the links for all of the teams are included in the document below: (Please make sure you attend the correct night for your child's grade level - listed above).

[Day Back To School Night Zoom Links for Parents](#)

Before you attend.....

Please ask your child to list all of their multi-team teachers so that you know which videos to watch. Multi-team teachers will include: world language teachers, arts rotation teachers, PE teachers, Health teachers, Math Lab and Lit Lab Teachers, Special Education related services faculty such speech and language, reading, school psychologists.

While attending Back to School Night, we ask that you follow the norms listed below:

Norms:

- To join, please click on the team Zoom meeting link sent by your child's team. (It is also linked in the document above). Make sure that you attend the correct evening for your child's grade.
- Come prepared with the names of your child's multi-team teachers (All teachers who are not on-team listed above).
- When you enter, you will be muted. 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.
- It is disruptive to add members while the session is going on, so please do your best to join the meeting at the designated time.
- Please refrain from asking specific questions about your child or a faculty member out of respect for confidentiality. Individual questions should be emailed to teachers directly so that they can schedule a time to talk with you. Non-urgent questions can be reserved for parent/teacher conferences later this fall.
- The Admin. Team is holding office hours this evening should you have questions not directly related to the team presentation such as questions about the hybrid model. (See the link below) There will also be a presentation about the hybrid model on 10/26 for all Day parents.

Day Administration Office Hours: During all three Back to School evenings, members of the Day Administrative Team will be available to answer any big picture questions that are not appropriate for the team presentations. You can access us by the Zoom link below which will be live from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. each of the three grade level Back to School Night Evenings:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://newton-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/81318538029>

Meeting ID: 813 1853 8029

Passcode: 528615

PARENT INFORMATION SESSION ON THE TRANSITION TO THE HYBRID MODEL

The week of November 16, 2020, Newton Public Schools will be transitioning the middle schools from distance learning model to the hybrid learning model as planned.

In preparation for this transition, Day Middle School is planning the following:

- A recorded presentation about the Hybrid Model will be sent to parents/guardians by this Friday, October 23rd.
- There will be a Parent/Guardian Question and Answer live Zoom session on Monday, October 26, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. (** Please note that this is a date change from the previous newsletter) so that I can answer any specific questions you might have to the information that was shared out. Please see the link to the information session below:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://newton-k12-ma-us.zoom.us/j/82629126357>

Meeting ID: 826 2912 6357

Passcode: 843407

FAMILY SURVEY

If you have not done so already, please take a moment to complete our family survey below so that we know how best to support you and your child this year.

[Family Survey](#)

PROGRESS REPORTS

Term 1 ends on Friday, November 13th. Typically we ask teachers to share student progress with parents/guardians midway through the term, which is this Friday, October 16th. Because we had a later than typical start to our school year, and our focus has been on supporting and orienting students and developing their skills to be successful in the distance learning model, we are pushing back the date for progress reports to next Friday, October 23rd. By this date, teams will share information on how to access your child's progress through Schoology and sign off that you have seen it.

** Parents may request their own access to Schoology by emailing teachers, but this will only allow them to view the curriculum and not the ongoing assignments.

Please know that if a team has serious concerns about your child's transition to the new school year, they will reach out directly about those concerns and not wait for an update through progress reports.

DAY AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

We are pleased to be offering many virtual clubs at Day this fall, and several, in-person club offerings. Please see the slideshow of club offerings below. We will be showing this to your children during their advisory tomorrow, on Tuesday. Please have your child reach out to the club advisor with any questions:

[Day Middle School Clubs Fall 2020](#)

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.

PRINCIPAL VIRTUAL OFFICE HOURS

Principal Office Hours this week will be embedded into the Back to School Nights. See above.

PAR
KIN
G
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 Parking Lot Questions](#)

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.

PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED INFORMATION

I-READY

This week you will be hearing from your child's ELA teacher about the fall administration of the I-Ready progress monitoring assessment. This is a formative assessment of reading skills that we began last year district wide at the middle level to learn more about our students' literacy skills in order to inform our instruction.

The fall testing window will be the last two weeks of October: the weeks of October 19th and 26th. In this distance learning environment, students will take this online formative assessment at home. It will likely not take more than two class sessions.

You can expect information from your child's ELA teacher in the coming week about the specific days your child will participate.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions.

ABSENCE, TARDY AND DISMISSAL PROTOCOLS

Tardy/Absence Policy:

What is considered "tardy"?: If a student participates in less than half of a Zoom class either by arriving late or leaving early, then that student will be marked "absent" from that class.

What is considered "absent" for the day? If a student is absent more than half of the school day the student will be marked "absent for the day." Notifying the School of Absences:

Even though most of our students are learning in virtual classrooms, teachers are taking attendance every class. If your child is expected to be absence or late to a class or needs to be dismissed early from classes, we ask that you call the absence line at Day: 617-559-9102 or email Ms. Gandolfo at gandolfo@newton.k12.ma.us

WEDNESDAY DISMISSAL BEGINNING OCTOBER 7th

Dismissal for NPS middle schools is at 1:55 p.m. (instead of 3:05 p.m.) in order to accommodate professional development and

collaboration time for faculty. School dismissal on all other days will remain at 3:05 p.m.

CHANGE IN WEDNESDAY'S SCHEDULE FOR STUDENTS

This week your students will be given a new schedule for Wednesdays that reflect the earlier dismissal time. This new schedule will include:

- 20-minute advisory
- A full class in the morning
- 40-minute blocks with World Language and Rotation Classes
- Flex Time for ensembles and optional virtual drop-in PE offerings
- 60-minute time with on-team teachers

All of the Wednesday classes are mandatory EXCEPT for the drop in open gym options at 10:05.

Please reach out to your child's teachers with any questions.

OPTIONAL OPEN GYM TIME

On Wednesdays from 10:05 – 10:40 a.m. our PE Department is offering optional virtual “open gym” sessions during this flex block. I will be emailing students directly with links to these sessions. Students who are not in an ensemble groups and who do not wish to participate in one of the virtual open gym sessions can enjoy “off screen” free time from 10:05 – 10:40 a.m.

MORNING ROUTINES

As your child settles into a routine around virtual classes from 8:30 – 3:05 p.m., I would like to add the additional routine of each student logging in to check their NPS Gmail every morning before the start of the school day as teachers may have emailed important messages.

TEACHER ABSENCE AND CLASSES

If a Day teacher is unable to teach a class, the teacher will notify students no later than the morning of classes. The teachers unable to teach an online class will instead provide students with asynchronous assignments to continue their learning during the teacher's absence. It is important that students check their email every morning before beginning their day. The other team teachers will also notify and remind students if one of their teachers is absent that day. If a teacher is absent for more than three days, we will assign a building-base substitute teacher to resume online classes.

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>

HELP DESK

The Help Desk is not longer running, as we have been successful in getting most students fully engaged in online learning. We greatly appreciated your flexibility as we navigated some of the frustrations of technology glitches.

Should your child experience technology issues going forward you should email the familytechsupport@newton.k12.ma.us

I also encourage your child to email teachers directly to notify them of your difficulties.

FORJ (Families Organizing for Racial Justice)

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

ADDITIONAL OFFERING: Wednesday, October 14th 7pm-8pm –

HOW TO RUN CONSTRUCTIVE CONVERSATIONS ON RACE
Come learn more about District Highlight Initiative: Constructive Conversations on Race and what it entails to run a group.

[Thursday, October 22nd 7:30pm 9pm](#) - School Leaders Meeting

[Thursday, October 27th 7pm-8pm](#) - [Raising Antiracist Kids Panel](#)

[Tuesday November 19th 6:30pm-8pm](#) - Housing Inequities with special guest Richard Rothstien author of “The Color of Law, A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America.”

Here is the 2020-2021 [FORJ City-Wide Meetings Calendar](#)

PTO NEWS

Dear F.A. Day parents and caregivers,

Welcome to the 2020-21 school year at F. A. Day! We especially welcome all the 6th grade parents and caregivers that are joining us for the first time. The second half of the 2019-20 school year was nothing like we expected and all our PTO planned events that go towards fostering a sense of community and belonging at Day had to be put on hold.

As we start this school year, we are grateful that we are still able to educate our kids in this ever-changing environment. But this also leads us to think about the new role the PTO must play during this time and how to bring value to the community without in-person gatherings and activities.

While we have some volunteer positions on the PTO board (see article below), we welcome any feedback and suggestions you may have on socially-distant or online events, as well as ways to connect and communicate that are safe, yet foster a sense of community. Please [email us](#) with your suggestions and feedback.

Sincerely, Day PTO

Volunteer Opportunities - Join the PTO!

First, we would like to extend a HUGE thank you to ALL Day PTO volunteers, including our PTO Board members, volunteers at events, committee members, &

committee chairs for all the hard work you put in last year. There were several events that were held last year prior to the Covid-19 crisis that were so important to the Day community, for community building, raising funds, enriching our children's learning experiences, and helping our teachers. And, for those volunteers whose events were not able to come to fruition, we thank you for volunteering, and for the work that you already put into the planning phase. We could not have done it all without you.

We would like to continue the work that the PTO does for Day Middle School this year, and we are again calling on you to help. We are also asking our new 6th Grade families to get involved with Day through the PTO as well.

We are looking to fill the following 2-year Executive Board positions:

PTO President-Elect

PTO Treasurer

PTO Secretary

PTO METCO Representative

Please send an [email](#) to the Co-Presidents stating the position you are interested in holding with a paragraph or two telling us who you are, any experience you have with other Boards and/.or PTOs, and why you'd like to volunteer. These statements will be shared only with the other members of the Executive Committee and will not be shared publicly. The deadline to submit statements is October 6th and with the slate will be voted on at our next Executive Committee meeting.

Volunteer Opportunities- Team Liaisons Needed!

The Day PTO's main objective is fostering a sense of community and belonging at school. But as you can imagine, with our students starting remote, cancelled even postponed sporting events, and all of the Covid-19 social distancing rules about gatherings, our families are feeling disconnected from other families at Day.

To help remediate this, we would like to pilot a program to connect parents in more facilitated online gatherings throughout the school year, or at least until we can again gather together once more in person. Because of the size of the school (around 1,000 students), we have decided to break up these groups by both grade and co

We are looking for a group of at least 12 fun, social, Zoom-savvy Cohort Liaisons both organize and facilitate online cohort gatherings for the 2020-2021 school year. Because this is a new responsibility for the PTO, we will need to adjust and plan events to suit the needs of the groups. Depending on the interest and/or size of the groups, we may have co-liaisons for the following groups:

6th Grade:

Cobalt

Indigo

Sky

Ocean

7th Grade:

Phoenix

Cardinal

Fire

Ruby

8th Grade:

Emerald

Evergreen

Ivy

Mint

If you are interested, please send an [email](#) to with your student's cohort color, want to lead the cohort group, any issues you think the groups should address, and ideas you may have to connect the group in a fun and inviting way. These statements and ideas will be shared only with the other members of the Executive Committee and will not be shared publicly. The deadline to submit statements is October 6th. We will discuss cohort leader placements at our next Executive Committee meeting.

DAY PTO ONLINE MERCHANDISE STORE IS OPEN: DAY SWAG IS HERE!

The Day Middle School store is now open for business. The store will remain open until October 5, and will fulfill the orders shortly after. Each t-shirt, sweatshirt, and sweatpants come in both grey and navy. Let us know if you have any issues ordering products at copresidents@daypto.org.

<https://daymiddleschool.itemorder.com/sal>

Day Middle School PTO Dues Drive: Help us kick off the 2020 Day Middle School PTO Dues Drive!

PTO dues payments are an important part of the PTO's annual budget -- and on only two major PTO fundraising campaigns each year. Our dues drive fund pays for:

- Curriculum and classroom support, such as: Creative Arts and Science enrichment programs, student assignment books, classroom supplies,

PE equipment.

- Technology, such as: Chromebooks, Chromecarts, Cricuts, A/V equipment, Zoom subscriptions
- Community-building events, including: welcome back teacher lunches, student socials, 8th grade moving-on ceremony
- General operations of the PTO including: directory, communications, supplies, principal coffees

Although there is no set annual dues payment required, we greatly appreciate all and all, amounts our families are able to give.

Day PTO dues payments can be made by clicking [HERE](#) or you can mail a check (payable to Day Middle School PTO) to:

Day PTO, Attention Treasurer
F. A. Day Middle School
21 Minot Place
Newtonville, MA 02460

Your PTO dues are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Day Middle School PTO is a 501(c)(3) organization and the TIN is 81-0572465.

Thank you for your support!

Community Notes

- [2020-21 School Supply List](#)
- [Day Merchandise](#)
- [Newton Community Education classes \(lots of online options\)](#)
- Student Absence Phone Line (617) 559-9102

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

deweesh@newton.k12.ma.us

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

Jackie Mann

F. A. Day Principal

jacqueline_mann@newton.k12.ma.us

(617) 559-9100

On Twitter: @JMannNPS