



Somerville Public Schools

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Somerville High School to Seek Accreditation from New England Association of Schools and Colleges

Public schools are eligible for accreditation every ten years;

Accreditation offers confidence that schools have the resources to offer a high-quality education, framework for school improvement and growth.

Somerville, MA -- The Somerville High School (SHS) leadership team and the Somerville Public Schools district are pleased to announce that SHS plans to seek formal accreditation by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC). Public schools have the option of seeking accreditation once every ten years. According to the [NEASC website](#), accreditation is an ongoing, voluntary cycle of both internal and external assessments, planning, and reporting that allows schools to meet their unique goals while maintaining alignment with research-based standards that define characteristics of high quality, effective learning communities.

SHS announced its intent to enter the formal accreditation process this fall, however the full process will occur over three years, with a final decision by NEASC expected to be delivered in late 2025.

Co-principal Sebastian LaGambina stated that, “We are very excited to be starting the NEASC accreditation process. We are very proud of our recent work in developing the Highlander Habits as a profile for our graduates, our revamped community model, our extensive systems of support, our CTE program and workforce development initiatives, along with integrating equity work into our practices. We are confident and excited to highlight these strengths through the Self-Study reflection and we know that we will grow in all areas.”

To launch the process, Somerville High School's faculty members met on October 12, 2022 to listen to strategies on preparing for the school's Self-Reflection. The session was offered by Bill Wehrli, Associate Director for the Association's Commission on Public Schools.

To become a member of NEASC, a school must align with the Standards for Accreditation. The Self-Reflection provides an opportunity for the school's professional staff to review its educational programs, processes, systems, and practices to determine the degree to which SHS school aligns with those rigorous Standards. The Standards were established to ensure that the necessary components for effective education exist within the school. Mr. Wehrli noted that, "While Accreditation by the Association does not imply perfection, it does ensure that the school has the resources, leadership, and organization necessary to support the ongoing improvement required of all schools."

Following an extensive Self-Reflection, an assessment will be conducted by visiting teams of professional educators, sent by the Commission, who review all materials prepared by the faculty in



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the Self-Reflection, visit classes, and talk with students, teachers, administrators, parents, and community members during their four-day visit to the school. Somerville High School has been scheduled for visits at the conclusion of the Self-Reflection and again in April of 2025.

The New England Association of Schools and Colleges, founded in 1885, is the oldest accrediting agency in the country and is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as the sole agency to award Accreditation to PreK-12 schools, elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools in New England.

NEASC is a voluntary accrediting agency of more than 2,000 public and independent schools, colleges and universities, and vocational, technical, and career institutions. Of these, approximately 725 schools are accredited through the Association's Commission on Public Schools. The Commission works with individual schools to improve the quality of education through a continuous process of evaluation and Accreditation.

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