

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**Monday, October 1, 2018 – Regular Meeting**

7:00 p.m. - Board of Aldermen Chambers - City Hall

**Members present:** Ms. Pitone, Ms. Palmer, Ms. O'Sullivan, Dr. Ackman, Ms. Normand, Mr. Green, Alderman Ballantyne, Mayor Curtatone

**Members absent:** Mr. Futrell

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Green called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. with a moment of silence followed by a salute to the flag of the United States of America.

Chair Green asked the Dr. Abeyta for a roll call, in the absence of Superintendent Skipper, results of which were as follows: PRESENT – 8 – Ms. Palmer, Ms. Pitone, Mayor Curtatone, Dr. Ackman, Ms. O'Sullivan, Ms. Normand, Alderman Ballantyne and Mr. Green. ABSENT – 1 – Mr. Futrell.

**II. REPORT OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

Emily Nash was in attendance. She reported that seniors met with their counselors, during X-block on the previous Tuesday, to discuss how to get letters of recommendation from their teachers and how to fill out college forms. Also, there was a football game on Friday, a group of students has started to do themes for each football game, there has been a lot of attendance and school pride because of this.

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

No Members of the audience signed up to give public comment

**IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS- OUT OF ORDER  
B. INDIGENOUS PEOPLE'S DAY RESOLUTION**

Chair Green invited Dr. Hatch to introduce the teacher and students in attendance from the East Somerville Community School. She introduced Ray Woodcock, 6<sup>th</sup> grade teacher. Ms. Woodcock and her students read a speech about how this change came to be.

**Ms. Rae:** Hi, my name is Rae Woodcock and I'm a teacher at East Somerville Community School. I've had the honor of teaching 5th grade last year and now 6th grade this year. My students and I are very excited to be here to share some of our work and we want to thank the school committee for inviting us to speak tonight.

As a history teacher I emphasize to my students the importance of looking beyond the text-books to examine primary sources; to study what happened directly from the people who were there and develop their own understanding of history. Before teaching the colonization of the Americas, I shared a quote from a historian about the importance of teaching history honestly despite some adults thinking kids are too young to learn the sadder parts of our history.

I then asked them if they agreed with this or not and at first there was a big debate over whether or not the word *kids* was being defined as 2nd graders or kindergartners. When I clarified that the kids being referred to in this quote were kids like them they quickly reminded me that they were 10 now and not little kids anymore. Good or bad they just wanted to learn the truth.

After extensive research about Columbus and indigenous peoples of the Americas, my students wanted to share their truth and seek out justice for what they felt was right. The student leaders behind me are here to share with you all what they know to be true and why advocating for change was so important to them.

**Jessica:** Hi my name is Jessica. This is Josue, Seline and Damary and we are all 6<sup>th</sup> graders at East Somerville Community School.

**Josue:** This all started when we were in 5<sup>th</sup> grade and our class read an article about Columbus Day vs. Indigenous People's Day. It mentioned that he did a lot of bad deeds towards the indigenous people. Everyone in the class became really angry that Columbus was being celebrated in Somerville.

**Seline:** We were also really angry because this article was the first time most of us, except for me had ever heard about the truth of Columbus. I remember that in kindergarten we talked about how good and heroic he was. When I returned home however, my parents who are from Haiti told me that he was a cruel murder.

**Damary:** So, after we learned this many of us really didn't want to celebrate Columbus anymore. We suggested that we write letters to the mayor of Somerville to try to convince him about our opinions.

**Jessica:** So this is why we started the project in the first place and Ms. Rae helped us research more about what really happened back then when Columbus came to the Americas. To help you understand why we were so passionate about changing this holiday we wanted to read to you parts of the letters we wrote to the mayor.

**Seline:** Dear Mayor Curtatone, why would we want to commemorate someone who slaughtered innocent people? That's exactly what you're doing on Columbus Day. According to historian Howard Zinn, Christopher Columbus was a man who conquered the Native Americans and ended up wiping out a whole tribe, but people still celebrate him. We should eradicate Columbus Day in Somerville and honor Indigenous People's Day.

**Damary:** We shouldn't honor Columbus Day because he was a liar. Columbus lied that he found the Americas. Columbus was not the one who found America. It was the Indigenous People.

**Josue:** Columbus took land from the Indigenous people, which caused less land for them. He also enslaved and killed indigenous people. This cause a big decline in the population of the indigenous people. In two years since he landed on the island of Hispaniola, he and the Spanish people he led killed over 100,000 people.

**Jessica:** Columbus and his men would kill the Native Americans if they didn't give them gold. But there was no gold. Columbus was a greedy and careless person. He didn't care about what he did to Indigenous People or taking away their land. He didn't care about lying to the king and queen of Spain. The only thing he cared about was money.

**Seline:** We should celebrate Indigenous People's Day because they found this land and treated people well. They were hospitable towards Christopher Columbus. Before the massacre, the Native Americans traded everything they owned with the Spaniards willingly. But Christopher Columbus was so inhuman that he wrote in his ships' log that, "They would make fine servants...with fifty men we could subjugate them and make them do whatever we want."

**Damary:** As you can see, it's just fair that Indigenous People are honored for what they've been through and for their advanced technologies and ideas. Not Christopher Columbus. Almost all of the sixth graders at our school are feeling happy and excited about the new change from Columbus Day to Indigenous People's Day. We hope other people in Somerville and in other places understand why we wanted this change.

**Josue:** We feel like this change proves that nothing is impossible no matter how old you are. We would like to thank the mayor for reading our letters and changing the holiday and we would also like to thank all of you for listening to us here today.

MOTION: Chair Green moved to adopt the resolution relating to Indigenous People's Day, seconded by Mayor Curtatone. Chair Green read the resolution out loud.

### **Resolution No.**

A **RESOLUTION** relating to Indigenous Peoples' Day; declaring the second Monday in October as Indigenous People's Day in the Somerville Public Schools (SPS), encouraging other institutions to recognize the day, and reaffirming the school district's commitment to promote well-being and growth of Massachusetts's Indigenous community.

Whereas: Somerville Public Schools recognizes that the Indigenous Peoples of the lands that would become known as the Americas have occupied these lands since time immemorial.

Whereas: Somerville Public Schools recognizes the fact that Massachusetts is built upon the homelands and villages of the indigenous peoples of this region, without whom the building of the City of Somerville would not have been possible.

Whereas: Somerville Public Schools values the many contributions made to our community through indigenous people's knowledge, labor, technology, science, philosophy, arts, and the deep cultural contribution that has substantially shaped the character of the City of Somerville.

Whereas: Somerville Public Schools has a responsibility to oppose the systematic racism towards indigenous people in the United States, which perpetuates high rates of poverty and income inequality, exacerbating disproportionate health, education, and social crises.

Whereas: Somerville Public Schools promotes closing of the equity gap for indigenous peoples through policies and practices that reflect the experiences of indigenous peoples, ensure greater access and opportunity, and honor our nation's indigenous roots, history, and contributions.

Whereas: Indigenous Peoples' Day was first proposed in 1977 by a delegation of Native Nations to the United Nations sponsored International Conference on Discrimination Against Indigenous Populations in the Americas.

Whereas: In 2011 the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, representing 59 Tribes from Washing, Oregon, Idaho, Northern California, Western Montana, and some Alaskan Tribes passed resolution #11-57 to "Support to Change Columbus Day (2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of October) to Indigenous Peoples' Day."

Resolved: The Somerville School Committee acknowledges the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of October as Indigenous Peoples' Day and urges the Somerville Public Schools community to join in this observance. Further the School Committee refers this change to Rules to review our policies and procedures for compliance with this change.

Voted:

Date:

By the Somerville School Committee

Mayor Curtatone thanked these young people for writing to him and leading the way on this issue. He also thanked Dr. Hatch and Ms. Woodcock for facilitating these young people's ability to bring forth their concerns. He spoke about being Italian American and how powerful this issue is. He wanted to say to the students that this is not his work, it is their work. He spoke about the tremendous amount of support he's gotten from the community and the work that now has to follow. He expressed how proud he is to be a part of this community.

Ms. Normand also spoke and said bravo to the outstanding students and incredible educators for the huge amount of work, compassion, thought and advocacy that went into making this change. It's what School Committee loves to see, specially from younger students. She also thanked to Ms. Woodcock for teaching that primary resources are so important when doing research.

Ms. Pitone acknowledged how difficult it is to stand up at the podium knowing that you are being filmed and will be on local TV, she told the students they should feel proud of their hard work. She ended by thanking the

students and expressing her joy for being able to be a part of this moment.

Ms. Palmer shared an anecdote from a time where she was part of a democratic committee where adults wanted to make this same change but didn't think it could happen. She told the students that their words and their work are extremely powerful and they made it happen.

Chair Green said he had an experience like Ms. Palmer, where he was asked about making this change and didn't think it could happen. He thanked the students for being bold and brave. Chair Green also made a request for all members of School Committee to sign a copy of the resolution and for the Mayor's office to make copies for the students to have.

The motion was approved via voice vote.

Chair Green made a request for a 5-minute recess at 7:30 p.m. and encouraged the students and their teacher to take some pictures.

Meeting back in session at 7:35 p.m.

## **V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT**

### **A. DISTRICT REPORT**

Superintendent Skipper sent her apologies. Assistant Superintendent Abeyta gave the following district report in Superintendent Skipper's absence:

The **recycling and composting pilot program** at the Argenziano, Brown, Healey, and Kennedy schools officially launched today. We are excited about expanding our recycling efforts and building on our commitment to environmentally friendly practices, and to educating students about the role they can play in creating healthy, sustainable communities. This was and will continue to be very much a team effort by several departments in the City and in the schools. Our sincere thanks to everyone involved in moving this work forward, and to the Mayor, the School Committee, and the Board of Aldermen for their support.

As you know, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released results of its spring 2018 state-wide assessment last Thursday. The Department implemented several changes in how accountability results are calculated in the new **Next-Generation MCAS**, so the 2018 results set a new baseline for future years. There were many highlights in our district's performance on this latest version of the assessment, including:

- our continued strong growth scores across the district,
- the Brown School being named a School of Recognition (one of 52 in MA) and landing in the 99<sup>th</sup> percentile in accountability,
- the Kennedy School being in the 88<sup>th</sup> accountability percentage,
- Somerville High's SGP of 61.9 (the highest grade-level SGP in the district and the highest growth in ELA of any other urban district), and
- Our continuing Proficiency in Science with 67% of SHS grade 10 students scoring Proficient or Advanced on the Science and Technology/Engineering test, and 43% of grade 5 students scoring Proficient or Advanced in Science.

More importantly, however, is the commitment of educators and other staff members in **every** school in our district to support and challenge students, and to help every student continue to grow and develop into their best selves. I am proud to be part of this district and to work with an outstanding team.

I want to give a special shout-out to the Somerville High School Student Council for their initiative and commitment to making sure their fellow students recognize the power of their voice and their vote. The Student Council recently held a **Student Voter Registration Drive**. Student council representatives tabled during lunchtime throughout the drive, and walked around the school encouraging and helping students complete their voter registration forms. They also conducted pre-registration for 16- and 17-year-olds, ensuring that these students are ready for when they are officially able to vote. Great work to the SHS Student Council

and their advisor Sarah Eustis!

Earlier this afternoon, the Somerville High School Science Department hosted its first **SHS Women in STEM Summit**. The Summit was open to all SHS students, and included a panel of STEM professionals that were on hand to share their experiences as women in STEM professions. Congratulations on an excellent inaugural event!

Congratulations are also in order to El Sistema Somerville for having recently been awarded a **\$16,000 grant from the Ser Hacer Initiative of the Mass Cultural Council**. The award supports El Sistema Somerville's continuing commitment to providing "equitable access to the pursuit of musical excellence, self-esteem and self-confidence for children" in our district. Thank you to the El Sistema staff, students, and parents/guardians for your commitment to this program. We look forward to continuing to support your great work.

We also recently received notification that we were selected to have a team participate in a **Learning Excursion to Denver, Colorado** in early November for an "immersive exploration" of schools that have redesigned their learning model. The learning excursion will support the redesign planning work that Somerville High School has been engaged in for the last year and a half, working in partnership with the Center for Collaborative Education and the Barr Foundation. A team of 5 representatives from the District and SHS will be attending. Thank you to Next Generation Learning Challenges and the Barr Foundation for supporting this opportunity.

## **VI. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES**

**A. Long Range Planning Subcommittee:** August 29, 2018 (Chair Green)  
Chair Green moved to table the Long Range report to a future meeting.

**B. Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee:** September 24, 2018 (Ms. O'Sullivan)  
Education Programs & Instruction - Meeting Minutes – September 24, 2018

The Education Programs & Instruction sub-committee held a meeting September 24, 2018. Sub-committee members in attendance were Paula G. O'Sullivan and Emily Ackman. Participating district staff included Superintendent Mary Skipper and Assistant Superintendent Almi Abeyta. School Committee Chairperson Andre Green also attended. There was one member in the audience.

Ms. O'Sullivan called the meeting to order at 6:03pm. There was one item on the agenda, a continuation of the review and discussion of the district's homework policy. Following the Education Programs & Instruction sub-committee meeting on May 30, 2108, at which information gathered through parent, student, and staff surveys were shared, two new drafts of the policy were written, incorporating the feedback and research findings. At the September 24th meeting, participants reviewed these drafts and had a general conversation about the goals of the policy.

The recommendations discussed in this meeting reflect a reduction from the current policy in homework time for students in grades K-8. Meeting participants believe this reduction will allow students to recharge better during out-of-school time and be better able to engage in learning during the school day. In addition, these recommendations are supported by the academic research on this topic. Meeting participants also recognized the complexities of making homework a meaningful and productive experience for all students, given that students can be in different places academically, have different emotional reactions to homework, have varying amounts of support outside of school, do not always have access to a conducive environment, and have varying amounts of extracurricular activities and obligations.

There was general agreement that at primary grades (K-2) homework should foster home-school connections, along with a love of learning, and should not be mandatory, nor graded. In the upper elementary grades and middle school grades, participants discussed a gradual increase in the amount per grade and a limited number of nights per week that homework is assigned. In addition, people felt that homework should only be assigned when it is a necessary extension of classroom learning, and not be assigned just for the sake of assigning homework.

Given that research supports a positive impact at older grades, there was a desire to gradually increase the amount over grades 3-8, in order to foster independence and organization, while serving as a bridge to the

requirements in high school. The following limits were discussed and agreed upon (note these are MAXIMUM amounts of homework and should not be construed as a requirement imposed by district policy):

- Grade 3 - 30 minutes (2-3 nights per week)
- Grade 4 - 40 minutes (2-3 nights per week)
- Grade 5 - 50 minutes (2-3 nights per week)
- Grade 6-8 - 60 minutes (3-4 nights per week)
- No student in grades 3-8 should have homework over weekends, holidays, or school vacation weeks.

In addition, participants discussed that:

- When students receive assignments from multiple teachers, the teachers should be aware of and mindful of the overall cumulative amount of homework assigned on a given night.
- Teachers could assign homework over multiple days, such as a packet that is due at the end of the week, or a long-term project.
- Whenever possible, homework should be differentiated and potentially offer options for students.
- Homework should not be part of a student's academic grades, beyond a completion check.
- While too much homework can be detrimental, some amount of homework may provide a productive activity for after-school time, particularly for students who have limited options after school.
- School staff should solicit input from staff, parents and students on a regular basis regarding the amount of homework and the usefulness of the assignments.
- Online homework can have many benefits, such as allowing for virtual collaboration and offering many more resources, but there can be drawbacks as well. Given that too much screen time has been shown to have a negative impact on children, and ideally that parents and guardians are enforcing online/device time limits, when homework requires the use of technology, parents and guardians would consider it as part of their child's overall time limit.
- Teachers should not make assumptions about resources available at home, including technology.

District staff will revise the draft policies to incorporate these recommendations, and this committee will review again on a future date.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50pm.

MOTION: Motion by Ms. O'Sullivan to approve subcommittee report, seconded by Dr. Ackman.

Ms. Normand asked two questions following the report: was reading ever considered homework for the younger grades? And was there a discussion around when assignments are handed out to students and when they are due?

Ms. O'Sullivan responded, and said both topics were discussed. For grades K-2 the idea is that reading is recommended but it is not mandatory. There is some concern that when something becomes mandatory it could turn kids off from it, and so they tried to find a balance. In terms of assignments, there was talk about the idea that teachers could assign homework long term or over the week and not penalize students if they needed to take the weekend to complete it.

Ms. Pitone asked Ms. O'Sullivan to share some information on the task force and how staff was involved in creating the homework policy.

Ms. O'Sullivan said that there is a task force that was formed about a year ago. One of the first things they did was put together a survey that went out to parents, students and staff last spring. The task force has met a few times since and they have been involved in drafting the homework policy. Dr. Abeyta added that the task force includes central office and STA President Jackie Lawrence and that the survey was composed of 10 specific questions. Once the data was received from the survey, they were able to combine it with the findings of a literature review that was also done. At the end of the year there was a presentation during Ed Programs

sharing all the data with the task force. From there they were able to create a policy using what the community was saying and what the research showed.  
The motion was approved via voice vote.

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. Somerville Public Schools Policy Manual:**

The following policies are being presented this evening for second reading:

- File JRA: Post-Secondary Discipline Policy

MOTION: Motion by Ms. Pitone to approve JRA, seconded by Ms. Normand

Ms. Pitone made a correction stating that the policy in the packet is wrong and she brought in copies of the updated policy.

Ms. O’Sullivan missed it last meeting and asked where the change in the policy came from.

Ms. Pitone explained that this is the actual practice that is in the high school, in respect of privacy of students records this is how the high school is acting. The administration is in support of that and so they brought it forward to the rules committee and asked that they consider inclusion. Originally it was going to be a separate policy, but they realized it is part of student records and so they made the recommendation and approved it.

Motion approved via voice vote.

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. MASC Conference Delegates and Resolutions**

Chair Green stated that it is the School Committee’s obligation to appoint one member to be delegate and one member to be alternate at the MASC Conference, to have the power to vote on resolutions. He asked who would like to be delegate.

Ms. Normand asked for a list of members attending the MASC conference. Chair Green did not have the list available but asked members for a show of hands of who is attending, result: Pitone, Palmer, O’Sullivan, Normand. Chair Green asked who would be a delegate, Ms. Pitone volunteered, Ms. Normand will be the alternate.

Chair Green moved to table the MASC Resolutions.

Ms. Pitone mentioned that being delegate requires feedback from everyone, if there is anything in particular anyone wants to discuss. There is one resolution which stood out to her. It is resolution 8 and it is regarding sports wagering. It basically says that if Massachusetts decides to accept sports gambling and tax it, the schools would get some of that money, this made her uncomfortable and raised a flag. She would like to discuss this at the following meeting.

Ms. Normand commented that as MASC members they received the whole delegate manual. The resolutions are only 3 pages of it and include really good summaries of them. It would be helpful if everyone could look at that before the next meeting.

Chair green wanted to highlight resolutions 2, 5 and 8, which are ones that as a body they have never touched on or discussed. He asked that people specifically look at those.

**B. Somerville Public Schools Policy Manual:**

The following policies are being presented this evening for the first reading:

- File: GBAA: Workforce Diversity Policy

Chair Green moved to table File GBAA.

**C. Acceptance of Donations (recommended action: approval)**

The Superintendent recommends the acceptance, with gratitude, of the following donations:

<b>Donation</b>	<b>Donor</b>	<b>City, State</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Program donated to</b>
Monetary	East Somerville Main Streets	Somerville, MA	\$300	El Sistema Somerville
Grant	Dollar General Literacy Foundation	Goodlettsville, TN	\$1,000	Youth Literacy at WHCIS

MOTION: Dr. Ackman made a motion to accept the donations, with gratitude, seconded by Ms. Normand.

Motion was approved via voice vote.

Ms. Pitone asked if the homework policy will be referred to the Rules committee.

Chair Green responded that draft policies go to the chair and he will refer them to committees as need be. It is his hope that he could send the homework policy straight to Rules.

Ms. Pitone had an additional question and concern regarding technology access for high school students and how much of their homework revolves around access to technology.

Ms. O'Sullivan responded and said they did speak about this, it just wasn't included on the report. She agreed that not only in high school but also in the younger grades there is some expectation that there is technology at home. They talked about two things:

- there are some benefits specific to online homework, such as allowing for virtual collaboration and a lot of different resources
- there are some drawbacks, thinking about the amount of time students are spending on the screen and the amount of distractions online

In the draft policy there is a statement that teachers should not make assumptions about resources available at home, including technology. There is some continued thinking on this so thank you to Ms. Pitone for raising that.

Ms. Normand asked if there will be more information about the high school, or is the homework policy focused to K- 8.

Ms. O'Sullivan said they could set time limits at the high school but it would be worth talking about the cumulative load for high school students.

Dr. Abeyta added that they are suggesting that if students have multiple teachers that those teachers would find a way to have conversations, so they are not loading the kids so much. As they talked about high school, what the research showed is that there is a benefit to homework and the policy states that.

Ms. Normand asked that at a future date, they have a discussion about at high school level, course selection and homework amount.

## **VII. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

### **Chair Green**

Chair Green and Mayor Curtatone had the opportunity to attend the Somerville LGBTQ liaison's event where transgender residents got to tell their stories and experiences with social issues and gender identity issues. It was powerful, and there were a number of Somerville High School students in attendance. They were able to share the work that School Committee as a body has done to protect and support the LGBTQ community. There was also some feedback on the status of sex and health education and some places where they would like to see some improvement. Chair Green will be bringing that as new business to a future meeting.

## **VIII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:02 p.m. via voice vote.

### **Related Documents:**

Agenda

File JRA: Post-Secondary Discipline Disclosure Policy

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
BOARD OF ALDERMEN CHAMBERS**

**REGULAR MEETING – October 1, 2018 – 7:00 P.M.**

**Somerville Public Schools - School Committee Vision Statement/Goals**

*We believe in developing the whole child - the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical potential of all students - by providing students with the skills, opportunities, and resources that will nurture innovative ideas, foster pride in diversity, inspire students to become lifelong learners and empower them to enrich their communities.*

- Goal #1: Increase achievement and access for all students. Reduce all performance gaps by half.  
Goal #2: Develop and implement a comprehensive PreK-12 social-emotional learning framework that provides students with the skills they need for social and academic success.  
Goal #3: Increase engagement with the community to reflect the community in which we live.  
Goal #4: Continue to develop and implement innovative ways of measuring student academic performance and school quality such as formative assessment, performance-based tasks, and whole quality indicators.  
Goal #5: Develop a comprehensive plan for Universal Kindergarten Readiness that supports intellectual, physical, and social/emotional growth from birth to Pre-K.  
Goal #6: Develop and implement a strategy to recruit, develop, and retain a diverse and talented staff.

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Call to order with a moment of silence and a salute to the flag of the United States of America.

**II. REPORT OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES**

**III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- September 17, 2018

**IV. PUBLIC COMMENT**

**V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT**

**A. District Report**

**VI. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES**

**A. School Committee Meeting for Long Range:** August 29, 2018 (Chair Green)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Long Range of August 29, 2018.

**B. School Committee Meeting for Educational Programs and Instruction:** September 24, 2018 (Ms. O'Sullivan)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Educational Programs and Instruction of September 24, 2018.

**VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**A. Somerville Public Schools Policy Manual**

The following policy is being presented this evening for second reading:

- File JRA: Post-Secondary Discipline Disclosure Policy

**B. Indigenous People's Day Resolution**

**VIII. NEW BUSINESS**

**A. MASC Conference Delegates and Resolutions**

**B. Somerville Public Schools Policy Manual**

The following policy is being presented this evening for first reading, as amended:

- File GBAA: Workforce Diversity Policy

**C. Acceptance of Donations** (recommended action: approval)

The Superintendent recommends the acceptance, with gratitude, of the following donations:

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Program donated to
Monetary	East Somerville Main Streets	Somerville, MA	\$300	El Sistema Somerville
Grant	Dollar General Literacy Foundation	Goodlettsville, TN	\$1,000	Youth Literacy at WHCIS

**IX. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

## STUDENT RECORDS

In order to provide students with appropriate instruction and educational services, it is necessary for the school system to maintain extensive and sometimes personal information about them and their families. It is essential that pertinent information in these records be readily available to appropriate school personnel, be accessible to the student's parents or legal guardian and/or the student in accordance with law, and yet be guarded as confidential information.

The Superintendent will provide for the proper administration of student records in keeping with state and federal requirements, and shall obtain a copy of the state student records regulations (603 CMR 23.00). The temporary record of each student enrolled on or after June 2002 will be destroyed no later than seven years after the student transfers, graduates or withdraws from the School District. Written notice to the eligible student and his/her parent of the approximate date of destruction of the temporary record and their right to receive the information in whole or in part, shall be made at the time of such transfer, graduation, or withdrawal. The student's transcript may only be destroyed 60 years following his/her graduation, transfer, or withdrawal from the school system.

The Committee wishes to make clear that all individual student records of the school system are confidential. This extends to giving out individual addresses and telephone numbers.

In the college admissions process, many colleges and universities will ask schools to disclose a student's discipline record. Somerville High School will not provide colleges or universities with student discipline or criminal records. School Counselors will mark the option "school policy prevents me from responding" when asked the following questions on the Common App form (or similar questions on other college recommendation forms):

- *Has the applicant ever been found responsible for a disciplinary violation at your school, whether related to academic misconduct or behavioral misconduct, that resulted in the applicant's probation, suspension, removal, dismissal, or expulsion from your institution.*
- *To your knowledge, has the applicant ever been adjudicated guilty or convicted of a misdemeanor or felony?*

Colleges will ask students questions about their discipline and/or criminal background and students are expected to answer truthfully. SHS staff will instruct students that it is their responsibility to provide the information that colleges ask of them. SHS School Counselors will provide support to students in submitting a written explanation of discipline or criminal history. It is also the responsibility of the student to disclose any changes in a discipline or criminal record that occurs after the initial submission of a college application.

SOURCE: MASC

Adopted: April 1996

Amended: September 2018

**LEGAL REFS:** Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974,  
P.L. 93-380, Amended  
P.L. 103-382, 1994  
M.G.L. 66:10 71:34A, B, D, E, H  
Board of Education Student Record Regulations adopted 2/10/77, June 1995 as amended  
June 2002.  
603 CMR: Dept. Of Education 23.00 through 23:12 also  
Mass Dept. Of Education publication Student Records; Questions, Answers and Guidelines,  
Sept. 1995

CROSS REF: KDB, Public's Right to Know