

## CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS SCHOOL COMMITTEE

### Monday, October 2, 2023 - Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m. – City Hall Chambers

**Members present:** Ms. Krepchin, Dr. Ackman, Ms. Barish, Ms. Dion, Mr. Green, Ms. Pitone and Dr. Phillips

**Members Absent:** Mayor Ballantyne and President Ewen-Campen

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00PM with a moment of silence, followed by a salute to the flag of the United States of America. Chair Krepchin asked Superintendent Carmona to call the roll, results of which were as follows: PRESENT – 7 – Dr. Phillips, Dr. Ackman, Ms. Dion, Chair Krepchin, Mr. Green, Ms. Barish and Ms. Pitone. ABSENT – 2 – Mayor Ballantyne and President Ewen-Campen.

Chair Krepchin asked interpreters to introduce themselves:

Tracey Pichardo -Spanish

Ben Cruz-Portuguese

Angie Surprise-Haitian Creole

#### II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- May 22, 2023,
- June 12, 2023
- June 26, 2023

**MOTION:** There was a motion by Ms. Barish, seconded by Ms. Dion to approve the minutes of May 22, June 12 and June 26, 2023. The motion was approved unanimously.

#### III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Krepchin read the public comment regulations and asked those who signed up to comment at this time.

Chair Krepchin announced a five-minute recess in order to troubleshoot audio problems.

**Emily Hickey** - Parent of a fourth grader at Argenziano. As parents/caregivers now turn to Facebook leading to misinformation rather than SPS sources to gain accurate information, she suggests that SPS create a syllabus for each K-8 grade to address a) when does school start, b) how long is lunch break, c) what kind of literacy is being used, d) when can a student self-dismiss, e) when will MCAS scores be mailed, etc.. All this information should be available on the website and made legible and clear as to where on the page information can be gained. A family syllabus would also have an introduction to target language of what is unique and special about the grade, a table of summarized curriculum objectives with link to the full curriculum guide, homework policy, key assessments and timing, a list of key screenings for grade, dates of report card issuance and parent/teacher conferences, weekly newsletters, school committee meetings, points of contact. She encourages the district to recapture its narrative through transparency and cooperation. Not being able to find answers to simple questions sometimes feels like the district has something to hide. A lot of this can be solved by "pointing to a single source of truth."

**Erin Feeney** - Parent of a first grader at Winter Hill/Edgerly and a four-year old pre-K child at Winter Hill/Capuano. She complained about the food discrepancy from the rest of the district and busing. She stated that the majority of days she does not see her four-year old child until 4:15PM on a bus that is scheduled for drop off at 3:15PM, and she does not receive messages on late buses. She suggests consolidating all the Edgerly students into one bus and all the Capuano students on a second bus, allowing children to be dropped off between 3:15 and 3:40PM. Having the smallest children in the district extend their day on the bus is not acceptable. She also asked that she be included in all communications.

#### IV. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

## **A. District Report**

### Hispanic Heritage Month Acknowledgement

Director of Equity and Excellence Caeli Gallitano reviewed her PowerPoint presentation including the following highlights:

- Happy Hispanic/Latine Heritage Month - September 15-October 15, 2023
- What does celebrating Hispanic/Latine Heritage look like in the district?
  - Newsletters and emails
- What is going on in the schools?
- A look at equity work throughout the district
  - Argenziano
  - Healey
  - East Somerville Community School
  - Somerville High School

### **QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**

Mr. Green noted stated that, insofar as the district is comprised of 40% Latine students, what can be done structurally as a district to recognize that the default is Latine and the Anglo experience as different. Ms. Gallitano stated that it is part of the larger conversation and bigger picture to consider how we are teaching children throughout the year about the history of our country and not just the default Caucasian-Anglo experience.

In answer to Mr. Green's question on why Latine Heritage month begins on the fifteenth of September to the 15<sup>th</sup> of October, Ms. Gallitano responded that it revolves around when independence was gained from Spain. Ms. Pitone added that Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala and Chile gained independence from September 16-18. This was recognized by the Eisenhower administration.

Dr. Ackman asked what role Brazil and the Brazilian diaspora played in this recognition. As not a Spanish-speaking country, like Haiti, they are recognized. Ms. Gallitano noted that both the Healey and East Somerville schools acknowledge book highlights for both countries in morning announcements. The district continues to learn and build its knowledge and she encourages specialists and educators to share pockets of information in a particular area to further educate the community.

Ms. Pitone found learning about Hispanic Heritage month compelling and suggested enhancing ways to share content with families through newsletter connection each month and on the website.

Ms. Krepchin suggested offering an adult book club during Latine month. Ms. Gallitano noted that she is in discussion with the Deputy Director of Racial and Social Justice for the City on offering film talkback series at the armory to build bridges that are meaningful and engaging between families and those in the community without children in the district.

Mr. Green suggested investigating other areas for recognizing other heritages in the community.

Ms. Pitone suggested partnership with PTO leadership to offer in-person and remote speaker series on different cultures.

Dr. Ackman suggested using the mobile farmer's market as a model for introducing diverse cultural local fresh foods and recipes.

### **District Report (continued)**

#### MCAS/Assessment

Samantha Eligene, Director of Data, Assessment and Accountability, reviewed her PowerPoint presentation including the following highlights:

- Spring 2023 MCAS results
- Key highlights
  - Achievement levels have remained steady from Spring 2022 to 2023

- Achievement levels remained steady among subgroups as well by grade and subject matter
- Students maintained moderate growth in Math and ELA MCAS similar to pre-pandemic percentiles
- DESE accountability metrics
  - Where are we in terms of accountability?
  - School accountability percentile
  - SPS made moderate progress toward targets
- What are we doing to advance students on their path to academic recovery

## **QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**

Mr. Green noted that he serves on the Advisory Committee to DESE and plans to meet on Wednesday to discuss the assessment. He stated that, insofar as nationally socioeconomic class is a better predictor of outcome, he asked how the district could serve poorer students by delving deeper into the numbers as to the impact of class on learning. Ms. Eligene stated that the numbers of low income students is no longer based on free/reduced lunch from the state, but on Mass Health, homelessness and foster care and would not include undocumented students.

Dr. Phillips noted that, while it is not surprising that the Kennedy and Brown Schools are at the top of the DESE framework, she is most excited to see that the Healey School is making substantial progress on criterion reference. In response to her question on what was done right at these schools and is it able to be replicated in other schools, Ms. Eligene stated that this is a clear example of the importance of reviewing data and better understanding how it can be replicated in other areas. She would defer to the Healey on understanding the “secret sauce” that goes into progress and noting that the district is seeing positive results of student growth across the board.

Ms. Pitone highlighted the fact that the growth percentile for tenth grade in math showed 39% in 2019, 41% in 2020 and 45% in 2023. While in the past the focus has been on growth percentiles as a reflection point in how students can grow and evolve, she asked what impact the significant change in 2018 in the lower grades of curriculum contributed to the positive upswing in this group.

Dr. Boston-Davis responded that she agrees that the introduction of the illustrative math curriculum in the lower grades contributed to the upswing. The teachers have reported that the curriculum helps deepen a conceptual understanding rather than covering a lot of surface material. In collaboration with Assistant Superintendent Mazza, teachers were able to leave the classroom and collaborate on planning time together and train with partners at Lesley on the curriculum. The partners are also working in collaboration with the middle and high school levels. Getting together with principals and educators and being able to “walk each other’s schools” and learning best practices for opportunities and growth has had a very positive impact on student learning growth.

In answer to Ms. Dion’s question on the reasons for the three schools that needed intervention because of low MCAS participation, Dr. Boston-Davis stated that the only reasons students cannot be included in MCAS scores and affect the achievement score, is if the student is a first-year EL student, and therefore not eligible for MCAS in English but in math and science not factored into the achievement score, or if a student had a medically excused absence.

Mr. Green stated that preschool data relative to changing demographics of newcomers and refugees coming to the district would be very helpful in the analysis of that data and its impact on MCAS scores.

Ms. Eligene noted that in looking at data between 2019, 2022 and 2023, key subgroups which had a lower percentage of performance of meeting or exceeding peers, most percentages are stable for Black African-American and Latine students, but the biggest impact was seen from the low income students. In 2019 that group was designated at 39% and has increased by ten percentage points or more up to the current year, post-Covid. An influx of multi-lingual learners can have an impact on scores.

Mr. Green noted that, insofar as MCAS is very good at measuring class and income, before considering the reasons for changes it was important to determine that the district is measuring the same people.

Ms. Barish noted that it would be helpful to see how the third grade did in 2019 as compared to the eighth graders in 2024. In this way the growth scores are compelling as the student is being compared to him/herself. She suggested that in the future prior years be included in the slides of subgroups displaying growth.

In response to Dr. Phillips' question on how student growth/peers is measured, Ms. Eligene stated that multiple recent years are used in the student cohort, except that 2021 was left out as it represented half the assessment. In 2023 performance is measured in 2019 and 2022 as well in order to create that peer group.

Ms. Pitone asked how the district finds this accountability data useful in the school improvement planning process. Ms. Eligene stated many of the schools are on top of these indicators. She gave the example of the high school's chronic absenteeism rate was 39% last year, and as a large initiative to bring students consistently into school, the rate decreased to 24%. Beyond just looking at achievement levels, templates are being used to inform standards that students are struggling, i.e. timing of standards or consistency across the grades of recording categories. This strategy takes into account the value of data-driven decision making of planning.

Dr. Boston-Davis added that the leadership team is able to look at specific areas of focus and determining priorities and making decision for instruction and professional development.

In response to Dr. Ackman's question on the number of students who did not graduate last year solely because they did not pass the MCAS, Ms. Eligene stated graduation requirements involve either getting a passing score on MCAS or going the route of a plan to pass requirements called the competency determination. The number of students who passed that requirement was 90.7% in science, 62.7% in math and 80.4% in ELA. However, there were students who did not graduate simply because they did not pass the MCAS.

In response to Dr. Ackman's question with regard to i-Ready data that is most exciting, Ms. Eligene stated that the data has a strong correlation to MCAS and accessible in real-time and can address whether grade 3-8 students are mastering grade level standards and the likeliness of their meeting/exceeding proficiency. There is a training this week for educators on how best to interpret the data and to give educators the tools to determine ways to ensure that students are on the right track of learning and mastering the content.

Ms. Pitone stated her appreciation for the elements of academic recovery that have come together this year. She noted that Cambridge had been in the press lately speaking to returning to pre-pandemic levels through curriculum improvement over summer and vacation learning time intervention. She asked if there were lessons to be learned from Cambridge around being able to "jump ahead" and seize other opportunities for extra help.

Dr. Boston-Davis stated that the district is looking at every opportunity to take advantage of extra learning time. In the past the district did sponsor Saturday and vacation break schools, and she will explore opportunities to collaborate further.

Dr. Carmona stated that causality is critical and caution must be taken in attributing causes. He noted that the district has made significant changes in terms of outcome. The Kennedy school has been designated as a blue ribbon school and the Healey and Brown schools have shown significant achievement and he celebrated everyone who contributed to the process. He did say, however, that "data is data" and we must learn from it, but that "we are all in this together." One of his goals is to create data literacy around assessment and ensure that we make the right correlation of information.

Dr. Ackman acknowledged that while Cambridge brought scores back to pre-pandemic levels "on the backs of white and Asian students," there remain many gaps. She stated that she did not want to "do it that way," and hoped that educators worked as hard as possible "to lift all students."

Mr. Green stated that if class is the number one predictor of success, referring to the significant budget for Cambridge schools, he opined that the second would be money spent in the district. He noted that DESE, by its

own admission, has devised opaque algorithms for its measurements. Not only does this not allow for a nuanced narrative to build progress, but that it does not help parents to enter into a coherent data story to be held accountable to things “that mean something” other than arbitrary algorithms. He asked what could be done to assist parents to understand basic terms used in scoring.

Ms. Eligene responded that, while the data does not tell the full story as to the student’s learning progress and experience, multiple data points are important in the process including real-time teacher input.

Dr. Carmona stated that, while the complexity of information makes it hard to digest, MCAS offers good data points across the board including trends. Leveraging that information presents opportunities to improve instructional methods. Ultimately, how the student comes into the classroom and is welcomed by the teacher builds the foundation for the learning relationship and how the district provides supports to the students in their struggles. Hard quantitative data allows the district to understand what is happening in the classroom and how instruction is being delivered.

Chair Krepchin asked if the math interventionist position had been reinstated at Winter Hill. Mr. Mazza will follow up on the question.

In response to Ms. Pitone’s question on the conditions for learning survey, Ms. Eligene stated that the survey will be administered to students, staff and families in the spring. Ms. Dion asked that a presentation be made on the trends and results of the surveys.

Dr. Carmona stated that part of the work is aligning the school improvement plans with the MCAS report that have references to the past but have implications for the present.

In response to Mr. Green’s request for an update on MCIEA, Dr. Phillips stated that discussions are underway to reinstitute the partnership and will keep the Committee informed as to progress.

**District Report** (continued)

*Memo Update on Winter Hill Transportation*

Mr. Mazza reviewed the memo update on the Winter Hill Transportation.

**QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**

Dr. Ackman, as a “front door neighbor of Edgerly,” she thanked Mr. Mazza for being understanding and responsive to the problem. Mr. Mazza stated that he was only part of the process of a collective effort of staff contributing to a solution. Erika Martinez was hired to be the bus coordinator in order that the principal and assistant principal could continue in their role in instructional leadership. In answer to Mr. Green’s question on whether the memo update was available on the website, Mr. Mazza stated that it would be posted tomorrow morning. Erika Martinez will continue to be the point person for parents to contact.

Mr. Green asked for clarification on the delivery of food services at Winter Hill and the use of the East playground.

Mr. Mazza stated that during the transition to Winter Hill, it was discovered that the kitchen was not functional. In the meantime the district partnered with Stock Pot, which was not without its challenges. They provided hot meals, it was according to its own menu which was different than the district schools and not as well liked by students. Food nutrition services, however, provided cold choices like power packs grab ‘n go the same as other schools. An oven has been installed at Winter Hill and hot meals will be provided next week.

Mr. Mazza noted the district’s long-standing relationship with Stock Pot, having provided meals over the summer months when food nutrition services was not available. Last week the vendor ran out of pizza and the situation was rectified with Ames Pizza with the delivery of needed pizza. The district is committed to making sure that students are well fed and he looks forward to the new kitchen being in operation next week.

Mr. Mazza stated that all efforts are being made to ensure a comfortable teaching and learning environment.

Although the library is a lot smaller than that at Winter Hill, the art room is bigger and the theater/music room are adjacent in the old Sped wing. The transition experience has been a good experience in creativity and adaptability, and he was happy to report that students seem happy and engaged in their new environment. Students go once a week to East playground.

In answer to Ms. Krepchin's question, Mr. Mazza stated that Winter Hill specialists at Edgerly go to Capuano for PreK-K to continue the relationship with teachers.

### **District Report** (continued)

#### Superintendent report

Dr. Carmona, Mr. Mazza and Dr. Boston-Davis recognized contributions of employees in the district with initiatives/events planned.

Monday, October 2, 2023

Superintendent's Update for School Committee

This has been an exceptional month for several of our students and staff.

Congratulations to Somerville High School seniors Lucca Valdes and Maria Clara who were awarded the National Hispanic Recognition Award by the College Board. Great job, Highlanders!

Antonella D'Eramo is our Multilingual Learner Education Curriculum and Instruction Specialist. She supports the educators who teach our MLE students, who make up 24% of our population. She was named a 2023–2024 WIDA Fellow. Congratulations Ms. D'Eramo!

Maura Mendoza, our Multilingual Services Coordinator, was awarded a 2023-2024 Latinos for Education fellowship! Congratulations Ms. Mendoza!

Dr. Ana Nieto is our Coordinator of Prenatal to School Entry Partnership Alignment Grant Development. She won the 2023 Early Childhood Policy Fellowship with Bankstreet College of Education, along with 13 other leaders across the country. Congratulations Dr. Nieto!

Somerville High School history teacher Adda Santos was recognized by Masslive as an inspiring leader from the Hispanic Community. Congratulations Ms. Santos!

I am excited to see the work of our students and staff recognized locally and nationally.

### **Our Community Celebrates**

Some members of our Muslim community observe Mawlid Al-Nabi today.

Our Jewish community celebrates Sukkot from September 29 to October 6, and Shemini Atzeret [pronounced: SHMIIH-nee ah-TSEH-ret]

and Simchat Torah [pronounced: seem-KHAT to-RAH] on October 7 and 8th.

Hindu community members observe Nvaratri, a festival that spans 9 nights and 10 days, from October 15 to 24. Hispanic Heritage month continues to be celebrated through performance and curriculum across the district until October 15.

### **Back to School at SCALE**

High school equivalency reading and writing classes started at our adult education department, SCALE, on September 24. Director Joselyn Marte and her amazing staff welcomed students with a table filled with food and several exciting career training

opportunities planned for the next few months. Please visit the SCALE website to learn more. [www. www. somerville.k12.ma.us/SCALE](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/SCALE)

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### **SHS Chorus Performed with performers from Tbilisi, Georgia**

The Somerville High School Chorus was invited to help bring form to and harmonize several original melodies, based on solo Georgian melodies from the mountains of that country. The students then performed alongside local musicians, local writers, and two musicians from Tbilisi, Georgia. Thank you to Somerville High School choral director and music teacher Max Evrard for bringing this incredible opportunity to the high school. He was also one of the participating local professional musicians.

### **YSIU participation went up this year**

The Yearly Student Information Update period has ended. This is the process to collect and update guardian contact information, student medical information, and other important details. Participation increased this year by 4% to 64% and has gone up an incredible 20% since the 2021/2022 school year. Congratulations to the Enrollment team and school support staff who worked hard to keep improving engagement in this process.

### **Free MBTA passes**

Staff and educators received their free MBTA passes and can now ride all local buses and the subway for free.

## **Open Houses**

The school to home connection is a powerful tool for supporting a child's academic success. Thanks to the school leaders, educators, staff, interpreters, and volunteers who organized our school open houses this fall and made these important family engagement events possible.

## **Climate-Palooza**

The Healey and Brown Schools are hosting a joint event for all families with students in grades Kindergarten through fifth grade. It will take place October 19 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Healey School. There will be family-friendly climate activities and free pizza!

## **Upcoming Half Days and School Holidays**

October 4 will be a half day for students in pre-K through grade eight.

There will be no school, and district offices will be closed, in honor of Indigenous People's Day on Monday, October 9.

## **Shout Out**

Now that we've settled into our new administrative home, I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge the work and flexibility of our Finance and Payroll teams and our Chief Financial Officer Fran Gorski. Our Finance and Payroll teams have been involved behind-the-scenes starting in the spring, when they reached out to Eastern Bus to arrange student transportation for Winter Hill students to the temporary Tufts site. Throughout the summer, they worked with city departments and Assistant Superintendent Mazza to support the extraordinary effort it took to move a school and an administrative team to new homes while ensuring that our finance and payroll operations – two critical operations in our district – continued without interruption. Thank you to our wonderful Finance and Payroll teams for all you do!

## **QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**

The climate-palooza event is district-wide.

All information to be updated can be referred to Theresa Rodriguez.

Dr. Carmona noted that he receives messages from employees leaving the district expressing the sentiment of pride to have served the district. He recognized their contribution to the district as invaluable. He announced with regret and gratitude the resignation of Susanna Hernandez with formal farewells to be scheduled.

### **B. Personnel Report**

Dr. Carmona reviewed various sections of the personnel report as of September 2023.

## **V. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES**

**A. School Committee Meeting for Education Programs and Instruction:** September 11, 2023 (Dr. Ackman). **This vote was tabled to next meeting.**

**B. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management:** September 18, 2023 (Ms. Barish)

Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting

September 18, 2023

City Council Chambers

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm. Subcommittee members Ellenor Barish, Sara Dion, and Sarah Phillips were present, along with Dr. Ruben Carmona, Dr. Susana Hernandez Morgan, and SHS Principal Alicia Kersten.

### **1. Approve notes from June meeting**

Sarah Phillips moved to approve the notes from the June Rules Management meeting, seconded by Sara Dion. The motion passed unanimously.

### **2. File JIC - Student Discipline**

Principal Kersten shared the draft provided by Attorney Paige Tobin with Assistant Principals at SHS with no concerns raised. Dr. Hernandez Morgan suggested that we make sure this version is legally compliant. Dr.

Phillips suggested two edits concerning the roles of school council and School Committee with regards to student handbooks. Those edits will be sent for review by Attorney Tobin. In addition, clarity on the definition of "school council" will be requested.

### **3. Extended Campus Lunch Policy**

In 2021, School Committee passed a policy allowing upper-class members in good standing and with parent/guardian permission to leave the SHS campus for lunch. Principal Kersten has requested a revision allowing all students to leave campus for lunch without requiring parental permission. (CRLS does not require permission.) Students would scan their IDs when leaving the building and parents could opt out. Additionally, students could lose the privilege. Ms. Kersten was clear that students would not be permitted to get into their own or other students' cars. Neighboring businesses support this policy. Ms. Kersten will provide draft revisions. Some wondered if this belongs in the School Committee's policy manual or whether it can happen at the handbook level. If managed via the handbook, we will need to develop a system by which School Committee can consider changes to the handbook mid-year. Ms. Barish will check with Attorney Tobin regarding parental permission and the policy vs. handbook question. She will also check in with Nutrition and Food Services.

### **4. MASC Policy Updates**

Ms. Barish shared the MASC Policy Newsletter with her Rules Subcommittee colleagues. MASC is conducting a comprehensive review of their reference policies. We can anticipate lots of language changes and some removals of obsolete policies in addition to more substantive changes. Ms. Barish reminded her colleagues that the full School Committee approved a series of language changes to our own policies a couple of years ago but that many of those updates have not been made. She will coordinate with Ana Bautista, the new Executive Assistant to the Superintendent and Chief of Staff, around how to most efficiently make changes like these. Additionally, MASC has updated their reference policies concerning purchasing. Ms. Barish will run those changes by Finance Director Fran Gorski before asking Rules for a vote. Dr. Phillips asked if this might be an opportunity to incorporate language regarding sustainability into the purchasing policy.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:14 pm.

**MOTION:** by Dr. Phillips and seconded by Dr. Ackman to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Rules Management of September 18, 2023.

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

In response to Dr. Ackman's question on the campus lunch policy, Ms. Barish stated that the policy pertaining to upper class members, with a rollout to seniors first and then juniors, was not instituted. Principal Kersten requested modifications to the policy to apply to all high school students. The logistics of the policy applied to when students were allowed to leave and not allowed to leave, signing out and signing in, the distance they could go away from the school, parental permission and working with the attorney to ensure legal issues were covered.

Dr. Carmona added other logistics involved an acceptance by default for students/parents signing the student handbook as permission was contained therein and opting out if not in agreement. Other logistics included loss of privilege for violation of rules and building in safeguards.

Mr. Green stated, insofar as the school acted *in loco parentis*, he was concerned that the policy be fully vetted by the Committee to address potential liability. Ms. Barish stated that the Committee cannot make changes to the student handbook mid-term. Dr. Ackman acknowledged, while safety and security are of concern, as a student growing up in an open campus environment, she was "truly shocked and disappointed" that the district was not doing this for the students. Ms. Pitone agreed that it was important to ensure safety of students and protection from liability of the district.

Chair Krepchin stated that the rules will be reviewed again at the next meeting.

### **C. School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities: September 20, 2023 (Dr. Phillips)**

Report of The Finance and Facilities Subcommittee, September 20, 2023, submitted by Sarah Phillips

The Finance and Facilities Subcommittee met on September 20, 2023 via Zoom. Members present were Sarah Phillips, Emily Ackman, and Andre Green. Also in attendance were Superintendent, Rubén Carmona; Chief Financial Officer, Fran Gorski; Assistant Superintendent, Chad Mazza; and Director of Multilingual Learner Education, Paulina Mitropoulos.

Chair Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm. There was no one in the audience. There were four items on the agenda:

#### 1) Overview of the MLE Department

The MLE Department provided a snapshot of their students' educational placements and an overview of its income sources and expenses.

#### 2) YTD Expenditure Detail

Director Gorski voiced over the district's budget and year-to-date expenses. He highlighted several large, unbudgeted expenses we will need to account for this year, including transportation to/from Edgerly and technology such as hot spots and SMART boards in Edgerly classrooms. The city has indicated that it will help the district pay for these expenses, but budget discussions are on-going.

#### 3) ESSER Update

Director Gorski reviewed the expenses still on the ESSER budget, which must be expended by September 2024. There are a sizeable number of positions still on ESSER, which also funds some key SEL programs. Director Gorski reminded the subcommittee that we will need to decide what to do with these positions and expenses in our next budget. Director Gorski and Mr. Greene also reminded the subcommittee of city's commitment to bringing the remaining positions in the ESSER budget onto the local budget during the next budget cycle and our expectation of an 8% increase to the local budget.

#### 4) June and July/August Bill Rolls

After an overview of select expenses by Director Gorski, Dr. Ackman moved to approve the June local bill rolls. Mr. Green seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

Dr. Ackman also moved to approve the July local bill rolls. Mr. Green seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05pm.

**MOTION:** There was a motion by Mr. Green and seconded by Dr. Ackman to accept the bill rolls for July and August. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- A. Discuss vote on Superintendent’s entry plan – to be discussed under Superintendent’s Evaluation below.

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. MASC Conference Delegate and Resolutions  
This item is tabled until the next meeting when members will have been able to review full documentation.
- B. Superintendent Evaluation  
Dr. Phillips reviewed the MASC/DESE guidelines for evaluation of the Superintendent.  
Dr. Carmona reviewed his outline of the collaborative process among educators across the Board.

**QUESTIONS/COMMENTS**

Ms. Pitone noted that a lot of the measurements were action measurements rather than outcome or

impact measurements. She added that the Committee had planned to refine the activities around its goals but this did not happen because of a change management. She also questioned the full implementation of the I-Ready assessment by educators and improvement in the multi-tier system of support. She made the point that if the district is asking its educators to be data informed, that the Committee and leadership at this level itself be challenged to be data informed. She also questioned where the Superintendent plans to be at the end of December in progress toward goals. She also noted that there was no mention of the district facility master plan and ensuring that the district is hearing the voices of the community.

The matter will be discussed further at the next meeting.

**A. Acceptance of FY24 Grant Funds** (Recommended action: approval)

**MOTION:** There was a motion by Ms. Barish and seconded by Ms. Dion, seconded by Ms. Barish to accept all federal entitlement and continuation grants and all state continuation grants awarded to the Somerville Public Schools listed below:

Grant Type	Grant Title	Award Amont
Private	This grant is to help with the dissemination of community health equity survey. The survey will help communities improve conditions that impact health, particularly those most impacted b health inequities.	\$2,000.00

The motion was approved unanimously.

**C. ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Mr. Green noted that to date the district has not heard anything from the City with regard to the master building plan and with every passing day the district loses credibility. He suggested reaching out to the City to restart the conversation.

Dr. Carmona stated that there have been developments thus far. The MSBA has sent letters to Winter Hill and Brown Schools with regard to the same conditions and expectations as it has in the past on the trajectory of work which will require community involvement. Mitigation work will happen around asbestos being removed from the building. He agreed that the district needs to work on the partnership and ensure full participation from the Mayor and her team and have an open flow of communication and sharing information.

Ms. Pitone suggested having a standard agenda item to discuss master planning on an ongoing basis

and having the City be accountable for sharing information and providing timely updates.

Ms. Pitone also noted that the school building facility and maintenance committee meeting scheduled on October 4<sup>th</sup> was not added to the School Committee call for this week. Even though the meeting is sponsored by the City Council, the meeting should also be listed on the call for the School Committee for important notice to the school community.

**D. CONDOLENCES**

The School Committee offers its deepest condolences to the families of:

**Charles L. McCaughey**, father of Shelli Durail, resource room teacher at the John F. Kennedy School and Charlene O’Neill, retired fourth grade teacher at the Winter Hill Innovation School.

**Perry Savage**, brother of Kristi Savage, teacher at the Argenziano School.

**Francis John Leland**, retired headmaster of Somerville High School and father of Laura Lieberman, Somerville High School math teacher.

**E. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 10:06PM.

**Related documents:**

**Agenda**

[Hispanic Heritage Month Acknowledgment](#)

[MCAS/Assessment](#)

[Memo Update on Winter Hill Transportation](#)

**Personnel Report**

Submitted by: C. Barraford

**ATTACH DOCUMENTS STARTING ON THE NEXT PAGE**

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE  
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – CITY HALL  
REGULAR MEETING – OCTOBER 2, 2023 – 7:00 P.M.**

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting of the School Committee will be conducted via hybrid participation.

We will post an audio recording, audio-video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of these proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting on the City of Somerville website and local cable access government channels.

To **watch** this Regular School Committee meeting live from home please visit the following link:  
[www.somervillema.gov/govTVLive](http://www.somervillema.gov/govTVLive).

To **listen** live to the simultaneous interpretation of this meeting in **Spanish, Portuguese, or Haitian Creole**, or to participate in Public Comment, please join this Zoom Webinar and choose your desired language by clicking the interpretation globe on Zoom:

<https://k12somerville.zoom.us/j/85251446618?pwd=ZkQwWjd0Z1JnbnNmNsSS9jeC9TSnptQT09>

Meeting ID: 852 5144 6618

Password: 752252

**Somerville Public Schools - School Committee Goals 2023 - 2025**

In order to address the root causes of systemic inequity in our schools, the Somerville School Committee and SPS commit to the following goals, knowing that these can only be achieved through ensuring meaningful partnerships with Somerville families, district staff, city government, and community partners. Our goals attempt to address deep-rooted systemic barriers that have prevented us from achieving our district vision of equity and excellence and ensure that all students, regardless of race or ethnicity, have the support and resources they need to achieve educational success in our district now and in the future.

1. Whole Child Teaching and Learning... We will:

- Prepare students to demonstrate strong literacy and mathematics foundation by grade 3, grade 6, and grade 10
- Provide all students with integrated classroom lessons from a high-quality social-emotional learning curriculum that helps students value and develop their ability to build relationships with other students, to be self-aware and socially aware, to self-regulate, and to make responsible decisions
- Expand access to real-world learning experiences through students' participation in Early College, Advanced Placement courses, CTE, and/or other learning experiences that help students build critical 21st-century skills, meeting with their college and career counselor in their junior and senior year, and students graduating with a defined post-secondary plan.

2. Equitable Access to Programming... We will conduct a district enrollment study to understand the prospective future population of the district and create and begin implementing a strategy for school building development, school assignment, and programming that aligns with the district's equity policy, and which is based on the results of the enrollment study and the projected 10+ year plan for school facilities.

3. Workforce Diversity... We will increase the percentage of support staff of color, teachers and counselors of color, and administrators of color by 6% per group compared to SY22 rates through evaluating and strengthening all elements of our personnel system – recruitment, processes, training, retention, development, advancement, and staff data collection systems on which we base and measure our improvement efforts.

4. Equitable Resource Allocation... we will design, evaluate, and partially or fully implement student-based budgeting by 2025, or identify alternative mechanisms to more equitably allocate district resources.

**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. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- May 22, 2023
- June 12, 2023
- June 26, 2023

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT – In person or via Zoom**

To participate in Public Comments remotely please use the following Zoom link:

<https://k12somerville.zoom.us/j/85251446618?pwd=ZkQwWjd0Z1JnbnNmNsSS9jeC9TSnptQT09>

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**IV. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT**

**A. District Report**

- Hispanic Heritage Month Acknowledgment
- MCAS/Assessment
- Memo- Update on Winter Hill Transportation

**B. Personnel Report**

- September 2023

**V. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES**

**A. School Committee Meeting for Education Programs and Instruction:** September 11, 2023 (Dr. Ackman)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Education Programs and Instruction of September 11, 2023.

**B. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management:** September 18, 2023 (Ms. Barish)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Rules Management of September 18, 2023.

**C. School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities:** September 20, 2023 (Dr. Phillips)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities of September 20, 2023.

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

- A. Discuss and Vote on Superintendent’s Entry Plan

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

- A. MASC Conference Delegate and Resolutions
- B. Superintendent Evaluation
- C. **Acceptance of FY24 Grant Funds** (Recommended action: approval)

MOTION: To accept all federal entitlement and continuation grants and all state continuation grants awarded to the Somerville Public Schools listed below:

Grant Type	Grant Title	Award Amount
Private	<b>Community Health Equity Survey Grant-</b> This grant is to help with the dissemination of a community health equity survey. The survey will help communities improve conditions that impact health, particularly those most impacted by health inequities.	\$2,000.00

**VIII. ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**IX. CONDOLENCES**

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

**For Simultaneous Interpretation in Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole See below:**

**Español - Para Interpretación**

Para **ver** la Reunión Regular del Comité Escolar el 27 de Febrero a las 7:00, en vivo desde casa, visite el siguiente enlace y elija **GovTV**: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/communications-and-community-engagement/somerville-city-tv>

Para **escuchar en vivo la interpretación simultánea de la Reunión Regular en español, portugués o criollo haitiano**, únase a este Zoom y elija el idioma que desee haciendo clic al globo de interpretación:

The items listed are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. Not all items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

October 2, 2023

<https://k12somerille.zoom.us/j/85251446618?pwd=ZkQwWjd0Z1JnbmNsSS9jeC9TSnptQT09>

Identificación de la reunión: 852 5144 6618

Contraseña: 752252

### **Português - Para Interpretação**

Para **assistir** à Reunião Regular do Comitê Escolar 27 de fevereiro às 7:00, ao vivo de casa, visite o seguinte link e selecione

**GovTV:** <https://www.somerillema.gov/departments/communications-and-community-engagement/somerille-city-tv>

Para **ouvir ao vivo a tradução simultânea da Assembleia Ordinária em espanhol, português ou crioulo haitiano**, entre neste Zoom e escolha o idioma desejado clicando no balão de interpretação:

<https://k12somerille.zoom.us/j/85251446618?pwd=ZkQwWjd0Z1JnbmNsSS9jeC9TSnptQT09>

ID da reunião: 852 5144 6618

Senha: 752252

### **Kreyòl ayisyen - Pou entèpretasyon**

Pou **gade** reyinyon regilye Komite Lekòl la 27 fevriye a 7:00, an dirèk nan kay la, vizite lyen sa a epi chwazi **GovTV:**

<https://www.somerillema.gov/departments/communications-and-community-engagement/somerille-city-tv>

Pou **w tande entèpretasyon similtane Reyinyon Regilye a an panyòl, pòtigè oswa kreyòl ayisyen an**, rantre nan Zoom sa a epi chwazi lang ou vle a lè w klike sou balon entèpretasyon an:

<https://k12somerille.zoom.us/j/85251446618?pwd=ZkQwWjd0Z1JnbmNsSS9jeC9TSnptQT09>

Reyinyon ID: 852 5144 6618

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Somerville Public Schools  
 Education • Inspiration • Excellence  
 PERSONNEL REPORT  
 2023-2024 School Year  
 September 2023

RESIGNATION FOR PURPOSE OF RETIREMENT:

SHS/CTE	Social Studies Teacher	Everett Roscoe	09/27/23	27 years
SHS/CTE	Teacher	Hugh Wallace	01/01/24	16 years
SHS	Head Clerk 1	Barbara Favalaro	07/31/23	21 years
ESCS	Teacher	Rosa Delgado Castilla	12/31/23	7 years

RESIGNATION NOTICES:

AFAS	Teacher-Guidance	Jacqueline Brown	08/01/23
DW	School Nurse Manager	Karen Hart	09/01/23
DW	Chief of Staff & Strategy	Maria Hernandez Morgan	10/31/23
DW/Food Service	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Yash Senchaudhuri	09/08/23
ESCS	Elementary Assistant Principal	Erick Pagan	08/18/23
ESCS	Building Substitute Teacher	Edna Sofia Gamba	09/11/23
Healey	Teacher - 3/4	Alison Swigut	08/11/23
Kennedy	School Based Social worker	Rachel Drucker	08/21/23
Kennedy	Library Aide	Meghan Strapec	08/17/23
SCALE	Computer Technology Specialist	Zachary Shea	09/05/23
SCALE	ABE Education & Career Counselor	Clara Serpa	08/04/23
SHS	Art Teacher	Jessica Howard	08/18/23
SHS	Teacher-Resource Room	Amanda Mirabella	08/23/23
WHCIS	Paraprofessional	Eva Hai-Eun Kahng	08/21/23
WHCIS	Paraprofessional-SPED	Jessica Popken	08/14/23

ASSIGNMENT ENDED:

Capuano	Teacher-Special Education	Mallory Crane	08/09/23
DW	Director of Educ. Infrastructure Spec. Proj.	Sean Callanan	09/15/23

LEAVES OF ABSENCES:

NW/FC	Instructional Coach	Timothy Dunphy	10/10/23-12/08/23
NW/FC	Crisis Counselor	Nichole Artavia	09/27/23-10/04/23
SHS	Path Clinical Coordinator	Christine Campbell	09/27/23-01/12/24 - Revised

INTRA-DISTRICT PERSONNEL TRANSACTIONS

AFAS	GR. 1 SEI Teacher - Newcomers	Claire Fortier	New Assignment	Rene Holtzman	08/28/23
AFAS	Long Term Substitute Teacher - Middle School Science	REYNA THEODORE	Temp Reassignment	Michael Coughlin	08/28/23
AFAS/Comm Schools	PT Lead Teacher	Etta Resnick	Reassignment	New	08/29/23
AFAS/ESCS	School Based Social Worker	Lisa Stahl	Reassignment	Carla Feehan	08/28/23
BR	Building Substitute Teacher - Full Time	Nancy Shea	New Assignment	Becky Hsieh	08/28/23
BR/Comm Schools	FT Lead Teacher	Emma Daly	New Assignment	New	09/18/23
CAP	Special Education AIM Paraprofessional	Ana Daysi Mejia	Temp to Perm	N/A	08/28/23
CAP/Comm Schools	FT SPED Lead Teacher	Gita Khanal	New Assignment (No longer a para)	New	08/29/23
Central	Human Resources Associate	Mercedes Braga Tinoco	Reassignment	New	09/05/23
District	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Meghan Strapec	New Assignment	N/A	08/30/23
District	.70 Long Term Substitute Teacher - Strings	Lu Yu	New Assignment	I. Wong/reorg	08/28/23
District	Interim Special Education Department Chair	Laura Walley	Temp New Assignment	New	07/01/23
ESCS/Comm Schools	PT Assistant Teacher	Ashley Castro	New Assignment	Sonia Barahona	09/05/23
HLV	Kindergarten Paraprofessional	Shalanda DiSola	Reassignment	L'Erin Cross	08/28/23
HLV/Comm Schools	FT Lead Teacher	Ishaya Williams	New Assignment	Henry Duarte	09/20/23
KEN	SPED SEEK Teacher	Nicole Deamato	New Assignment	T. Babbins	08/28/23
KEN	SPED AIM Paraprofessional	Samantha Swanton	New Assignment	Wendy Whoriskey	09/15/23
KEN/Comm Schools	FT Lead Teacher	Emma Oppman	New Assignment	New	08/29/23
Kennedy	Provisional SPED SEEK Teacher	Nicole DeAmato	New Assignment	Trina Babbins	08/24/23
SHS	Restorative In-School Program Coordinator (RISP Coordinator)	David Thelemaque	New Assignment	New	08/28/23
SHS	Music Teacher	Immei Wong	Reassignment	Vanessa Fitzgerald	08/28/23
WHCIS	Building Substitute Teacher - Full Time	Nalika Weerasinghe	New Assignment	Eliza Bowditch	08/28/23
WHCIS	Kindergarten Paraprofessional	Nalika Weerasinghe	Temporary Reassignment	Hai Eun Kahng	09/14/23
WHCIS	SPED AIM Paraprofessional	Alejandra Banuelos Perez	New Assignment	New	08/28/23
WHCIS	SPED AIM Paraprofessional	Silvia Martinez de Mejia	New Assignment	Michelle Anzalone	08/28/23
WHCIS	SPED AIM Teacher	Kashima Riley	New Assignment	Brittany McEwen	08/28/23
WHCIS/Comm Schools	PT Assistant Teacher	Sarah Romero Ferruino	SHS Helper to Perm position	New	08/30/23
WSNS/Comm Schools	PT Lead Teacher	Joseph Amari	Reassignment	Vanessa Nason	08/29/23
WSNS/Comm Schools	PT Lead Teacher	Gianna Amari	Reassignment	Ryan Scanlan	08/29/23
<b>NEW HIRES</b>					
AFAS	SPED Language Based Classroom Paraprofessional	Lauren McMahon	New	No/No	09/05/23
AFAS	Building Substitute Teacher - Full Time	Nadia Ismail	Lee Heredia	No/No	08/28/23
AFAS	Library Utility Aide	Shaun Wrinn	Erin Carr	No/No	09/18/23
AFAS/Comm Schools	FT Lead Teacher	Keala Arciero	Deepa Deshikachar	No/No	08/29/23
CAP	SPED AIM Paraprofessional	Karolina Serres	Tommico Ahadzi	No/No	08/28/23
CAP	SPED AIM Paraprofessional	Miranda King - Giannino	Ghita Khanal	No/No	09/05/23
CAP	Out of School Assistant Site Director	Stephanie Guevara	Alex Mendoza	No/No	08/28/23
Central	GOAL Program Specialist	Marycruz Somes	Martha Franco	No/No	08/24/23
Comm Schools	Out of School Time Assistant Site Director	Tamica Connor	New	No/No	08/28/23
Community Schools	High School Helper	Destiny Andrade	Siarrah Murray	No/No	08/30/23

Community Schools	High School Helper	Dilip Jaghoo	Ludwig Perez	No/No	08/30/23
Community Schools	High School Helper	Gianna Bottiglio	Lia Sokol	No/No	08/30/23
District	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Caroline SanAgnelo	N/A	No/No	09/20/23
District	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Cheryl Worrell	N/A	No/No	08/30/23
District	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Daniel Davis	N/A	No/No	09/20/23
District	Intermittent Lunch Attendants	Ismene Teliard	N/A	No/No	08/30/23
District	Special Education Department Chair	Janet O'Reilly	New	No/No	07/01/23
District	Elementary Math Interventionist	Karen Kolman	New	No/No	08/28/23
District	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Leonora Koney	N/A	No/No	09/20/23
District	Provisional Teacher - Social Studies	Matthew DeAngelis	Carlos Contreras/Amina Sheikh	No/No	08/28/23
District	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Tianna Whitmarsh	N/A	No/No	08/30/23
District Wide	Intermittent Cafeteria Helper	Gurbakash Kaur	N/A	No/No	09/14/23
ESCS	Provisional Assistant Principal	Estephanie Lugo	Erick Pagan	Yes/No	07/01/23
ESCS	Library Utility Aide	Hillary Fens	Wendy Whoriskey	Yes/Yes	08/30/23
ESCS	Reading Specialist	Kelsey Lightfoot	Adrienne Lieveuse	No/No	09/05/23
ESCS/SHS	Spanish Teacher	Monica Tsinagini	Diana Santiago Acevedo	Yes/No	08/31/23
HLY	Building Substitute Teacher - Full Time	Michael Toplyn	N/A	No/No	08/28/23
KEN	Grade 4 Teacher	Abigail Lee	Caroline Hanly	No/No	08/28/23
NW/FC	ESL Specialist	Shelby Benham	New	Yes/Yes	08/28/23
SCALE	ABE Education and Career Advisor	Jannette Marte	Clara Serpa	No/No	09/25/23
SHS	Provisional .50 FTE English Teacher	Andrew Wang	Theresa Dietrich	No/No	08/28/23
SHS	Provisional .50 Biology Teacher	Abigail Clark	Susan Schmidt	No/No	08/28/23
SHS	Grade 5 Math/Science Teacher	Charlotte Croft	Lorin Federico	No/No	08/30/23
SHS	English Teacher	Jovita Solorio-Fielder	Joanne Kim/Maddy Wheelock	No/No	08/28/23
SHS	PT Academic Tutor - Bridge Program	Julia Fernandes	Arbens Lesy	No/No	09/05/23
SHS	Special Education Math Teacher	Margaret Tersavich	Dawn Dunleavy	No/No	08/28/23
SHS	Paraprofessional - CET (Bilingual)	Nelema Basith	New	No/No	08/28/23
SHS	Provisional .50 Science Teacher	Samuel Cain	Susan Schmidt	No/No	08/28/23
SHS	Senior Clerk	Scarlett Soto	Irma Calderon	No/No	08/29/23
SHS	Social Studies Teacher	Vincent Timmins	Beth O'Connor	No/No	08/28/23
WHCIS	SPED AIM Paraprofessional	Adriana Villa-Perez	New	No/No	09/05/23
WHCIS	Building Substitute Teacher	Keegan Bliss	N/A	No/No	09/15/23
WHCIS	SPED AIM Paraprofessional	Madison King - Giannino	New	No/No	09/05/23
WHCIS/Comm Schools	FT SPED Lead Teacher	Elizabeth Gates	New	No/No	09/18/23
WSNS	Building Substitute Teacher - Full Time	Elisabeth Kistner	N/A	No/No	08/28/23
WSNS	Senior Clerk	Nana Shveldze	Fernanda Camacho	No/No	08/28/23