

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Monday, March 10, 2025 - Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m. – City Hall Chambers

Members present: Ms. Pitone, Mr. Green, Mr. Biton, President Pineda Neufeld, Mayor Ballantyne, Ms. Barish, Dr. Phillips, and Ms. Krepchin **Members Absent:** Dr. Ackman

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:04__ 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, the results of which were as follows: PRESENT – _8__ –Ms. Pitone, Mr. Green, Mr. Biton, President Pineda Neufeld, Mayor Ballantyne, Ms. Barish, Dr. Phillips, and Ms. Krepchin **ABSENT** – Dr. Ackman

Chair Krepchin asked interpreters to introduce themselves:(none, assisting with Parent Teacher Conferences)

Vivian O'Toole-Spanish

Vanuza Teixeira -Portuguese

Angie Surpris-Haitian Creole

II. REPORT OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

No Student Representative were present

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- February 3, 2025

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Barish, seconded by Mr. Green, to approve minutes from February 3, 2025.

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Ines Santos of Ward 1: I am a resident of James St and parent of two at Winter Hill. I am here to talk about out of school time clubs. I just got a letter from the principal about availability of OST clubs which led me to peek at what other schools are doing. Brought this to the School Committee last spring also. At the current session, Winter Hill K-5 are offered Spanish on Mondays. The Brown, which we are talking about maybe merging with, has Spanish, yoga, nutrition, Strong Women Strong Girls. When I talked to the School Committee a year ago the situation was similar. I chose Brown here but I could have chosen any number of schools on the west side of the city. In the fall, we had several choices, nothing like what I'm describing from other schools but better than now. I got an email on Friday and the clubs were due to start the following week. This is not a lot of time to gather for a school that is not used to having this sort of thing. Clubs were participated in because my kids were in them. One session, and immediately we went into the current case which is one club. Spanish for K-5 and Danger Wizard for 4-8. This is an issue of equity I would like the School Committee to look into. Families like mine do have access to other activities. If we are going to weigh things in one direction it should be for the children who have access to less.

Ms. Brady staff member of WHCIS: I am an 8th grade civics teacher at Winter Hill. I am joined tonight by 13 of my rockstars, here to model another form of civic engagement. In the fall we dreamed up a

podcast and successfully applied for a grant from the [Somerville Foundation](#). Our fourth episode came out today. We have hosted a City Councilor and a state representative and it's only March. The students are now asking 19 different community research questions, affordability, mental health support, cost of living, housing costs, how Somerville Public School lunches are made. If you don't already follow us on Instagram, it's municipali-TEA. You can also email me or send us a comment on Instagram.

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Report

Dr. Carmona share his district report which was as followed

Good evening everyone!

Tonight, I am looking forward to hearing from our school leaders about the progress we're making towards our strategic priorities. We'll hear from Principal Glenda Soto from the Argenziano and Principal Steve Marshall from the Kennedy School on their School Improvement Plans.

With budget season now in full swing, the community feedback provided by School Improvement Councils is more important than ever. Our commitment to student, family, staff and community engagement, is a core value that is central to everything we do as a district—from our school improvement plans and extends to our collaborative budget process.

I am grateful to work in a district that truly supports all of our students and families.

I'd like to acknowledge the ongoing dedication of Sam Eligene, our Director of Data and Accountability, Dr. Jessica Boston Davis, and our outstanding school principals for their leadership and commitment to this work.

SHS Robotics

Next, I want to take a moment to congratulate the SHS Robotics Team.

Over the last two weekends, our Robotics team came in 8th in the Granite State Competition and 2nd in the Greater Boston Competition. The Somerville High School Highlanders Robotics team is currently the number one team in New England. We are cheering them on as they strive to go all the way to the world competition. Congratulations FRC6201 Highlander Robotics Team!

Also, a big thank you for the hard work and dedication of Coach Laura Peters, Innovation Specialist Jason Behrens, and the CTE Educators who supported them, including Sylvan LeBrun. I'd also like to thank the extraordinary group of Robotics Team mentors and volunteers.

Student CTE Graphics Award

Finally, I want to congratulate Somerville High School senior Sam Ryan. He designed the winning logo for the Massachusetts Association of Vocational Administrators "Connect for Success conference!" Sam participates in the Graphic Communications program within the Career and Technical Education Department at Somerville High School. Congratulations to Sam's CTE graphic communications educator

Richard McElroy for your work with Sam. Sam's logo will be used across the Connect for Success Conference and he was given a \$250 prize by MAVA members last week.

With that, let's get started on our presentations.

Dr. Boston Davis introduced Principal Soto to share her school improvement plan

- **Argenziano School Improvement Plan **see presentation attached below ****

Dr. Phillips: As a proud Argenziano parent, I am so proud of all the progress you've made over the past year. Have a third grader at home who will be psyched about the focus on math.

President Pineda Neufeld: Looking at Wellness and Joy goals, second bullet point discrepancy about students who are calm and managing emotions?

Principal Soto: We think students are judging themselves whereas the students are considering every student in the classroom.

Mr. Green: Given nationwide assault on the idea of equity, what would you say to the parent who sees this plan and goes, "what about my non-Latino struggling student?"

Principal Soto: All of those strategies and interventions work for those students and can benefit all of them.

Mr. Biton: So happy to hear that things feel like they are working and that investments are seeing dividends. Shout-out to the initiative on the room parent program. That is something that has been wonderful, having served as a room parent myself at the West. It is a great way for the parent community to connect with the educator community. Makes the school feel like part of a community. Loved seeing the quantitative measures for the next several years. If you find in Years 1 and 2, that you're not quite moving at the rate you want, do you have ideas ready to go for intervention? Or what is your process for assessing what strategies to employ?

Principal Soto: As part of the SIP process we have to assess our goals every year.

Ms.Pitone: How they can be a resource to educators. Is that in the scope of our professional development?

Dr. Jessica Boston Davis: We have a PD led by the SFLC. I'd have to pull up the catalog to see what's in there every year. Amazing family liaisons also, who are also members of SEU who can partner with connecting with families.

Chair Krepchin: It would be nice to see a presentation at some point about school volunteers, what they are doing, and how teachers can use that.

Principal Soto: Jennifer Capuano does an amazing job with getting and coordinating volunteers. Jen and Marian Berkowitz. If they know we need a volunteer they work hard. They matched a Portuguese speaker with a math background to a fourth grader who needed help with math skills.

Dr. Jessica Boston Davis: I'm happy to connect with Jennifer Capuano if that feels helpful. Other things, re: PD catalog, there are many educators also who can learn about best practices for family engagement. Teachers who lead PDs about cultures around the world, Brazilian culture, best practice shares. Final thing, re: early adopters for Illustrative Math. I attended the preview at Lesley University last week at Winter Hill. Educators were talking through the differences in approaches -- not teaching the standard algorithm in first grade, and what does that mean, adding tens and ones, and brainstorming how they are planning to lead the lessons and partner with the family and caregiver community.

Ms. Pitone: As a parent, I observed during the pandemic that there was a lot of shutting the doors. Families were told, drop your families at the door and don't come in. I hope we are moving back in the direction that families feel like they are part of the school, that with permission they can access those classrooms and take those walls down.

Dr. Carmona: We are looking at out-of-school time. There are more pieces to it. They are doing good work for how it was designed, but we need a better system to connect the day with the afterschool. There is a team on that; also partnering with different nonprofits on that. We will be looking at the issue of access across the board. But it's not necessarily Out of School Time that will make the difference. The new math program will also help. We know that correlation between SES and outcomes still needs to be addressed. Replicating the curriculum at home is one of the issues that we see. We are still using a culturally responsive framework. Those partnerships that we aim to develop are still part of our work with the community. Welcome every parent to continue to engage with our office.

Dr. Boston Davis invited Principal Marshall to share his presentation

- **Kennedy School Improvement Plan **see presentation attached below ****

Mr. Green: I really appreciate the clear focus on these SIPs on clear, actionable goals. On your Wellness and Joy goal. I appreciate your understanding that time spent in discipline is time away from the classroom. My question is, what I don't understand is how you compare with how Kennedy has been, particularly when SPS saw a spike in behavior issues right after we came back from COVID. Five years this week since we went remote. Where are you relative to where you were before COVID?

Principal Marshall: We had 85 suspensions and reduced it to 7, the year before COVID. We had emergency removals, which is an investigatory timeframe, and then we made a decision. One of the things I've noticed is that emergency removals, once they became something, increased. It was a way to have a child, if it was unsafe for them to stay in school, we still saw a low number of actual suspensions, but that was because we had the emergency removal. They still weren't accessing the curriculum. My goal is to reduce emergency removals as well. In terms of the pandemic, a majority of our suspensions come from SEEK. I did see a lot of decline in social skills. They didn't rise to the level of behaviors that took students out of class; it was more of a cultural shift. We've definitely seen an increase since the 7 that we had just before the pandemic, but we are working to keep those numbers low. I do hear feedback sometimes that we are not tough enough. I stand by my values that it's an education thing, that you have to socially learn how to work together. By suspending a student, things that don't change a student's behavior, don't make sense to me. What's your impact on the community? Sam has helped with this. Why what a student did wasn't okay. Sometimes it's teachers, sometimes it's families that feel that something should happen to a

student.

Mr. Green: That may have been the most honest and frank conversation about principal that I have heard a principal give. One of the hardest things for principals to talk about is the reality of how discipline works in their schools. Appreciate that frankness and it gives me real hope.

Ms. Pitone: A question for the central office again. I'm excited to hear that schools want to educate families about the new math curriculum, like what we're doing in ELA. I would hope those efforts are collaborative. I wouldn't want admin and educators developing a whole program in one school and another school having to reinvent the wheel.

Principal Marshall: I know Paul O'Sullivan is leading some sessions for parents. It's something I want to continue. I think the more information we can provide to families, that leads to a higher level of achievement. Really reaching everybody. One of the things about that, how do we give everyone access to that. Reaching our sub-separate programs, who rely on transportation. How do we reach those families who don't always have access?

Dr. Jessica Boston Davis: It's an excellent point. We do have some districtwide events coming up. I pulled up the dates. This was shared with SFLC and will be announced in a district newsletter too. Specifically around math, three sessions: Thursday 3/27 at ESCS with childcare and pizza; Friday 3/28 8-9am at Kennedy, no childcare provided, no registration necessary. 4/10 on Zoom at 7pm. These will be more widely shared. Similarly, as part of the curricular development councils, Kathleen Seward has been going to each school site council meeting and talking about the curriculum development process. That said, priorities for next school year, and tying it back to the Argenziano plan. We could do a better job as a district so people don't have to formulate it themselves. That is something I'm thinking about especially as we are rolling out a lot of curriculum. This will be a priority for next year.

Mr. Green: I get so many things from SPS, I'm not always sure where to look. Think about ways to make it clearer to parents who join me in where to find things.

Dr. Jessica Boston Davis: Part of the reason I think it's better for central to better support the schools is so we can streamline. One tool that I think is great is the calendar, the live one available on the SPS website. You can download it to your phone and it has concerts and district-sponsored events in one place. It may or may not have all school events. If you want to merge it to your phone calendar it can be there too.

Mr. Biton: Segueing off that point around communication with families. For me and my family, understanding the events that are happening at school and what is happening with a social or PTA event, or when conferences are, is one thing. Then there's regular communications from the classroom about what academics are happening and how we as parents can help support that. Those are two completely different things. Refining and enhancing those communication pathways, whatever is goal 4, the parent communication can actually amplify goal 1, and make the academic focus better.

Dr. Phillips: It's been a couple years since I lived fully in the world of SEL, but when I did, I was really struck by the research that teachers find it hard to improve kid SEL when they are working on their own SEL skills as well. How are we supporting educators' social-emotional learning?

Principal Marshall: It's not minor, but a piece of a bigger puzzle, is just how we care about each other in the building. We all have lives, things we have to attend to, emergencies, some of us have children. For

me, it's critical that I acknowledge the needs of our staff as much as I can so they can do their best work. We want to be mindful of trends, and making sure our teachers are there for our students, but acknowledging that we are a community and need to support each other. When things get tough, we rally around each other and we problem-solve. It's not just Sam and myself trying to figure out these problems. School Council, PTA, those pieces help support our staff in their social/emotional wellbeing. We are not living in isolation.

Dr. Carmona: We have invested significantly in SEL. Specialist in every school; project with Children's Hospital on role clarity. We need to support our students and staff as well. The overall framework of wellbeing in the district is also a priority. We are investing on this new addition to the budget last year, and we continue to prioritize that work and will look at outcomes from the work we are doing right now.

Mayor Ballantyne: My question is more for the district. As we are reviewing these SIPs, does the district do a longitudinal study so we can track changes or developments over time?

Dr. Carmona: We have a new dashboard; we have a Strategic Plan that we didn't have before and that's a place we can track our data across the board from different metrics. MCAS, iReady is a new tool. The design, through the portal, is intended to track ways.

Mayor Ballantyne: Over time, so we can see last year, to this year, to going forward.

Principal Marshall: Also tracking behavior and attendance, things that contribute to academic success. We are looking at students who struggle with attendance, looking at their past attendance. This helps parents understand how many hours of school they've actually missed. It's been really beneficial for parents to say, boy I didn't really recognize that.

VI. REPORTS OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee: February 24, 2025 (Ms. Barish)

MOTION: there was a motion by Mr. Green, Seconded by Dr. Phillips, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee for February 24, 2025

Rules Management Subcommittee

February 24, 2025
City Council Chambers

The meeting was called to order at 5:03 pm. At the start of the meeting, Leiran Biton, Andre Green, and Ellenor Barish were present, along with MASC Field Representative, Alicia Mallon. Chief of Staff and Strategy Amara Anosike arrived later. There was no one in the audience. There were four items on the agenda.

1. Approve Notes from February 3 Meeting

LB moved to approve the notes from the February 3 meeting, seconded by Andre Green. The motion passed unanimously.

2. The next item on the agenda was Policy Manual Review - Sections A-C.

Subcommittee members have no additional questions for legal counsel regarding Section A. Ms. Barish

has requested some clarifications and feedback and hopes to hear back before the March meeting. Ms. Mallon picked up reviewing MASC recommendations for Section B where the group left off at the previous meeting.

BEDH - should be retained as is.

BEDH-E - will be retained with small language changes including citizen to resident.

BEE - MASC recommends leaving Instructions out so there can be flexibility for particular circumstances; guidelines would be read aloud before any hearing.

Ms. Barish asked where things that must exist should exist if not in policy. They should be maintained in the Superintendent's office.

BG - Minor language changes; we don't need to include the reference to NSBA

BGB - Remove final paragraph; SC doesn't levy punishment for infractions

BGC - Alicia will insert the version we approved last June.

BGD - Somerville with minor language changes from MASC.

BGE - Changes as proposed by MASC

BGF - No action required

BHC - Add section on visiting schools

BHE - Use MASC version which is more up-to-date

BIA - Mr. Biton noted that the language is very passive. Mr. Green pointed out that is standard in policy. No changes required.

BIBA - Subcommittee members prefer the MASC version

BID - We do not currently have this policy; Ms. Mallon will revise to include the fact that we are paid and the mechanisms by which that happens - according to City Charter and amount determined by ordinance.

BG - Policies match

BK - Retain; no MASC equivalent.

Ms. Barish asked that the group move to Agenda Item 3 and return to Policy Manual Review if time should allow.

3. Policy KHC - Distribution of Notices

Ms. Anosike brought this language to us. She noted that while the district values freedom of expression, we must do our best to ensure that there is no confusion between statements made or shared in the educational environment and official district positions. Additionally, the district must prevent district resources being used to advance staff members' personal interests. This language already exists for electronic communications in the Acceptable Use policy, but not for printed materials. Mr. Green noted that as written, this policy would eliminate the distribution of community notices - Cub Scout sign ups, for example. Subcommittee members want to be able to retain that ability. Mr. Biton asked if students should be named in this policy as well as staff. Subcommittee members discussed the difference between district position and personal position. Ms. Anosike will request more specific language from legal counsel. Ms. Mallon suggested reviewing KHA and KHB and referencing Article XIV - Academic Freedom. Ms. Anosike said that any challenges to this policy would be reviewed on a case by case basis, but that this policy would provide the administration with necessary support.

4. Policy IJNDB - Network Acceptable Use Policy for Staff

Ms. Anosike shared a paragraph to be added to the end of policy IJNDB addressing appropriate use of email by district staff, particularly what can be included in an email signature. Attendees discussed items that should be allowed but aren't already included in this draft: credentials, honorifics, confidentiality statements, professional designations, legal references, etc. Andre will follow up with Amara with some additional suggestions.

5. Policy JCA - Controlled Choice Student Assignment

This item was tabled.

The group returned to the Policy Manual Review, taking up Section C.

CA - Minor language updates to Somerville version

CB - Members noted that SPS does not present an Annual Report to City Council. Ms. Mallon will edit accordingly.

CBC - MASC recommends striking this as most of it comes from MGL. Members agree.

CBD - Retain Somerville with MASC language changes

CBI - Somerville with updates from MASC

CCB - Somerville with minor language updates

CE - Minor language updates and expenses language

CH - Grammar update

CHA/CHC - To replace SPS CHA and CHC; Ms. Barish requests removal of "in the schools" for more universality

CHB - Subcommittee opted to remove this policy based on MASC guidance

CHCA - Subcommittee members chose the MASC version, switching the order of the 2nd and 3rd paragraphs and changing school council to School Improvement Council.

CHCA-E - This is handbook language; remove from policy manual

CHD - One small language change

CL - Remove this and insert MASC's CM. Mr. Biton requested standard language changes: citizens to residents and towns to cities.

That concluded Section C.

Ms. Mallon will send Sections D and E for review at the April Rules meeting. She is unable to attend the March meeting.

The Meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm

Documents Used:

FILE - Addition to IJNDB - NETWORK ACCEPTABLE USE

File-KHC -DISTRIBUTION OF MATERIALS AND NOTICES

Somerville DRAFT Section A With Changes

Somerville DRAFT Section B With Changes (1)

Somerville DRAFT Section C With Analysis

Somerville DRAFT Section C With Changes

Title IX and Policy - other revisions 12.27.24 (1)

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

B. A. School Committee Meeting for the School Building Facilities and Maintenance: March 3, 2025 (Mr. Biton) Tabled

C. School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole: March 5, 2025 (Dr. Phillips)

MOTION: There was a motion by Mr. Green, seconded by Dr. Phillips, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole for March 5, 2025

Report of The Finance and Facilities Subcommittee, March 5, 2025, submitted by Sarah Phillips

The Finance and Facilities Subcommittee met on March 5, 2025, via Zoom. Members present were Ilana Krepchin, Sarah Phillips, Andre Green, Ellenor Barish, Laura Pitone. Also in attendance was Interim Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Pat Durette, and Superintendent Rubén Carmona, and Assistant Supt. Jessica Boston-Davis.

Sarah Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:02pm. Emily Ackman, joined at 6:06pm. Leiran Biton joined at 6:42. There were 2 attendees in the audience and four items on the agenda:

1) FY26 Level Service Projections

Rubén offered an overview of the FY26 budget process, including the budget's focus on being student-focused, transparent, equitable, and aligned with the strategic plan. He described the current financial landscape, including uncertainty at the federal level. We currently receive \$3.5 million in federal entitlement grants plus an additional \$4 million for the school food program and free school meals, we receive \$2 million from the state, and the Mayor has offered a 5% budget increase.

The committee asked about the city's confidence in their proposed 5% budget increase. Rubén affirmed that the city has consistently been projecting a 5% budget increase but agreed that the economic picture is challenging.

The district is assuming we are working within a level-service budget environment. With all the requests that have come in through the budget collaboratives, we are projecting a 7% budget increase. The district needs to go through those requests and decide which to fulfill, however most are compliance related, meaning that we must fulfill them. This does not include the numbers that will be coming through the union negotiation process.

Rubén described the budget collaborative process. Every principal and department head discusses what they need. Right now that is in the context of a level service budget. We are almost at the end of the collaborative process.

Pat provided an overview of the draft level-service budget. It does not include any of the new requests from the budget collaboratives. Key changes include: addition of funds to the school committee org for MASC, a reduction in the alignment of our HR/PR systems, additional funds for Unidos and Newsela (which were pre-paid this year), projector replacements and increases in technology supply costs, transportation increases, menstrual product and dispenser costs at all middle/high schools, a decrease in accreditation costs, and increase in supplies for the CTE program (which were pre-paid this year), a new

contract for SPED transportation, projected increase in out of district tuition, projected salaries for mid-year hires, decrease in Title 1 funds, and salary adjustments. Many of these increases are estimates and will change as bids come in and contracts are signed.

The committee discussed the costs of menstrual products and the increase to the school committee line item.

2) Mid-Year Hires

Pat discussed the list of mid-year hires– positions that were not budgeted for in the prior budget and will continue into next year. This list is changing. For example, the resource room teacher at the Healey may not continue. This is the group of people represented by the mid-year hire salary line in the budget. The committee discussed whether the recording secretary was a full time or stipend position. This supports people who take notes at school committee meetings. There was also a question about the facilities, transportation, and safety coordinator. This is currently an unfilled position. There were also questions about college and career stipends, which are stipends for staff to strengthen the college and career specialist roles at the middle school level.

Laura followed up on a question about charter school enrollment. Emily offered an update on charter school reimbursement from the state and how it changes year to year based on how many years each child from our district has been in a charter school. The overall rate from the state also appears to have been changed as well. We will discuss further at our next meeting.

3) YTD Expenditures

The committee discussed the year to date expenditures. We have used or encumbered about 61% of our budget, which is where we should be. We encouraged our schools and departments to start looking at any balances they have and to spend those down before the end of the fiscal year.

The committee discussed items that were pre-paid from last year and added to the level service for this year and whether we would be able to pre-pay them again this year. We may be able to. The committee also asked about transportation, where we are currently at 93% expended, and wondering if there is a risk of going over. That is because a lot of transportation is encumbered for the full year. In transportation, the main unknowns are in McKinney-Vento costs.

4) February Bill Rolls

The committee discussed the February local bill rolls. There was a question about a field trip aiming to clarify that an outside organization donated money for the tickets and the district paid for transportation. There was a motion by Ilana Krepchin, seconded by Ellenor Barish to approve the local bill rolls. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 6:43pm.

Documents Used:

Finance and Facilities March 5, 2025.pdf
FEBRUARY BILL ROLL.pdf

FY26 Unbudgeted Positions.pdf 2
FY26 Level Service Budget.pdf
YTD Budget report February.pdf
Increases to FY26 Budget.pdf
Cherry Sheet Estimates.pdf

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. February Bill Rolls

MOTION: There was a motion by Mr. Green, seconded by Dr. Phillips, to approve the January Bill Rolls
The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

B. UAW Community School MOU

MOTION: There was a motion by Mr. Green, seconded Ms. Pitone, to authorize the chair to sign the UAW Community School MOU
The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

C. A. Field Trips: (Recommended action: Approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Barish, seconded by Mr. Biton, to approved field trip for April 2, 2025-April 5, 2025, Twenty- six students from the SHS Robotic team will travel to Springfield, MA to participate in The Big E Robotic competition. Travel via school bus at no cost to students.
The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

D. A. FY25 Somerville High School Diploma Request (Recommended action: approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Mr. Green, seconded by Ms. Barish, to approve FY25 Somerville High School Diploma for *Jose Ferman Fuentes, Youseline Julien, Patricia Quintana De Leon of Somerville, MA*

Mr. Green noted that these students had not passed the MCAS previously but are now eligible to receive a high school diploma

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

E. A. FY25 SCALE Diploma Request (Recommended action: approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Phillips, seconded by Ms. Pitone, to approve FY25 SCALE Diploma request for *Daniel Alberto Pérez Ramírez of Somerville, MA*
The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

F. Acceptance of FY25 Grants Funds (Recommended action: approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Mr. Green, seconded by Dr. Phillips, to accept all federal entitlement and continuation grants and all state continuation grants awarded to the Somerville Public Schools listed below:

Federal

Special Education IEP Implementation- \$ 20,000.00- Special Ed. IEP Implementation

Title I Grant -\$240.00- Grant Increase

Title II Grant-\$1, 501.00-Grant Increase

PRIVATE

Somerville Foundation- Author- \$500.00- Brown School Library

SAC- Author-\$1, 302.00- Brown School Library

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Resolution in support of people with Disabilities in Somerville Public Schools.

Mr. Biton - Mr green provided some edits to the resolution which are now add to the new amended version

Mr. Green: As discussed at our last meeting, I thought it important to detail specific things we could do. With that in mind, proposed some changes to language in the second resolved item: to be more in fitting with the way we talk about other forms of equity and a justice lens, rather than backing away from a discussion of justice and structural oppression, to lean into it and added three action items, 4, 5, and 6.

4. Wholeheartedly rejects any implication from the so-called "Make America Healthy Again" Executive Order that conditions such as Autism and ADHD represent a "threat to the American people and our way of life";

5. Authorizes the Chair of the Somerville School Committee, alongside the Superintendent and Director of Special Education, meet with the Committee's legal Counsel to develop strategies to assist national efforts in defense of federal Special Education Law and the enforcement thereof; and

6. Calls on the Massachusetts Legislature and Governor to codify special education rights into state law and to compensate districts for any potential lost federal funding.

Resolution in Support of People with Disabilities in Somerville Public Schools

WHEREAS Somerville Public Schools is committed to providing an inclusive, equitable, and safe environment for all students, staff, and caregivers/families, regardless of disability status, immigration status, national origin, ethnicity, race, religion, sexual orientation, sex, gender identity, socioeconomic status, or beliefs;

WHEREAS people with disabilities may hold a variety of other identities intersecting among other groups, which can compound experiences of marginalization;

WHEREAS Somerville is enriched by the presence of individuals with disabilities, and that the success and wellbeing of each member of our community is central to the wellbeing of the community overall;

WHEREAS the lawsuit *Texas v. Becerra* brought by 17 states, seeks to have Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 ruled unconstitutional, which would jeopardize the rights of all people with disabilities;

WHEREAS President Trump's Executive Order 14212 "Establishing The President's Make America Healthy Again Commission" frames an increase in autism spectrum disorder and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder diagnoses as part of "a dire threat to the American people and our way of life," without acknowledging the improved understanding of autism and ADHD that have arisen because of the tireless advocacy of the neurodiverse community, or the significant changes to the diagnostic criteria for ASD and

ADHD that have resulted in many more people receiving these diagnoses than would have previously;

WHEREAS the nominee for Secretary of Education, Linda McMahon, has promised to dismantle the U.S. Department of Education, which plays a crucial role in monitoring states' compliance with Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and ensuring that students with disabilities receive the services and supports they need; and

WHEREAS a January 16, 2025 report on Massachusetts's educational system from the ED Office of Special Education Programs identified ten findings of noncompliance with federal IDEA requirements, including in areas of Dispute Resolution and "Child Find" (identifying children with disabilities), which may put the state's annual \$340 million in federal special education funding at risk;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Somerville School Committee:

1. Recommits to providing inclusive educational opportunities for all students with disabilities and ensuring access to supports and services needed for students to thrive in the educational setting;
2. Will continue to engage with advocates and educators with expertise in areas of disability and its intersection with diversity, equity, and inclusion about how to integrate a disability justice framework throughout SPS curricula, including coverage of the history of the disability rights movement, for all students to further combat stereotypes and foster empathy;
3. Will foster collaboration and partnership between SPS and organizations such as Somerville SEPAC and the DESE Special Ed Department, as well as other institutions with expertise in special education, to promote best practices to identify and empower students with disabilities to access grade-level instruction and promote compliance with federal and state requirements. Somerville will lead by example in identifying and meeting the needs of students with disabilities, consistent with SPS's commitment to inclusivity and excellence.;
4. Wholeheartedly rejects any implication from the so-called "Make America Healthy Again" Executive Order that conditions such as Autism and ADHD represent a "threat to the American people and our way of life";
5. Authorizes the Chair of the Somerville School Committee, alongside the Superintendent and Director of Special Education, meet with the Committee's legal Counsel to develop strategies to assist national efforts in defense of federal Special Education Law and the enforcement thereof; and
6. Calls on the Massachusetts Legislature and Governor to codify special education rights into state law and to compensate districts for any potential lost federal funding.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution shall be:

1. Distributed to all District schools and published on the district website;
2. Sent to state and federal representatives; and

3. Shared with the Somerville SEPAC.

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Pitone, seconded by Dr. Phillips, to the Resolution in support of people with Disabilities in Somerville Public Schools.

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

B. MSBA Update:

No new updates

VIII. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Pitone: This Thursday, the SHS Ceramics is hosting the SHS Empty Bowls Project for a donation, you eat donated soup from restaurants in the area, bring home a beautiful bowl, and the money goes to Project SOUP. It is from 5-7 at the high school.

Chair Krepchin: After that is the first performance of the Shakespeare play Much Ado.

Ms. Pitone: A second event, SHS fundraising is having an event on 3/22 from 7-11 pm, hosting a musician/comedian at the Dante Club.

Mr. Green: Congratulations to SEU, CAAS, and others for the successful rally on Sunday in support of immigrants. An estimated 300 or so people, which for a windy, cold day speaks to the values of this community. Shout-out to Padres Latinos, who celebrated their fourth birthday this year with a party featuring many elected officials. Joined by Senator Jehlen.

Mayor Ballantyne: This is more of a request. One of the roles of SC is policy development. My ask is that on the SPS website, we keep a little table that says "these are the policies that are in the queue," you know, where it is in progress, and when we anticipate when it will be due. What was brought up was the homework policy from a few years back, parents didn't necessarily know about it. On the City Council side, we have legislative software. Trying to keep track of what is in the queue. Since the School Committee is set up differently, I just wonder what you all think about having a little table that gets updated continually. I couldn't answer someone's question when they asked me what policies SC is developing. It's a step towards being transparent.

IX. CONDOLENCES

The Somerville School Committee extends its deepest condolences to the families of

X. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned 8:41 p.m.

Related documents:

Agenda

[Argenziano School Improvement Plan](#)

[Kennedy School Improvement Plan](#)

Attach Documents Starting on the next page

Submitted by: C. Legaski

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – CITY HALL
REGULAR MEETING – MARCH 10, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2025, 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:
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 the Zoom:

https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_EB-AFq7pROSMl0vsJOWNEg

Meeting ID: 869 0362 0322

Password: SPSSC24

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 supports 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 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. SCHOOL COMMITTEE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- February 3, 2025

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – In person or via Zoom

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

https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_EB-AFq7pROSMl0vsJOWNEg

Meeting ID: 869 0362 0322

Password: SPSSC24

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT**A. District Report**

- Argenziano School Improvement Plan
- Kennedy School Improvement Plan

VI. Report of Subcommittees**A. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee: February 24, 2025 (Ms. Barish)**

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee for February 24, 2025

B. School Committee Meeting for the School Building Facilities and Maintenance: March 3, 2025 (Mr. Biton)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for the School Building Facilities and Maintenance for March 3, 2025

C. School Committee Meeting for the Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole: March 5, 2025 (Dr. Phillips)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for the Finance and Facilities Meeting of March 5, 2025.

VII. NEW BUSINESS**A. February Bill Rolls****B. UAW Community School MOU**

MOTION: to authorize the chair to sign the UAW Community School MOU

C. Field Trips: (Recommended action: Approval)

April 2, 2025-April 5, 2025,

Twenty- six students from the SHS Robotic team will travel to Springfield, MA to participate in The Big E Robotic competition. Travel via school bus no cost to student

D. FY25 Somerville High School Diploma Request (Recommended action: approval)

Jose Ferman Fuentes

Somerville, MA

Youseline Julien

Somerville, MA

Patricia Quintana De Leon

Somerville, MA

E. FY25 SCALE Diploma Request (Recommended action: approval)

Daniel Alberto Pérez Ramírez

Somerville, MA

F. Acceptance of FY25 Grants 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:

Federal

Special Education IEP Implementation- \$20, 000.00- Special Ed. IEP Implementation

Title I Grant -\$240.00-Grant Increase

Title II Grant-\$1, 501.00-Grant Increase

Private

Somerville Foundation- Author- \$500.00- Brown School Library

SAC- Author-\$1, 302.00- Brown School Library

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**A. Resolution in support of people with Disabilities in Somerville Public Schools (second reading)****B. MSBA Update**

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

IX. ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

X. CONDOLENCE

XI. ADJOURNMENT

For Simultaneous Interpretation in Spanish, Portuguese and Haitian Creole See below:**Español - Para Interpretación**

Para **ver** la Reunión Regular del Comité Escolar el 3 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:

https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_EB-AFq7pR0SMl0vsJ0WNEq

Identificación de la reunión: 869 0362 0322

Contraseña: SP55C24

Português - Para Interpretação

Para **assistir** à Reunião Regular do Comitê Escolar 3 de Fevereiro às 7:00, ao vivo de casa, visite o seguinte link e selecione **GovTV**: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/communications-and-community-engagement/somerville-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://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_EB-AFq7pR0SMl0vsJ0WNEq

ID da reunião: 869 0362 0322

Senha: SP55C24

Kreyòl ayisyen - Pou entèpretasyon

Pou **gade** reyinyon regilye Komite Lekòl la 3 Fevriye a 7:00, an dirèk nan kay la, vizite lyen sa a epi chwazi **GovTV**: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/communications-and-community-engagement/somerville-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://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_EB-AFq7pR0SMl0vsJ0WNEq

Reyinyon ID: 869 0362 0322

Modpas: SP55C24