

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Monday, January 13, 2025 - Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m. – City Hall Chambers

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

Members Absent: Mayor Ballantyne, President Pineda Neufeld

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:01 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 – 7 –Ms. Pitone, Dr. Ackman (Arrived at 7:08 p.m.), Mr. Green, Mr. Biton Ms. Barish, Dr. Phillips, and Ms. Krepchin **ABSENT** – 2 Mayor Ballantyne, President Pineda Neufeld

Chair Krepchin asked interpreters to introduce themselves:

Addy Penate-Spanish

Sueli DeCarney-Portuguese

Tia Santos-Haitian Creole

II. REPORT OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Student Representative Jampa Lhanyits was present and reported the following:

- Starting on Wednesday, course selection begins for freshman, sophomore and juniors along with the introduction of the new course selection fair where students will have the chance to explore new electives and classes by going around the high school during X-Block
- Access Testing for non-English speakers begin next week along with mock AP test in the morning creating a late start for some students.
- Sparks Scholarship opens their application to sophomores and juniors to provide \$3,500 scholarship to a summer program of the student choice.
- High School Multicultural fair planning has begun, and the fair will take place sometime in April

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **November 25, 2024**
- **December 9, 2024**
- **December 16, 2024**

Motion: There was a motion by Ms. Barish, seconded by Mr. Biton to approve the school committee minutes from November 25, 2024, December 9, 2024, and December 16, 2024.

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Dayshawn Simmons SEU Union President- Comment attached below

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Report

Dr Carmona shared his district report which was as follows Happy New Year and welcome back to everyone for our first Meeting of the Year! Today we have an agenda that reflects the rich and diverse culture of Somerville Public Schools.

Today's agenda includes important updates, starting with Dr. Boston Davis. Dr. Boston Davis will lead us through a review of the proposed calendar for the 2025-2026 school year. This proposal builds on previous successes while introducing some key changes aimed at improving functionality and ensuring that critical elements remain intact.

Next, we'll hear from the SFLC Multilingual Services team. We are fortunate to have a dedicated group of translators and interpreters who do incredible work in supporting our district's families. This team truly embodies the priorities of our strategic plan, especially in the areas of Equity & Access, and Family & Community Engagement. During their presentation, you'll hear how they meet families where they are—using culturally responsive strategies and communicating in their native languages.

Staff Shout-Outs

Also, before we proceed, I'd like to take a moment to celebrate some of our staff's recent achievements:

- Thank you to the Somerville Times for awarding us with the [Best Idea of 2024](#): Free Food Market for Somerville Public Schools families.
- Shout out to the SFLC staff and to our volunteers for organizing and staffing this event on the first Tuesday of every month!

Brown Boiler

Switching gears, I'd like to provide an update on the Brown Boiler. As many of you know, last Monday we had a heating failure with the Boiler at the Brown School, on a day in which temperatures were below freezing. As a result, we had to make the difficult decision to dismiss school early.

I want to express my gratitude to the students, staff, and families at the Brown School, along with our Central Office staff. Everyone worked quickly to ensure that students were safely dismissed and also received lunch prior to dismissal.

I also want to thank DPW for their quick response. DPW identified that the issue was due to a sensor failure and a frozen pipe connected to the boiler. Fortunately, the problem was discovered early Monday morning and resolved by 3 p.m. that same day.

If you have any detailed questions, the City has communicated that they will provide an update on the boiler at the next Joint School Committee and City Council meeting on facilities. The date for this meeting has not yet been scheduled.

MLK Jr. Day!

Before we continue, I'd like to take a moment to acknowledge and celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Each year, we honor his extraordinary legacy of non-violence, justice for all, and collaboration across all walks of life.

As we move into today's meeting, I want us to reflect on Dr. King's words from his I Have a Dream speech:

"We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today. We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now... Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy."

Let's carry that sense of urgency into our work. We are tasked with creating the future Dr. King envisioned—one where every student has the opportunity to thrive and where academic excellence is available to all.

I also want to highlight that our Director of Equity & Excellence, Caeli Galitano, is organizing an MLK Jr. Day Celebration with the City of Somerville on January 20th at 11 a.m. at the East Somerville School. There will be food, entertainment, and a panel discussion.

A big thank you to Caeli for putting this together!

he then invited Ruth Santos SFLC Director to share her presentation along with her team

- **SFLC Multilingual Services**

Ruth Santos introduced her Multilingual Services team, which includes Viviana, Angie, Micaela, and Vanusa. She shared that the department now has a full-time coordinator and three full-time interpreters.

The data shared today reflects the first four months of the school year. During this period, the Multilingual Services Department has successfully supported 131 events and translated over 136 documents. They have fulfilled 100% of all submitted translation requests and approximately 96% of event requests.

The most requested languages for services include Portuguese, Spanish, Haitian Creole, and Mandarin.

Micaela Yang multilingual coordinator continued with the presentation until recently there was no specific training but DESE has now started to standardize practices and has created a training. We received a grant to be able to provide this training to all of our staff our district is one of the first districts in MA to do this. With this grant, I will become a DESE Certified trainer by the end of this school year. The goal is to train more staff internally and also lead trainings for other districts.

Micaela Yang, the Multilingual Coordinator, continued the presentation by highlighting recent advancements in training. She explained that, until recently, there was no standardized training for multilingual services. However, DESE has now begun to standardize practices and has developed a formal training program.

Thanks to a grant, our district can provide this training to all staff, making us one of the first districts in Massachusetts to implement it. By the end of this school year, I will become a DESE-certified trainer. This certification will enable us to train more staff internally and lead training sessions for other districts as well.

Questions/ Comments

Dr. Ackman- thank you for putting this presentation together it was very detailed

Dr. Phillips- how does the city and your work conjunction with each other?

Ruth Santos- we are currently working on system to be able to work in conjunction with each other.

- **2025-2026 School Calendar (Dr. Boston Davis)**

Dr. Boston Davis shared the draft of 2025-2026 school calendar and noted that per DESE regulation we schedule up to the 185th day of school. While the 180th day is the (actual) last day of school, the additional days provide flexibility in case adjustments are needed.

Biggest Difference for this year, the calendar will be one-sided. In the past, I included a list of various religious and cultural observances and holidays to celebrate the rich diversity of our community. This effort was developed in partnership with Gallitano, SFLC, and Nomi Davidson.

Since the inclusion of the list of cultural observances, Gallitano has established systems and structures, such as a monthly emailed calendar. This calendar not only highlights holidays but also includes links to resources and events.

Given these updates, I propose that the list of cultural observances transition into a live document maintained by the Director of Equity and Excellence, complementing the calendar. This approach allows the information to remain

dynamic and ensures it can be updated as needed.

The calendar itself will primarily focus on communicating when schools are open or closed. This streamlined format would help minimize the need to resend the calendar during the school year due to minor errors, such as capitalization or spelling mistakes, even after multiple rounds of proofreading.

This is the proposal, but I am open to addressing any questions or considering other suggestions.

Comments/ Questions

Dr. Ackman- It's been a joy watching the evolution of the calendar over the year, one thing I would ask the red key for no school- What I would want to know from a parent prospective is are my kids in school or not.

Chair Krepchin- by looking at the calendar I guess the students come back January 2nd maybe under the KEY we need to write " no school for Student/ PD for educators"

Ms Pitone perhaps have both colors in the same box

Mr. Biton- Recently have had questions from the community about the beginning of school, and why we have traditionally, and I see it here too start day is a Wednesday half-day, then Thursday full day, then the Friday before Labor Day off. Is there a particular reason why we have this schedule?

Mr. Green- The short answer is that it's part of the contract and has been for as long as I've been on the School Committee. In fact, my very first question on the SC was about this. At the time, leadership brought the question to the principals, who unanimously supported the "soft start." While this could potentially be changed during contract negotiations, any updates would not appear on this document until they are finalized and approved, which could take several months. The purpose of the soft start is to allow students to "ease" into the school year.

Dr. Ackman- From an equity perspective, the early start provides an opportunity for students to receive backpacks and supplies from the district. The backpack program also helps by providing food for students over the long weekend. From both an academic and equity perspective, this is another important reason to support the early start.

Mr. Green- Another reason is the rationale to climate change. Days in August and September are generally more valuable than days in June. The sentiment at the time was that we might face another year like 2017, so starting the school year earlier allows for better programming and reduces the likelihood of school extending to June 30.

Ms Pitone- Before this was included in the contract, the start date varied depending on when Labor Day fell. Some years, school would start before Labor Day, while other years, it started after. There was a desire to establish consistency, which, as a parent, can feel a bit complicated. However, always knowing that school begins on the Wednesday before Labor Day removes any uncertainty, which has its benefits.

Another factor was the impact of years with heavy snowfall. This change was implemented during a year when significant snow forced the school year to be extended to the point where it was difficult to finish on time. Since adopting this consistent start date, we haven't faced that same challenge.

Dr. Phillips- fully support the changes to the calendar but wonder if through you chair to refer the policies that talk about religious observances to Rules to think through, how to give kids space to not be in school and not do work on their major religious holiday.

Mr. Biton- I understand that the Director of Equity and Excellence will primarily be sharing information with educators. However, many of our educational partners, such as PTAs, also rely on this document.

Can you clarify how communication with these partners will be handled if all the information is not centralized in one place?

Chair Krepching made a suggestion to add a link to the calendar to direct constituents to where the Religious holidays will be displayed in the website.

Dr. Boston Davis- My initial idea was to get some feedback from today. There would be a live document, though not necessarily a rolling one. We could start with a similar, up-to-date list, maintained by the Director of Equity. Over time, we could add a monthly calendar as well, either linked alongside the list or housed under the Department of Equity's webpage. My vision is for the calendar to be public-facing, featuring a list of dates with links to relevant information, regularly updated.

Ms Pitone-I wanted to acknowledge Phillips—good idea to discuss this in Rules.

Ms Barish- base on the references from Dr. Phillips and Mr. Biton wondering if it makes sense to reference these policies either on this calendar or the webpage with the list of holidays.

Mr. Biton A minor wording change may be needed regarding holidays that start at sundown, as it might be confusing for some. The draft calendar indicates that holidays begin at sundown on the date listed. However, for many holidays, they actually begin at sundown the previous day, meaning the listed date may differ.

Dr. Boston Davis that is correct I thought it was confusing some holiday start the day before. I took the liberty to list the date the holiday begins, with the star indicating it starts at sundown that day. This makes it clearer and helps avoid confusion, so an educator doesn't realize too late that it actually started the day before. However, if the previous wording was clearer, I'm open to adjusting it back.

Dr. Phillips it makes more sense to have them listed this way.

Ms Pitone Was there anything weird in this calendar? Like the long holiday break for winter that we had this year?

Dr. Boston Davis-.Not quite. There are some contractual language considerations regarding when breaks begin. This year is much clearer professional development starts on a Friday, and students return on a Monday. The first day for students is January 5.

B. Personnel Report

• December 2024

Dr. Carmona announced the following retirements

- Shelley Jareo -Resource Room Teacher retiring after 21 years of service)
- Elizabeth Melcher Haddada - Special Education ELA Teacher SHS retiring after 4 years of service
- Michele Bennett-SKIP Teacher Kennedy retiring after 18 years of service

Thank you, to all of the retirees, for all your years of service and dedication to our SPS students.

Also acknowledged the resignation of Jackie Piques Director of Communication we lost a great asset and we are now actively looking.

VI. REPORTS OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting: December 16, 2024 (Ms. Barish)

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Barish, seconded by Dr. Phillips, to accept the report of the School

Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee on December 16, 2024.

Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting Report

December 16, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 5:35 pm with subcommittee members Leiran Biton and Ellenor Barish as well as Chief of Staff and Strategy Amara Anosike present. There were two people in the audience. There were four items on the agenda.

Mr. Biton moved to approve the notes from the November Rules meeting, seconded by Ms. Barish. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Barish took item three out of order and those in attendance reviewed comments from the legal team on MASC's recommendations for Section A of the policy manual.

In reference to the legal team's comments on ACA-R, Mr. Biton asked Ms. Anosike if there is a reason the administration would want to limit appeal rights of employees. She will get back to the subcommittee but her initial response was in support of allowing for appeals.

Mr. Biton also asked if Ms. Mallon had thoughts on removing definitions of Sexual Harassment as suggested by the legal team. Ms. Mallon pointed out that such lists are not exhaustive and that it's hard to say "including but not limited to" in a heavily legal document. She suggested that we should ask the legal team where those definitions should live if they are removed from the policy; they should be somewhere (eg. handbook or district procedures).

The next item on the agenda was JCA - Controlled Choice Student Assignment Policy. Mr. Biton has been working with Teresa Rodriguez to revise this policy and expressed gratitude for how productive that collaboration has been. The goal of this draft was to streamline the policy and align the language with current practice. Mr. Biton will prepare a "track changes" version so it's easier to see the changes that are being proposed. This version does not address potential changes that we discussed at earlier meetings - Brown School transition process, PreK assignment process, rebalancing based on high needs status. Dr. Carmona's preference was to pass an interim policy while we continue to consider how the district might best address those

challenges.

Ms. Pitone requested that we reconsider including some information about the Brown School process so that it is clear to families applying for kindergarten. Mr. Biton wondered if that was necessary since that process is described in this document under *School Transfers*. Ms. Pitone advocated for more clarity. For example, do Brown School students finishing fifth grade get placed prior to all other transfers? What about students who attend K at Capuano? Ms. Barish wondered if this is the same process for students who skill out of a program. Ms. Pitone suggested that the policy could direct caregivers to details located online or in a handbook. Mr. Biton will bring new revisions in a track changes format to the next meeting.

The final item on the agenda was Policy Manual Review: Section B which covers School Committee governance. For most of the policies, Ms. Mallon recommends minimal grammatical changes. Some exceptions follow:

BB - Legal Status

Ensure that our version aligns with the laws cited in the MASC version. Ms. Mallon will change Board of Aldermen to City Council.

BBA - School Committee Powers and Duties

Struck number 6 and 7. Number 7 is covered in the introductory paragraph and law is cited below. Number 6 is inaccurate as we approve bill rolls, not individual bills. Ms. Mallon recommended that we check with a School Business Official (Joe or Pat) to ensure that we get the language right if we want to retain something about approving bill rolls. Most districts call it the warrant.

BBBA/BBBB - Qualifications/Oath of Office

Ms. Mallon recommends the MSBA version for the up-to-date ethics training requirement. Ms. Barish will confirm that the City Clerk keeps track of School Committee ethics training status.

BCBA - Conflict of Interest

Ms. Mallon recommends removal of this policy as it is redundant. The material is covered in the ethics rules and later policies.

BDA - Organizational Meeting

Ms. Mallon recommends retaining this policy as long as it aligns with the City Charter. Ms. Pitone suggested adding the Caucus process to this policy so that it is codified somewhere. Ms. Mallon will pull the language from the City Charter and add it to the revisions.

BDB - Responsibilities of Officers and Members

Members did not recommend any changes to the listed responsibilities and acknowledged that some may have been overlooked in recent years.

BDE - Subcommittees

Members recommended adding the Long Range Committee.

BDEA - School Committee Meeting for Long Range Planning

Ms. Mallon will move some of this language to the previous policy.

BDF - Advisory Committees

Ms. Mallon recommends adding number 9 to cover Open Meeting Law. She also added MGL references and cited JIB.

BDF A - School Councils

Ms. Mallon recommends the MASC version which offers a clearer discussion of approval, references MGL appropriately, and consolidates all of the BDF A-E policies.

BDF A-Es - Ms. Mallon recommends removing these policies with the adoption of the MASC version of BDF A but recommends flagging this for the administration to review.

BDG - School Attorney

Ms. Mallon recommends the MASC version because the relationship is better clarified.

The remainder of the policies in this section will be taken up at the next Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting, scheduled for January 27.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:34 pm.

Documents used:

JCA - Controlled Choice Student Assignment Policy (Draft)

Rules Management Subcommittee Report for November 2024

Somerville DRAFT Section A With Changes 12.5.24 jrc edits

Somerville DRAFT Section B Analysis

Somerville DRAFT Section B With Changes

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

B. School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities Subcommittee: December 18, 2024 (Dr. Phillips)

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr Phillips, seconded by Mr. Biton, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities Subcommittee on December 18, 2024.

Report of The Finance and Facilities Subcommittee, December 18, 2024, submitted by Sarah Phillips

The Finance and Facilities Subcommittee met on December 18, 2024, via Zoom. Members present were Sarah Phillips, Leiran Biton, and Ellenor Barish. Also in attendance was Interim Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Pat Durette and Superintendent Rubén Carmona.

Sarah Phillips called the meeting to order at 7:15pm. There were 1 attendee in the audience. There were four items on the agenda:

1) November Bill Rolls

Pat reviewed key expenses, including approximately \$35,000 in legal fees. There are a lot of school supplies being bought. There are a lot of athletics purchases because it's every official and every game.

Leiran Biton, seconded by Sarah Phillips, moved to approve the November Bill Rolls. The motion passed unanimously.

2) YTD Expenditure

Pat reviewed the YTD Expenditures. There were not a lot of changes from the prior month. We have been watching a number of accounts closely. For example, in curriculum, we are working with Jess to see what other funds we will need this year and will pull from other accounts if necessary. We are also looking at the OST line. They have used almost 80% of their budget because they've shifted to long-term contracts that run through the entire school year. Special education and transportation do the same thing. We have a few leaves of absences that we've had to fill with a staffing agency. Because we pay an agency, we can't charge to the salary account. We will probably charge it to one of our operations accounts, which will show a big negative. But there are no concerns about going over budget.

3) Community Schools Follow Up

Pat followed up on the questions. As of December 18, there is a small waitlist. But they are fully staffed. 50% of students at ECSC received scholarships (not 50% of students in Community Schools)--approximately 900 students were enrolled and of that number 149 students received some scholarship. Of the year to year carryover, community schools will spend about \$315,000 a month in expenses. Given that, they have a three month revenue cushion.

4) Federal Funding - FY24 Federal Grants Received and Expected Changes

Pat shared a report showing the FY24 Federal and state grants because it shows the full year. This shows the grant total of approximately 6.5 million dollars. It is inflated by the ESSER grants but gives a picture of what our federal grants usually are. We thought we would be seeing a decrease in our Title 1 because one school is below the threshold for the number of students living in poverty, but we didn't. We will definitely see it next year. For FY25, this 3.49 million - 80% is budgeted in salaries. That's something to consider as we move into budget season, as we expect Title 1 will decrease by about 15%.

The other piece is regarding school food service. 4.2 million dollars is the amount spent in the food service department last fiscal year. This total amount is coming from state or federal money. 75-80% is federal money. Not sure what shift we'll see in these numbers moving forward. It's hard to plan for.

The city is estimating that 1-2% of its revenue comes from the federal government (including money to school).

In planning for the budget, it would be good to be more conservative as we put the budget together, knowing that we could have things that could be cut. We are looking at efficiency dollars to see what savings we have. We also heard from the state that there will be other cuts— charter school reimbursement and circuit breaker, for example. Revenue trends are not going in the right direction. However, SPED tuitions are forecasted to only be going up 3-4%.

The meeting adjourned at 7:01 pm.

Documents Used:

Expenditure.pdf

November Bill Roll.pdf

YTD Expenses.pdf

FY26 State Revenue.pdf

Federal Funding - FY24 Federal Grants Received and Expected Changes.pdf

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

Dr. Phillips Just a friendly reminder that this Wednesday is the start of the Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Subcommittee Assignments

Chair Krepchin announced that within the package there is a list of the Subcommittee Assignments which the committee will need to vote.

MOTION: There was a motion by Mr. Biton, seconded by Ms Pitone, to approve SY2025 Subcommittee Assignments.

Ms. Barish offer a friendly amendment to the add the Public Safety for all Task Force is missing from the subcommittee list.

Mr. Biton added a friendly amendment to the assignments

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

B. SEU Unit D Integrated Collective Bargaining Agreement

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms Barish, Seconded by Mr. Green, to authorize the chair to sign the SEU Unit DI Integrated Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

C. Somerville Public Schools Policy Manual

The following policy are being presented this evening for a second reading.

- **Policy Manual Review: Section A**

Ms. Barish - recommends to not vote on this tonight simply because the second set of lawyers' comments were just put into the folder tonight. I have questions about them for the lawyers, for MASC, and maybe for the administration, if you have any questions send them to me or Ms Mallin. It is my understanding that the next sections are less legal heavy I dont think every section of the manual will require so many hours of legal reviews.

Dr. Ackman- I am comfortable on not voting tonight, would it be possible to get a clean version and a editing version for it to be less confusing.

Ms Barish- I believe that Ms Mallin said she can put together a iteration once we have resolved question from the lawyer. If the body prefers that we try to resolved those questions from the lawyer in Rules before bring it to this body we can do it this way . I am open to suggestions.

Mr. Biton- My confusion about the package that is listed in tonights packet is that it is not clear what the propose changes are?

Pitone: My understanding is that we passed everything that MASC recommended. So everything written there is what the subcommittee passed. Agree?

Barish: Agree. There are also notes in the subcommittee report that reference some of those policies. But if it would be clearer to incorporate some of those notes into the document that comes to this body. Resolve legal comments in Rules rather than here?

Chair Krepchin- my thought would be yes to have more clear.

Dr. Ackman- to Ms. Barish is this something you're willing to do, and is it your recommendation as the chair of the Rules Subcommittee?

Ms. Barish- After reviewing one section, it makes sense to address all legal comments at once. Resolving the legal questions first would make it easier to create a cleaner document. I'm willing to help, though I'm unsure of my capability.

Dr. Phillip- Clarification question where it says "general note", we're not merging with Lowell's policies?

Ms. Barish- Yes, it should say Somerville, not Lowell. Will be corrected in the next version.

Ms. Pitone - once we have the clean open and the mark copy. I don't want to speak for my colleagues, but we have all the minutes from the Rules meetings. I don't want to add more work for Barish, just review the minutes, they're not that long.

Chair Krepchin- The main concern is that when it's time to vote, we need a clean copy to clearly understand the changes and know exactly what we're voting on. Refer the policy back to Rules.

D. Acceptance of FY24 Grants Funds (Recommended action: approval)

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

Private

- **Somerville Art Council- \$625. 00- Art Department to be used for field trips**

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

E. Donation (Recommended action: approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Pitone, seconded by Mr. Green to accept, with gratitude, the following donations:

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

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Program
Monetary	Elsa Gomes Bondlow	Arlington, MA	\$2,500	Unified Sports at Somerville High School

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. MSBA Update

Dr. Carmona- Just a reminder, we are in the feasibility phase. The Owner’s Project Manager (OPM) is in the process of being hired. I received an email from MSBA about joining the post-occupancy evaluation for the high school. It's a thorough assessment of lessons learned, focusing on the function and challenges faced by students, families, and administrators with the building. There will be a post-visit and a set of lessons learned for the next project. We're finalizing dates for the evaluation. I'm not sure if the School Committee will be involved, but interviews will be conducted with various stakeholders. I met with Raiche to discuss the City's role in this. I'm interested in learning from whatever comes out of this process. This is for the SHS project once it's fully closed out basically a postmortem.

Ms. Pitone- added that it would be valuable to include members who were in the building committee to be part of this post-occupancy evaluation.

Dr. Carmona- They haven’t reached out to me about specific categories, but that’s a good question. We've been going back and forth on dates, though. Noted.

Mr. Biton-I just wanted to note that the somervillema.gov/msba website, which is supposed to be our portal, still lists the "eligibility phase ending no later than November 29." In your conversations with the mayor, I hope you can emphasize the importance of keeping this page updated.

IX. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Mr. Green-since this will be our last meeting before the next president takes his seat. It seems likely that one of the first bills from the new president’s desk will be a ban on trans students participating in sports according to their correct gender. This could be a good time to strengthen our own policies and start having difficult conversations about potentially not accepting federal funding. Just putting this on our to-do list for the upcoming year as a high priority.

Mr. Biton- I received a letter from a group of municipal elected officials to Governor Healey regarding state emergency housing. It addresses reductions in funding and time limitations for families in state shelters. Several of

our elected officials have signed on, and I intend to as well. I encourage my colleagues on the SC to review it and consider signing.

X. CONDOLENCES

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

William H Smith – beloved father of Caeli Smith Gallitano SPS Director of Equity & Excellence

James Blanchard – Father-in-law of Michelle Clingan Principal Account Clerk for Somerville Public School’s Out of School Time Program and Father of Jesse Clingan Somerville’s Ward 4 City Council Member

Richard Craven – Husband of Debbie Connell retired Special Education Director

XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:14 p.m.

Related documents:

- Agenda
- Public Comment
- 2025-2026 School Calendar
- SFLC Multilingual Services
- Personnel Report

Submitted by: E. Garcia

Attach Documents Starting on the next page

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – CITY HALL
REGULAR MEETING – JANUARY 13, 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-AFq7pR0SMl0vsJ0WNEg

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

- November 25, 2024
- December 9, 2024
- December 16, 2024

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-AFq7pR0SMI0vsJOWNEg

Meeting ID: 869 0362 0322

Password: SPSSC24

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Report

- 2025-2026 School Calendar (Dr. Boston Davis)
- SFLC Multilingual Services

B. Personnel Report

- December 2024

VI. Report of Subcommittees

A. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting: December 16, 2024 (Ms. Barish)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee Meeting for December 16, 2024

B. School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities Subcommittee Meeting: December 18, 2024 (Dr. Phillips)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee Meeting for December 18, 2024

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Subcommittee Assignments

B. SEU Unit D Integrated Collective Bargaining Agreement

MOTION: to authorized the chair to sign the SEU Unit D Integrated Collective Bargaining Agreement

C. Somerville Public Schools Policy Manual

The following policy are being presented this evening for a second reading

- Policy Manual Review: Section A

D. Acceptance of FY24 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:

Private

Somerville Art Council- \$625.00- Art Department to be used for Field Trips

E. Donation (Recommended action: Approval)

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

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Program
Monetary	Elsa Gomes Bondlow	Arlington, MA	\$2,500	Unified Sports at Somerville High School

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. MSBA Update

IX. ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

X. CONDOLENCES

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 13 de enero 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-AFq7pR0SMI0vsJ0WNEg

Identificación de la reunión: 869 0362 0322

Contraseña: SPSSC24

Português - Para Interpretação

Para **assistir** à Reunião Regular do Comitê Escolar 13 de janeiro o 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-AFq7pR0SMI0vsJ0WNEg

ID da reunião: 869 0362 0322

Senha: SPSC24

Kreyòl ayisyen - Pou entèpretasyon

Pou **gade** reyinyon regilye Komite Lekòl la 13 janvyè 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-AFq7pR0SMI0vsJ0WNEg
Reyinyon ID: 869 0362 0322
Modpas: SPSSC24



SOMERVILLE EDUCATORS UNION

My name is Dayshawn Simmons and I am a resident of Ward 7 on Powder House Blvd, a middle school history educator in the City as well as the very proud President of the Somerville Educators Union.

When the topic of rats and rodent infestation comes up within this body and we chuckle because it seems ridiculous, and let's be clear - it is ridiculous that we have a rodent infestation issue of this magnitude in all of our City buildings including schools and our firehouses. However, I'm here tonight because too many of our educators know the infestation in our buildings is no laughing matter.

We are tired of hearing the City place their blame at the feet of educators for not doing enough to keep the buildings tidy. In 2025, we are asking educators to teach math, science, social studies, ELA, social emotional learning, be a mentor, attend co-curricular events, coach this team, go on this overnight trip, plan interventions for your entire class roster, and the list goes on. Our educators are too busy developing our country's tomorrow - so no, we cannot ask educators to be custodians on top of it all. There is a great group of union folk that do that important work already. What message are we sending to educators that their administrators are being sent pictures when a student forgets to put a wrapper in the garbage can at the end of the day? Our educators are trying their hardest on any given day and for the City leadership to blame them is not only a cop out, it's an abdication of their responsibility to manage our facilities.

The solutions the City leadership has given so far for this issue have been lazy at best and neglectful at worst. One of the solutions is to ask educators to have plastic containers to keep items away from pests. Nationally, on average, educators spend around \$500-\$750 of their own money to furnish, stock and decorate their room. Now you're asking educators to spend more of their own money to solve a problem the City is ignoring? That's simply not an option.

What is more concerning is the City's leadership's lack of transparency regarding their process. It's the SEU's understanding there are a number of facilities related items this body could use an update on and yet, I see no one here from City leadership to explain how the boiler at the Brown School went down last Monday that forced an early school closure. What caused the boiler failure? What steps has the City taken to ensure this doesn't happen to our students and staff again? How many times can the educators ask the City leadership to care about them and the lives of their students and families?

The SEU implores this School Committee to do whatever is within their control to ensure that the City is being a good partner to the district for the good of our students and staff. If the City leadership would be willing to work together, we wouldn't have educators worried about their students sitting on or eating mouse droppings (which actually did happen, not that it's a worry) or students being too cold to learn. Our students and staff simply deserve more.

AUGUST 2025 (2 days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

18 – 1st day for Administrator Prof. Dev.
25-26 – Educator Professional Dev.
27 – 1st day for students 1 - 12 (noon dismissal)
29 – No School: Labor Day (Offices Open)

NOVEMBER 2025 (16 days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

4 – No School: Election Day (Offices Open)
11 – No School: Veterans' Day (Offices Closed)
26 – Begin Thanksgiving Recess at noon
1st Quarter: 8/27 - 10/31

FEBRUARY 2026 (15 days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

16-20 – February Vacation (Offices Open)
16 – Presidents Day (Offices Closed)
17 – Lunar New Year
17 – Ramadan* begins

MAY 2026 (20 days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

25 – No School: Memorial Day (Offices Closed)
29 – Class Day (Tentative)

SEPTEMBER 2025 (21 days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

1 – No School: Labor Day (Offices Closed)
2 – 1st day for K and PK students
22-24 – Rosh Hashanah*

DECEMBER 2025 (17 days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

23 – Begin Winter Recess at noon,
Hanukkah* 12/14 - 12/22, Christmas 12/25, and
Kwanzaa 12/26 - 1/1 (Offices Closed on 12/24
and 12/25, Offices open 12/26 - 12/31).

Winter Recess begins on 12/23 at noon.
Classes Resume on 1/5.

MARCH 2026 (22 days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

4 – Holi
18 – Ramadan ends
19-20 – Eid al-Fitr*

JUNE 2026 (10 days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

1 – Graduation Day (Tentative)
12 – Last day of school (180 days)
19 – Juneteenth (Offices Closed)
22 – 185th day
4th Quarter: 4/1 - 6/12

OCTOBER 2025 (22 days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

1-2 – Yom Kippur*
13 – No School: Indigenous Peoples' Day (Offices Closed)
20 – Diwali

JANUARY 2026 (19 days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

1 – No School: New Year's Day (Offices Closed)
2 – No School: Educator Professional Dev.
5 – Classes Resume
6 – Three Kings Day
19 – No School: Dr. MLK Jr. Day (Offices Closed)
2nd Quarter: 11/3 - 1/21

APRIL 2026 (16 days)

S	M	T	W	TH	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

3 – No School: Good Friday (Offices Closed)
1-9 – Passover*
5 – Easter
20 – Patriots' Day (Offices Closed)
20-24 – April Vacation (Offices Open 4/21 - 4/24)
3rd Quarter: 1/22 - 4/1

KEY

- No School
- Professional Development For Educators
- Noon Dismissal for ALL Students PK - 12
- ★ Special Dates for Seniors
- Early Release Wednesday
- 1st Day of School: Grades 1 - 12: August 27, Pre-K and K: September 2
- Last Day of School: June 12
- XXX Major Religious and Cultural Holidays are underlined. Starred holidays (*) begin at sundown. Staff will strive to avoid scheduling one-time events, athletics, long-term assignments, and testing on these days.

EARLY RELEASE WEDNESDAY DISMISSAL TIMES: • PK - 12:00pm • Grades K - 8 - 1:00pm • SHS - 1:34pm • NW/FC - 12:10pm

For more information or questions, please contact Erika Garcia egarcia@k12.somerville.ma.us

Somerville Public Schools
Education • Inspiration • Excellence
December 2024

RESIGNATION FOR PURPOSE OF RETIREMENT:					
SCHOOL	POSITION	INCUMBENT	EFFECTIVE DATE	SERVICE YEARS	
ESCS	Grade 4 Teacher	Susan Fothergill	07/14/24	30 years	
Central	Principal Account Clerk - Special Education	Maureen Foley	07/06/24	24 years	
BR	Principal	Shawn Maguire	10/02/24 - Revised	9 years	
KEN/HLY	Reading Specialist	Celia McDonald-Nuccio	08/26/24	52 years	
BR	Grade 5 Teacher	Sandra Dumas	06/30/25	31 years	
CS	FT Lead Teacher	Janice Pousland	06/15/24	24 years	
HLY	Music Teacher	Yi Liu	06/30/25	15 years	
SHS	English Teacher	Lisa Brewster-Cook	07/23/25	26 years	
HLY	MLE Paraprofessional	Laura Semple	11/14/24	1 year/9 months	
SHS/Food Svc	FT Cafeteria Helper	Margaret Young	11/12/24	29 years	
SHS	Science Teacher	Peg Huben	01/29/25	25 years	
DW	IEP Team Leader / Team Chair	Deborah Farenga	08/17/24	3 years	
KDY	Resource Room Teacher	Shelley Jareo	06/30/25	21 years	
SHS	SPED ELA Teacher	Elizabeth Melcher Haddada	06/17/25	4 years	
KEN	SKIP Teacher	Michele Bennett	6/30/2025	18 years	
RESCINDED/DECLINED OFFER					
SCHOOL	POSITION	INCUMBENT	VICE	COMMENTS	
SCALE	PT ELL Level I Teacher - Morning	Julson Etienne	Christina Dennis	Offer Rescinded by SPS	
RESIGNATION NOTICES:					
SCHOOL	POSITION	INCUMBENT	EFFECTIVE DATE		
Central	Chief Communications and Development Officer	Jacqueline Piques	12/31/24		
DW	SPED Building Substitute	Paige White	11/20/24		
KEN	School Building Substitute Teacher	Avery Indermaur	12/13/24		
SHS	Senior Clerk 2 / Floater	Denise Capotosto	12/04/24		
ASSIGNMENT ENDED:					
SCHOOL	POSITION	INCUMBENT	EFFECTIVE DATE		
DW	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Khadeja McKinney	12/03/24		
DW	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Sunsou Phillippe	12/03/24		
SHS	School Building Substitute Teacher	Pierre Patrickson	12/02/24		
SHS/Athletics	Girls Indoor Track & Field Coach	NKemdilim Aduka	06/30/24		
LEAVES OF ABSENCES:					
SCHOOL	POSITION	INCUMBENT	EFFECTIVE DATES		
AFAS	SEI Teacher	Michele Moreno	11/18/24-04/01/24		
CAP	Speech & Language Pathologist	Alison Gordon	10/03/24-01/14/25	Revised	
Central/HR	Director of Human Resources	Mariana MacDonald	11/22/24-12/13/24	Revised	
DW	Itinerant BC/BA	Nyrallee O'Neill	12/02/24-03/14/25	Revised	
ESCS	Director of El Sistema	Evan Perry	01/13/25-03/19/25		
SHS	Resource Room Teacher	Julianne Stafford	12/09/24-12/13/24		
SHS	ESL Teacher	Samuel Blomberg	11/26/24-03/11/25		
SHS	Assistant Principal	Paul Cooley	12/02/24-02/07/25	Revised	
ESCS	School Nurse	Jennifer DeOliveira Souza	05/19/25-06/17/25		
INTRA-DISTRICT PERSONNEL TRANSACTIONS:					
SCHOOL	POSITION	INCUMBENT	REASON	VICE	EFFECTIVE
AFAS	Provisional SPED Resource Room Teacher	Lindsay MacDonald	Reassignment	Katarina Keown	01/03/25
BR/Food Svcs	PT Lunch Attednant	Santana Belkis	Reassignment	NA	11/25/24
BR/Food Svcs	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Ana Orellana Martinez	New Assignment	New	08/28/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Shayla Barker	Additional Assignment	NA	12/04/24
ESCS	Provisional Pre-K Sonrisa Teacher	(Maria) Gabriela Jorge	New Assignment	Andrea Carcamo	11/18/24
HLY	PT Lunch Attendant	Sarabjit Kaur	Reassignment	NA	11/25/24
SCALE	PT ELL Level 1 Teacher - Evening	Luz Janampa Cacnahuaray	Additional Assignment	New	12/09/24
WHCIS/CS	Provisional OST Assistant Site Director	Maria Henriquez	Temp New Assignment	Daniela Garcia	11/25/24
WSNS/CS	Provisional OST Assistant Site Director	Yesenia Reales	Temp New Assignment	Seana Reed	11/25/24
WSNS	PT Lunch Attendant	Sandra Aviles Perez	Reassignment	NA	11/25/24
WSNS	FT Lead Teacher	Joseph Amari	Reassignment	NA	12/16/24
WSNS	School Building Substitute Teacher	Meredith Fucile	New Assignment	Elisabeth Kistner	12/09/24
SCHOOL	POSITION	INCUMBENT	VICE	DUAL/SEI	EFFECTIVE
AFAS/WSNS	Provisional Paraprofessional SPED	Erin Clifford	New	No/No	12/06/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Biance Cicerone	NA	No/No	11/25/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Susanne Feld	NA	No/No	11/25/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Olivia Caldeira	NA	No/No	12/04/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Serena Antoine	NA	No/No	12/16/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	John Paul Agaba	NA	No/No	12/09/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Issam Mardini	NA	No/No	12/09/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Christopher Ford	NA	No/No	12/13/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Noah Smith	NA	No/No	12/09/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Lucas Termer Lally	NA	No/No	12/12/24
DW	Long Term Substitute Teacher - Grades 3-12 Strings	Hilary Lewis	Lu Yu	No/No	12/02/24
DW	Provisional SPED Paraprofessional	Owen Gallant	New	No/No	12/16/24
ESCS	Provisional Dean of Students	Anne Boyd	Mohammed Lewis	No/Yes	11/24/24
ESCS/CS	FT Lead Teacher	Mario Valladares	Sara Ali	No/No	12/16/24
SCALE	PT ELL Level I Teacher - Morning	Julson Etienne	Christina Dennis	No/Yes	12/03/24
SCALE	PT Introductions to Entrepreneurship Teacher	Tim Buntel	New	No/No	12/06/24
SCALE	PT ELL Level 3 Teacher - Evening	Tim Buntel	Keyana Parks	No/No	12/06/24
SHS	Senior Clerk 2 - Floater/School Year	Niki Sullivan	Denise Capotosto	No/No	12/02/24
SHS/Athletics	Athletics Coach - Assistant Swim	Robert Johnson	Lauren Costanzo	No/No	12/09/24
SHS/Athletics	Athletics Coach - Freshman Boys Ice Hockey	Raymond Mercuri	Craig Edwards	No/No	12/12/24
WHCIS/CS	PT Therapeutic Specialist	Finnegan Doherty	Theodore O'Brien	No/No	01/06/25
WHCIS	Provisional MLE Paraprofessional	Elias Kern (Rehire)	Laura Semple	No/No	12/11/24
WHCIS	School Building Substitute Teacher	Belmiro Da Veiga Jr.	Keegan Bliss	No/No	12/09/24