

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Monday, April 7, 2025 - Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m. – City Hall Chambers

Members present: Ms. Pitone(arrived late 7:02 pm, Dr. Ackman(arrived late 7:57 pm), Mr. Green, Mr. Biton, Mayor Ballantyne, Ms. Barish, Dr. Phillips, and Ms. Krepchin **Members Absent:** President Pineda Neufeld

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 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, Dr. Ackman, Mr. Green, Mr. Biton, Mayor Ballantyne, Ms. Barish, Dr. Phillips, and Ms. Krepchin **ABSENT** –President Pineda Neufeld

Chair Krepchin asked interpreters to introduce themselves:

Sueli DeCarney -Portuguese

Angie Surpris-Haitian Creole

II. REPORT OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Student Representative Jampa and Thiago Betti were both present and reported the following:

- Leadership conference at Revere High School-Somerville High School, among other school, were present to discuss different leadership techniques and ways to improve our schools
- Wednesday April 9th during X-block a student focus group with Harvard graduates students to discuss local issues that students feel are important We incentivize them with pizza
- Multicultural Fair will take place on April 19, 2025 a positive way for school spirit and encourage diversity where students cook food from different cultures and perform dances
- student and staff basketball game where students and teachers played against each other each grade played
- transportation focus group where had a focus group talking about how transportation to school every day effects students from certain neighborhoods.
- this month senior water tag where starting wednesday students will compete in a game one win you all get a cash prize
- quarter 3 is ended on Friday this is the last quarter for the seniors
- Spring sports started last week.

Question/ Comments

Chair Krepchin- would like to hear if there were any takeaways from the event you went to at Revere high school

Jampa- Mostly it was the student school committee representative who came; student council members were also invited and i think from all other high schools were student leaderships that from revere was the student senate and from the other two other high schools that attended it was their student council. we discussed big issues that all of our schools individually and how we can work on each of them, it was mostly to gather ideas and focus on certain ways and methods to go around and addressing them. it was very helpful and a good opportunity to meet new schools and meet new students from those schools

Mr. Green - directed his question to the district - these focus group that seem to be happening around various student led equity issues because i learn about it today from my daughter who came home with a informed consent permission slip. I love to know because it sounds like a very fascination work we're actually engaging students both as researchers and as the subject to the research, I would like a report soon from the district as to what appears to be a district wide initiative that sounds really fascinating.

Dr. Carmona- will provide a report at a different meeting.

Mr. Biton, the topics you raised sparked a little bit of curiosity in me. First the issues that are cropping up at other schools at the leadership conference, were there any similarities that you were seeing around sort of commonalities of problems in the different cities in different high schools and the second question is who won the basketball game

Jampa one of large issues that we saw overlap in was transportation and lack of transportation for certain students for somerville students who live in the Mystic Valley project typically don't have transportation to and from the school and the same thing happen in Revere where students who lived in the a 5 mile radius of the school weren't allowed to get transportation funded by the city as well for both of the other schools they were both located in urban neighborhoods and developments which is also very hard for them to get transportation funded by school to individually like their houses. There were a few other issues regarding diversity and certain representation of gender and cultures across, like these student leadership focus groups, which was a very noteworthy one

Thiago, as to your second question, the teachers won

Ms Barish- i happen upon the rules for the water tag game that is coming up and i wanted to say that I really appreciated the attention to safety of everyone involved so kudos to the folks organizing that we know its a lot of fun but we also just want to make sure everyone's safe and can learn and participate in their athletics

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- March 10, 2025

MOTION: There was a motion by Mr. Biton, seconded by Mr. Green, to approve minutes from March 10, 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.

Susan Lee 37 Stone Ave- I'm here as a resident, a parent to two young children, and I wanted to just make two brief remarks. The first one was actually, I guess I will thank you first. I will thank the Mayor, the superintendent, and the School Committee for all the work that you do for our city and our schools. My first and main reason for being here is to advocate for extremely strong support for our schools. So I understand that this is finance season, so we're advocating for this from the state to get a larger budget for education. And then after the state funding, then that funding will be allocated by the city to our schools. I saw many of you just a month ago as a PTA member with list of request from East Somerville, but all of our schools have their own requests. So i'm here to advocate for our schools not only as a East parent, but as a just parent of young children. My second reason for doing this public comment is to support the school's improvement plan. So both Brown and East are presenting today and I'm here to support them in their efforts to improve the schools.

Ryan Williams 47 Kingston St- President of the Somerville Council of PTAs and as well as Brown School PTA. I'm here to speak in support of the resolution for increase state funding. We asked for increased political bravery, and you are meeting that challenge with this and other actions you've taken. For quite some time, the chapter 7 funding formula has not matched the realities of today's school systems and its wholly inadequate when we face an unprecedented full-scale assault on public education by the federal government. Immediate action by the state is necessary to end the uncertainty facing Somerville and all of our municipalities in the commonwealth. We applaud the SPS and the school committee for your bravery and activism. However, we cannot wait for the state to save us. Our needs in the district are not changing. The city must rise to the challenges as well and increase the budget to not only meet the level of services, but exceed it. I understand the appeal of level services CD-wide. It sounds fair, but our children will not get the education they deserve at the level of services. Our educators do not get what they deserve, and we will not be able to retain and attract the talent that our students need. Money gets us people, people get us time, and time where educators meet students is where learning happens, and we make a difference. We urge the city to not only advocate to the state, but to lead by example. So we wholeheartedly endorse and support this resolution, and thank you for bringing it forward to this body. And aside from this, I've had the pleasure of working with Principal Williams on the SAP. The thoughtfulness, insight, and care that he puts into this will be obvious to all of you, and I look forward to hearing from him. Thank you

Brad Taylor 64B Marshall St- Hello, thank you for your time. I was on the T home from the hand-off protest over the weekend, and I try not to eavesdrop, but I heard a gentleman talking to his father and saying he works for the city. I didn't catch what department, some sort of environmental sustainability, something or other, all sounded very

good. And he was saying we are doing okay. We're lucky here that we don't have to make service cuts, and then he said something interesting. He said, except for the schools. I don't know about the schools, the schools are a black box to me. And that stuck with me because here was someone who's very plugged in, who's doing their part, who's in public service, and they don't know what's going on in our schools. and if that person doesn't know what going on in our schools how is somebody who's how are other people supposed to know? How is a young person who's here early in their life building their career supposed to know what's going on in our schools? How's a family with language or cultural barriers supposed to know what's going on in our schools? It's a black box, and so it falls to us to advocate for our kids. You know it falls to this body to advocate for our kids. I'm impressed at the engagement and the perspicacity of our youth representatives here, and our student activists generally, but we can't expect them to do all their organizing on their own interest. We're trustee of their welfare, and this body represents us, so I'm very supportive of any resolution to make sure that our schools don't have to make hard service cuts. This is a time when we can't be doing less with less. We need to be doing more with more, and our kids need us. Thank you for advocating for what our children need.

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Report

Superintendent Dr. Carmona read his District report

Superintendent's Notes: *School Committee- Monday, April 7, 2025*

Good evening everyone,

As part of our work on the SPS Strategic Plan, the district committed to including the voices of parents, guardians, students, and staff in our work. I am pleased to announce the annual Conditions for Learning Survey is open until May 2nd.

Along with School Improvement Plans, the Survey is a wonderful way to collect feedback, providing us with critical data from the SPS community that informs how we reach the goals in our Strategic Plan. The process touches on our goal to increase community engagement and reflects our value of shared responsibility.

Another exciting event happening in Somerville is the annual Week of the Young Child celebration on Thursday at City Hall from 5:30–7:00 p.m. Caregivers and their young children are invited to enjoy an afternoon of music, activities, and pizza.

Through joyful, community-driven activities, Somerville honors our youngest learners.

Week of the Young child is also a great way for the school district and the City of Somerville to connect families of young children with information about opportunities and resources in Somerville. As a reminder, one of those resources available to families with young children is the early education screening event on April 30. You can find more information about both events on our website.

Thank you all for your engagement and support.

I am also excited to announce some fun news

Our SHS Robotics Coach and STEAM educator, Ms. Laura Peters won the 2025 NCWIT Aspirations in Computing Educator Award for Massachusetts. Congratulations Ms. Peters! Over the last few years, she has expanded engineering programming to include a much larger part of our community through the Family Creative Computing & Robotics Night and the Girls Who Code Club.

Speaking of robotics, our SHS FIRST Robotics Team 6201 went to the district championships last week. While they did not earn a place at the World Championships, they performed better than they have in the history of the team. Congratulations to the team and to its leader, Coach Peters, for wrapping up a great season!

Congratulations, as well, to our district percussion educator, Jacob Gabriszeski. He won the Manilow Music Teacher Award and with it, he earned a \$5,000 Manilow Bucks credit to purchase instruments for SPS classrooms. Great job, Mr. G!

- **Brown School Improvement Plan**

Dr. Boston Davis introduced Principal Ames from the Brown school to present his school Improvement Plan

Comments/Questions

Dr. Phillips- First of all, this is a tremendous school improvement plan. The logic makes perfect sense to me the goals seem reasonable. But also significant I'm very impressed with the plan. Just a question for my own wondering. Do you happen to know what the overlap is between your lowest performing kids in ELA and your eco disc your eco disc population?

Principal Ames- I don't have it completely disaggregated, but I can tell you that 76% of our students in the testing grades met or exceeded the standards for ELA. That would be about 76 students in these numbers, where the N, or the number of students being considered for the lowest performing, I believe, is 18. so that gives you some perspective I could follow up further if you're interested in that specific number.

Mr Green- Because of the clarity view numbers and the clarity of your data points. I may be asking a lot of questions that may seem more critical than I intend, so i thought that in advance, but thank you for this work, its a statement to the quality of the data, Not that being said, my first question is actually to the district. Is not surprising to anyone who has ever done anything with that policy to know that economic disadvantaged students at every school underperform. I am curious to know this percentage of meeting and exceeding standards at Brown compares to other schools in the district and i ask that in part because I asked in part it frustrates me that if our goals is to close equity gaps and we see our strategy towards the students were falling behind is falling behind to do individual impressions for them rather than who schale curriculum and change it feels liek were taking our eyers off the ball. ANd treating those students as the exception when in a district like ours, they're really the rule

Dr. Boston Davis- I actually would I can pull up the data very easily so I'm happy to pull that up and then get back to you, you know if you're curious about the exact percentages. Otherwise, I can kind of speak at a more global way, but happy to pull up the data right now.

Mr. Biton- follow up with Mr. Green question and asked for slide 13 to be shown on screen. This is about as clear a statement as I've seen in the number of presentation that we've had, and I just want to compliment you on stating this as a clear as you have. Are Economically disadvantaged students are not making up the ground that they need to be compared with our non-economically disadvantaged students. The slides prior basically said they're going in the wrong direction. Is this correct?

Principal Ames I said that in relationship to the scaled score for our " Lowest Performing" there is a lot of overlap, by the way.

Mr. Biton This pattern is not unique to your school. It is something we see repeatedly year after year, school after school, community after community, even within our own community, where we are making thoughtful efforts to address the issue. Yet, here it is again, plain as day. I will refer my question to the district regarding the previous school improvement plan. However, if we are confronted with this problem again next year, or if similar data emerges and our interventions are still not working, how are we going to tackle it? While we have developed very thoughtful approaches, I am genuinely fearful that we continue to prioritize strategies that are not moving the needle. It's a concern I carry, and I believe we are all deeply committed to making a difference. I would pose this larger question to the district for consideration.

Dr. Carmona- We started with a strategic plan to address the significant gaps we have historically faced. A couple of points to consider: show me a district nationwide that is closing these gaps on a large scale, and I'll give you a thousand dollars right now. The reality is, this is not something anyone can accomplish in one year. That's not an excuse — it's just the truth. Improvement takes time. Student challenges can persist for a couple of years, or sometimes they can improve within a matter of months once the right interventions are in place. What I would ask is that we hold judgment on whether this is working or not, because it's still very early. We are just now beginning to implement key programs, like our new math program. Even the implementation phase itself takes significant time before a students become fully proficient.

conversation ensued on District data

- **East Somerville Community School Improvement Plan**

Dr. Boston Davis introduced Principal Ames from the Brown school to present his school Improvement Plan

Comments/Questions

Mr. Green at some point, we'd love to do a deep dive on this literacy range because one it tackles a real challenge we've had historically with Unidos, one that was really passing issues when I first joined the School Committee, and we've gone through several iterations of trying to get it. This was like the most promising one I've ever seen, it feels like that because it gets at the heart of what I think oftentimes society ends up being a struggle with issues of equity and inclusion is that a truly inclusive organization that doesn't just look different, it acts different like just the insight. These students who need intervention in a language we're not teaching most of the day and we actually met them where they are, instead of trying to expect to meet us where we are, we might see different results. When you say it out loud incredibly simple and straightforward but is something schools do not do enough of. I am excited to see where that line of thinking goes with time, with support and with more feedback from data. I would love to know what role if any did Spanish Spanish-speaking families have in coming up with some of these interventions and some of these data points.

Principal Mace Diaz explained that during a recent family event, they intended to cover several key questions, but the rich conversations between families, teachers, and students limited them to only four out of ten questions. The plan is to continue these discussions at future family nights and to use the feedback to inform school practices. Similar themes also emerged during coffee hours and discussions about the five-year plan, including a suggestion from families to provide core textbooks in Spanish for classroom use. In response, the school is working toward making more Spanish-language materials available not just for access, but to ensure they are engaging for students. This is one of the new interventions planned for next year.

Chair Krepchin gave kudos about the focus on family engagement, not just between the school and the families or the teacher and the families, but the families to each other, and I think fairly simple, but not something we typically hear about. This is very exciting. My question is I'd love to hear a little more about the leadership opportunities you talked about for seventh and eighth graders. You described it sort of like a job. So obviously you can't compensate them like a job. So, how do you get kids excited about it? How does it work?

Principal Mace-Diaz- A little bit of time out of class. it was also a little bit part of it so teachers were students had to apply, and they had to be performing really well in school. they were also willing to make up some of the time and some of the classwork after school. They do meet together with our school counselor after school to work on their goals that they have and the kids get to choose which parts of the day they're able to do and a lot of them do it during X-block and a lot of them do it during their recess and lunch. so some of them actually do miss a little bit of that time to go and play with little kids or like a read. But they choose small parts of their day. Sometimes it's not a whole day or a whole period of 55 minutes but it may be like 10 minutes or 15 minutes.

Dr. Phillips here is the model for how you truly incorporate DEI into planning like using kind of framework to help you figure out where the problems are and also where the solutions are going to be.

Principal Mace Diaz this also allows our staff at our school to have a common language about how to actually make these discussion among staff but also allow venue for students to have those discussions in the classroom as well.

Ms Barish appreciates the presentation I was really intrigued by the discussion about unios and the biliteracy intersection of biliteracy, I think, but I kind of want to dig don't have the graph and see the rest of it, you know, as it goes up the grades. i really appreciate that you are planning to ask students to define joy and teachers to define joy. Because what we learn in that process will really point the way to enhancing the learning experience for everyone involved. So, thank you.

Principal Mace Diaz- you're welcome, and I think something that you touched upon that I actually forgot to mention is that when we had the first DESE visit at our school, we actually had they had their own small groups of students that they spoke to, but we also did the same thing with our students. and some of the goals that we had here about voice, about wanting for their teachers to know what their interests were came from them, and so a lot of that focus really on that joy piece is coming from the feedback that we go from the students

Ms. Pitone, the focus on student discourse is really kind of at the heart of the engagement and I'm really excited to see that i have heard good things about culturally responsive teaching in the brain and hopefully that will you know it's a away to frame work without necessarily overwhelming. My question is the East several years ago we had put investments around trauma-informed practice in that school and I'm curious how that's maybe involved and how it evolved with this work. I know that it's not like disappeared. I know that that work is imbued in the work we do, but I dont know if any body can talk a little bit about the trauma- informed practice work that we've done over the last several years and how that's impacted where the school is now.

Principal Mace Diaz- that is before my time I think i can speak a little bit about it before and after. so there is this period in time was before my time and there's my time now right? With that comes a lot of newest staff and new teachers and so it becomes a not anything different, but i'ts an add-on so I think this opportunity that we have about using this center text to really center our work, it really is a way for us to not forget about what happened before, but also let's take a look at this new vocabulary and given us this new way of speaking to each other that is common again.

Dr. Boston Davis the only thing I can say is that I know that Director Liz Doncaster will be coming to present sometime in spring, and she can share more about to this.

Dr. Carmona just a quick thing on investment that have been in the past, social workers, guidance counselors has been commitment. those are actually things that cost in the structure of the budget.

- **Child Find Law Memo**

Dr. Carmona, Last week, you were presented with a memo, put together by our Director of Special Education, Ildefonso Arellano, at the request of the School Committee about the Child Find Law. I would like to make some time for the committee to ask any questions you have regarding the memo.

Ms Barish Memo was very helpful. Curious in the memo reads - if a parent suspects that their child need services, they can reach out to Somerville Public Schools and ask for help. Are people directed or told that by their daycare

providers, their doctors. I'm wondering how a family who isn't already connected with Somerville Public Schools would know to do that if they worry that their child has a delay or something like that

Dr. Camona that was actually a question that was I also had in terms of like how robust that system is. so I did reach out to our SFLC team which are kind of the gateway to access to families.

Mr. Biton would like to know the number of teacher referrals there are versus parent referrals for the IEP Process. One thing I hear about is conversations between parents and teachers that are somewhat hushed to talk about whether a student needs special education.

Dr. Ackman the district cannot move forward with our the parent consent. There might be ways where teachers approach it to put them at ease as much as possible, because for some parents, it can feel like a stigma

a conversation ensued

Dr. Carmona finalized his report and shared that there will be a DESE audit next year

VI. REPORTS OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting: March 24, 2025

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Ackman, seconded by Mr. Biton, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for the Rules Management Subcommittee for the March 24, 2025

Rules Management Subcommittee
March 24, 2025

Ellenor Barish called the meeting to order at 5:41pm.

Leiran Biton, Ellenor Barish, and Amara Anosike were present. Laura Pitone was in the audience. The meeting was held in City Council Chambers. There were four items on the agenda.

1. Approve Notes from February 24 Meeting

Leiran Biton moved to accept the notes from the 2/24 meeting, seconded by Ms. Barish. The motion passed unanimously.

2. Policy Manual Review - Sections A-C

Ms. Barish shared new versions of the model Title IX policy (ACAB) and related grievance procedure (ACAB-R), and the Civil Rights policy (AC) and related grievance procedure (AC-R) provided by the School Committee's attorneys. The documents were also sent to Alicia Mallon who is conducting the policy review for the School Committee so that she can add them to the documents to be considered. Members will review the documents and discuss them at the next meeting.

Ms. Barish discussed policy ADF with the district's Wellness Coordinator, Caitlin Kelly. Ms. Kelly would prefer not to have wellness policy content in two separate policies. Ms. Barish suggested moving the content currently in EFD to ADF. Mr. Biton agreed that it makes sense to consolidate. Additionally, the procedures related to EFD have not been approved by School Committee, based on standard practice, but they have been included in the online policy manual as EFD-R. MASC advised that anything in the online manual should be approved by School Committee. Mr. Biton moved to recommend replacing ADF with EFD content with the addition of "Wellness procedures will be

housed on the SPS website.” Ms. Barish seconded. The motion was accepted.

3. Policy KHC - Distribution of Notices

Mr. Green arrived. Leiran shared draft language with lawyers which generated a lengthy response. Mr. Biton said that his intention was to take focus away from third party materials and focus on avoiding the use of SPS resources to advance personal/political views in SPS classrooms. The attorney provided helpful context around the Academic Freedom provision of the SEU contract. Clarification may be needed to avoid overly broad interpretation by those enforcing the policy. Leiran will send proposed language to Erika for next month and will share lawyer’s feedback with subcommittee members. Ms. Anosike will also review those materials and bring recommendations to the next meeting.

4. Policy IJNDB - Network Acceptable Use Policy for Staff

Ms. Anosike suggested that templates for signatures would be provided. Inspirational quotes would have to be taken out of email signatures, for example. One must be able to apply the policy broadly. Currently it says what “must” be included in email signatures; subcommittee members suggested changing that to “may”. Legal/confidentiality disclaimers, honorifics, credentials, etc. should be added to the acceptable content list in the draft language. Amara will rework and share with lawyers.

5. Policy JCA - Controlled Choice Student Assignment

Ms. Rodriguez suggested language to replace/augment the “displaced” student statement. “Students who need a transfer because of a change in recommended educational programming (Sub separate special education class to general education class or SEI-1 classroom to general education) will be prioritized among all school transfers. Next current SPS students whose families request a change in school will be assigned. These transfers will be prioritized prior to the assignment of newly enrolled students.”

Ms. Barish shared the legal team’s assessment that in light of the US Supreme Court decision in *Students for Fair Admissions, Inc. v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, 600 U.S. 181 (2023) (“Harvard”), schools can no longer use race as a factor in admissions or placement decisions; if the District were to “rebalance classrooms” based on race, it would be susceptible to a legal challenge.

Mr. Green asked if that is a risk we want to take. He also wondered if the lawyers believe that *Brown v. Board of Education* is unenforceable.

Mr. Biton requested that the lawyers be asked if balancing based on socioeconomic status would be a suitable method.

Ms. Anosike acknowledged the context of the building decision that is coming up, and how that may impact demographics of the schools in the district.

Mr. Green stated that that is a separate question, as we consider the school selection policy. We could put different programs in different buildings which would also shift demographics.

LB - There are many ways we could address underlying ways that diversity differs in our schools. He noted as an example, the lack of socioeconomic diversity at the Brown compared to other schools. One way to address that could be eliminating proximity preference for the Brown, making Brown opt-in only. He wonders if that might make the 5-6th grade transition easier for future Brown School families.

Mr. Green asked if we as a School Committee want to undertake the challenge of desegregating our schools.

Mr. Biton stated that he is not comfortable moving away from a neighborhood/proximity model because he thinks it will make life harder for our families. It would require a thoughtful process.

Ms. Barish stated that if School Committee were to undertake this, it would likely be a long process with

subcommittees and lots of community input/involvement.

Mr. Biton asked - as at previous meetings - if we should pass an interim policy while the larger issues are considered.

Ms. Anosike believes that the recommendation from Teresa Rodriguez is the administration's response.

Mr. Biton advocated for bringing the interim version to reflect current practice to the full committee along with a recommendation to undertake additional considerations.

Mr. Green clarified that the Enrollment Office is doing amazing work with a broken policy structure; our job is to fix the policy structure. It's time for us to provide the guidance and support they need.

LB - Will incorporate the language from Ms. Rodriguez and will bring an updated draft next month.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:30pm.

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)

File -AC Policy

File-AC-R

File-ACAB-R CIVIL RIGHTS GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

File-ACAB

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

**B. School Committee Meeting for the Educational Programs and Instructional Subcommittee:
March 25, 2025**

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Ackman, seconded by Mr Biton, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for the Educational Programs and Instructional Subcommittee for the March 25, 2025

Education Programs Subcommittee - March 25, 2025

Meeting called to order at 2:50 pm.

Attendance SC: Emily Ackman, Ilana Krepchin, Laura Pitone

Attendance Staff: Alicia Kersten, David Dipietro, Jodi Remington, Lisa DaCunha, Marianna Hosking, Meagan Spinelli, Trish Murphy-Sheehy

Attendance Audience: Leigha Charboneau

Dr. Ackman opens the meeting, welcomes attendees, and welcomes Dr. Boston Davis, who then introduces Principal Kersten who introduced her team.

Principal Kersten:

High Expectations for All: SHS' approach to grouping and leveling

- Introduction: Building a Culture of Achievement
- Current Grouping and Leveling Practices

- Measuring Impact
- What's Working/Where We Need to Improve
- Access to College Level Courses
- Next Steps

Mr. Dipietro:

"A school with a culture of achievement is organized around the belief....that all students can do high level academic work..." "...teachers and school leaders are committed to making a challenging curriculum available to all students..."
– Alicia Kersten

è Vision supported by work of Theresa Perry

There is no perfect System for Grouping Students

TRACKING INTO ABILITY GROUPS

- Smaller range of needs within each class -easier to meet all students where they are at
- Seen as easier to provide challenge and rigor
- Seen as easier to cover more content
- Students become "trapped" in classes with low expectations
- Student self-perception (in all levels) can be harmful
- Often divided along lines of class, race, and subject to stereotypes and bias (personal, institutional, self)
- Students interact with with more narrow range of experiences and perspectives
- Murky definition of difference between levels

HETEROGENEOUS GROUPING

- High expectations for all
- More diverse range of student experiences and perspectives
- All students have access to high expectations and see that they can achieve at a high level
- Individual Mobility
- More challenging for teachers to meet wider range of needs
- Seen as harder to provide appropriate challenge and rigor

SHS uses both approaches

- At SHS we provide range of experiences- some heterogeneously grouped classes, some tracked
- Choosing where we think it works best based on needs of students, access and continually reflect on what makes sense and why.
- First Open Honors was 2016 US History II in Social Studies and English 4 - developed and piloted by teachers

NOTES:

- SHS philosophy is students and families choose levels – we recommend but decision is with students and families

- Almost all electives, CTE, SEI classes are heterogeneously grouped and unleveled (students do not have the option to earn different credits)

Why Open Honors?

- Leveling without tracking - Heterogeneous Grouping
- SPS does not have a middle school. Decisions about what level a student should be on are difficult to make as they come from different schools
- Do not want students to be stuck in a level with low expectations
- SHS Commitment to Equity means High Expectations for All, Excellence for All
- All students should have a chance to see themselves as high achieving students
- Create classes with representative diversity
- Improve classroom and community culture
- Easier for scheduling and for students to change schedules
- Create a solid foundation for ALL students, who then make decisions for themselves about academic levels as they move into the higher grades

How Open Honors Classes Work

- Course sections have seats reserved for CP and Honors students to ensure a consistent ratio of students
- Teachers clarify to students the difference between CP and Honors coursework and skills
 - Students enrolled for honors credit must complete honors coursework
 - Students enrolled for CP credit can elect to try honors coursework
 - Teachers often encourage students enrolled in CP to try honors coursework when they appear ready to do so
- Students can change course level by the end of semester 1 and do not have to change their schedule - they can stay in the same class

Lisa DaCunha:

Which Classes are Open Honors and why?

Most core 9th and some 10th grade courses: We want high expectations, foundational knowledge for all students; give all students opportunity to see themselves as high achieving; students coming from 5+ schools

Core 11th grade classes - in 11th grade an AP option becomes available in almost all core subjects; students not taking AP are in Open Honors courses to keep expectations high for all

World Language - the move to Open Honors allowed levels to align, facilitated the shift to proficiency-based instruction, and solved scheduling issues. Instruction in World Language classes based on concept of proficiency levels, which are open to all students, regardless of level

Marianna Hosking:

- Heterogeneous Grouping demands better instruction
- High Expectations for All
- Student-Centered Learning
- Differentiation of product and process by readiness and interest
- Common instructional techniques

- a. Flex grouping
- b. Heterogeneous group work (see slide on Complex Instruction)
- c. Project-Based Learning
- d. Performance Based Assessments
- e. Differentiated Assessments and Evaluation

How we support teachers: Shifting mindsets and practice

Shifting Mindsets

- Reviewing literature on benefits of heterogeneous grouping
- SHS Department Anti-Bias, Anti-Racist Commitments - underscore belief that all students can achieve at high levels

Shifting Practice

- Intensive focus on INSTRUCTION
- PD steeped in Zaretta Hammond's work (Developing Independent Learners)
- 3-year consultancy on Complex Instruction in Science and Math Classes - inclusive group instruction
- Development and Implementation of a Rigor Tool
- Additional Instructional Coaches
- Most Department Time devoted to improving instruction in Heterogeneous
- Classes

Trish Murphy-Sheehy:

How are we measuring impact?

1. Access to higher level courses
2. AP scores
3. Maintaining or increasing rigor of assignments
4. Student surveys/focus groups
5. Staff surveys
6. Grade distribution
7. Failure rates
8. Observations of classrooms

What is working?

- Students and teachers reported improved climate and culture—classes are more productive and focused and there is a decrease in behavioral issues
- Teachers report an increase in independence among CP students in open honors classes

- Improved clarity in the difference between CP and Honors work improved expectations between the two levels
- All classes have positive culture and passing rates (no more CP classes with 60% failure rates)
- **Increase in honors and AP participation, students switching from CP to H by midpoint of the year - especially among students of color, recently FLEPped students, students on IEPs**

Member Krepchin: has there been a change to open honors as the population of the city has changed?

Principal Kersten: I don't think the population of the high school has changed that much.

Member Pitone: I appreciate this. There are perceptions that have been debunked with this presentation. I appreciate the impact on the culture. Are we finding that students are avoiding open honors or pushing for AP because they believe that it's more rigorous?

Director Murphy-Sheehy: Open honors is more common in early years with AP in later years, especially in math.

Member Pitone: How do educators feel about the expectations/interest/readiness around differentiation?

Chair Hosking: Typically, from what we have seen, it is a harder transition for veteran educators or those who have been teaching a specific way for a long time.

Chair Dipietro: As an educator, I have seen a substantial shift. The culture that has been built focuses on differentiation.

Principal Kersten: I truly believe that heterogeneous grouping leads to better instruction. That does not make it easy. We are supporting our educators who are mostly on board.

Member Pitone: What do you need from the district to capture data?

Principal Kersten: Open Architects is coming to the district and working with district to help us systematically capture data.

Member Krepchin: Can you talk more about students who move from CP to honors, or honors to CP?

Chair Hosking: I am thinking about our department's antibias statement and I think about trying to increase student capacity to enter underrepresented fields.

Director Murphy-Sheehy: You want kids to be in the zone of proximal development, but you don't want them to be held back by bias.

Principal Kersten: We want all of our students to see themselves as honors students.

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

C. School Committee Meeting for Joint School Building Subcommittee: March 31, 2025 (Mr.

Biton)

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Ackman, seconded by Dr. Phillips ,to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for the Joint School Building Subcommittee for March 31, 2025

Report to School Committee on the School Building Facilities and Maintenance Committee Meeting for March 31, 2025

To: Somerville School Committee

From: Leiran Biton, Chair of Subcommittee on School Building Facilities and Maintenance

The School Committee (SC) School Building Facilities and Maintenance Subcommittee met jointly with the City Council's (CC) School Building Facilities and Maintenance Special Committee on March 31, 2025, via Zoom. Members present were: Leiran Biton, chair; Sarah Phillips, vice chair; and Laura Pitone. City Councilors present were: Lance Davis, chair; Jesse Clingan, vice chair; and Naima Sait.

Attending the meeting from Somerville Public Schools (SPS) were: Rubén Carmona, Superintendent; and Amara Anosike, Chief of Staff.

Attending the meeting from the City of Somerville were: Richard Raiche, Infrastructure and Asset Management (IAM) Director; Yasmine Raddassi, Legislative Liaison; Peter Forcellese, Legislative Clerk; Nicholas Antanavica, Director of Inspectional Services Department (ISD); Colin Zeigler, Environmental Manager at ISD.

Mr. Biton called the SC meeting to order at 6:04pm and established quorum with all members present.

There were five (5) items on the SC agenda. Memo updates were provided for agenda topics 3 (regarding the communication around closures at the Ginny Smithers Pool) and 4 (metrics for tracking rodent mitigation in schools).

1) Winter Hill/MSBA update

Mr. Raiche provided an update about status of the MSBA project. The city is currently in the "Forming the Team" module. The city released a request for services for an owner's project manager (OPM) and received nine submittals, and shortlisted that to four firms to be invited for interview. The interviews will take place on April 2. On April 3 the selection committee will select its top choice, which will keep the project on schedule for the MSBA May meeting.

Mr. Davis, Mr. Clingan, and Mr. Raiche discussed the difference between the Construction Advisory Group (CAG) and the School Building Committee (SBC). They also discussed similarities and differences between the current process and the prior process for Somerville High School (SHS). Mr. Raiche described the composition of the current SBC as being nearly identical to the SBC formed for SHS project. Mr. Raiche is interim chair until the SBC convenes and self-selects a chair.

2) Cummings School Building Renovation Cost

The Joint Committee discussed the costs and planning to develop a renovation plan for the Cummings School. The City does not yet have a plan in place for budgeting this item. With prompting from Mr. Davis,

Mr. Raiche offered a rough ballpark estimate of \$100 million (plus or minus \$50 million) for the overall renovation, a number that would need to be vetted and solidified through study.

Ms. Sait inquired whether the City could move forward with funding for a study in the FY26 cycle. Mr. Raiche described the process by which a construction project is studied and funded, and stated it is unlikely the City will have sufficient funds to start this effort using the FY25 operating budget. Mr. Raiche indicated that the lifetime of a cost estimate is shorter than it used to be pre-pandemic because of variability in costs due to a number of factors. Currently, cost estimation is essentially impossible right now because contractors are pricing risk into their bids due to the tariffs recently imposed on materials for the construction industry.

Ms. Pitone shared her frustration that the City had not executed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the School Committee as a required precondition under the SC's release of the Cummings on September 9, 2024. The MOU was to include development of a plan for use as a school building, and to mitigate further deterioration of the building, after its temporary use as a warming center to support the unhoused community. Mr. Raiche summarized work done to understanding the scope of the work, but indicated the capacity of the department to complete the planning was limited. Dr. Phillips requested a report out from the City to the Joint Committee on the plan required by the School Committee's release. Mr. Biton will submit the item through Council President Judy Pineda Neufeld.

3) Communication around temporary closures of the Ginny Smithers/Kennedy Pool

A memorandum was provided by the Parks and Recreation Department (Parks & Rec). Mr. Biton described the concern about families not being notified about swim class cancellations. Dr. Phillips asked how the City is communicating how long it will take to fix the chemical imbalance that resulted in a pool closure of longer than a month. Ms. Raddassi stated that Parks & Rec is continually checking the chemical levels in the pool to ensure it is safe for use. Ms. Raddassi indicated she would follow up with the Committee. Ms. Pitone asked whether this long closure, combined with other disruptions over the last couple years, suggest that outside expertise may be needed in managing the pool. Mr. Biton recommended that Parks & Rec look at the lists they are using to communicate with users because some users had never received notice or had received inconsistent notices. He also suggested that the Parks & Rec Director attend the next meeting of this Joint Committee, and this request was reinforced by City Councilors. Ms. Raddassi indicated that the City is beginning to address the communications issues through new social media and direct contact strategies.

Mr. Davis introduced two motions: (1) That the Administration report to this Council on the cause of the reported chemical imbalance in the Ginny Smithers Pool and the process being used to address the imbalance; and (2) That the Administration develop a new process to address ongoing maintenance at the GSP and report to this Council to describe that process. Mr. Clingan requested that an ISD report be attached to this item for future discussion. Members of the Joint Committee highlighted the importance of the pool to students for learning to swim and long closures of this nature represent a serious problem.

4) Rodent Mitigation Strategy System

Mr. Zeigler presented on the approach recently adopted for tracking rodent control in SPS school buildings. The City is now developing documentation and reports and distributing them to school contacts to track and improve follow-up. Mr. Zeigler provided an overview of an example report. SC members discussed with Mr. Zeigler and Mr. Antanavica the process by which reports will be delivered from ISD to schools. Mr. Antanavica indicated SPS administration, including Ms. Anosike, had been integral to the development of the reporting process. Mr. Antanavica indicated there would be a designated report submitted at each school, and Dr. Carmona emphasized that the process for submitting reports of rodents to ISD is already systematized thanks to Ms. Anosike.

5) Public Access to the Highlander Café for Lunch

Davis introduced the topic and indicated that there was significant interest in reinstating the Highlander Café at SHS which used to be open to the public for lunch. Dr. Carmona responded that the Café is integral to the work that happens to showcase student strengths of the culinary program in the SHS CTE. One challenge is operational constraints with staff and it has to do with structures in place in the department. CTE Director Hachey and Principal Kersten are working through logistical considerations. Fixing these problems may require budgetary allocation. Currently there are not enough culinary program seniors who would be required to run the Café. Ms. Pitone asked about the door to the outside and staffing at the prior SHS building. She also inquired whether there are enough juniors to run the program next year. Dr. Carmona responded the operational logistics for staffing, subject to current negotiations, may determine how to resolve the situation. The problem is not the door. The administration is aiming to resolve the problem this year. Mr. Biton asked whether receipts from the Café could help with costs, and Dr. Carmona indicated it would be unlikely to resolve the issue.

The meeting adjourned at 7:58pm.

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

D. School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole: April 2, 2025 (Dr. Phillips)

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Ackman, seconded by Mr. Biton, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole for April 2, 2025

Report of The Finance and Facilities Subcommittee, April 2, 2025, submitted by Sarah Phillips

The Finance and Facilities Subcommittee met on April 2, 2025, via Zoom. Members present were Emily Ackman, Ilana Krepchin, Sarah Phillips, Ellenor Barish, Laura Pitone, and Leiran Biton. Also in attendance was Interim Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Pat Durette, Superintendent Rubén Carmona, and Assistant Superintendent Jessica Boston-Davis.

Andre Green joined at 6:10pm.

Sarah Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm. There were 3 attendees in the audience and three items on the agenda:

1) Monthly Expenditure Report

We have spent 67.8% of our budget, which tracks to where we are in the year. CFO Durette sent an email to administrators to get in any requisition by April 30th so we can know how much they will be spending and if they will be over or underspending. Right now there is some money left to spend at each school. The other areas we are watching include the facilities budget line, which has over 100K left. Amara is working with DPW and staff to identify needs within the schools to address with this funding. Technology and Out of School Time also have significant funds to spend. We will reallocate those funds if they are not projected to be spent.

The Superintendent underscored that we are not spending funds randomly but are working to make careful allocations. Carefully forecasting how much will be left will help us develop next year's budget and the district is working to get better at that over time. There was a discussion about spending out-of-school-time funds and why there is so much extra money in the facilities budget and whether we could reallocate that for an assessment of the Cummings building. Much of it is to be spent the way it is anticipated to be spent. It just has not been spent yet.

2) March Bill Roll

There are a lot of transportation expenses on this bill roll because the contracts were recently approved and expenses cannot be paid without approved contracts. There is also an expense for a contractor to support HR data systems.

There was a motion by Emily Ackman, seconded by Ellenor Barish , to approve the March Bill Rolls. The motion passed unanimously.

3) FY26 Preliminary Services and Supply Budget

Superintendent Carmona offered some framing at the beginning of the meeting, noting that we'll be walking through the proposed FY26 budget that is a reflection of the entire community and designed to meet the needs of all our students. Although the city has asked us to propose a 5% increase, we are proposing a 6% budget.

CFO Durette walked us through changes to the level service budget that reflect items approved by the Executive Team from the budget collaboratives. Changes include additional funds for curriculum materials, stipends and materials for science curriculum piloting, and moving the Unidos curriculum to the MLE department. There were additions in IT to replace computers and monitors. Nursing supplies decreased from the level service budget to reflect the requests from the budget collaboratives. At the high school, the addition of a maintenance contract for CTE was identified in the budget collaborative. The Library asked for additional funds for a software contract. Funds have been added to offset expected Title 1 losses.

The projected salaries for new positions are newly included, reflecting positions that were recommended through the budget collaborative process, inclusive of positions cut. It works out to be an additional 8.5 FTEs. This number will likely change and does not yet include final changes at the high school. But it does include changes related to enrollment and compliance.

Out of the 40 items recommended by the budget collaboratives, there are many things that could not be included here. However, when we add this up, it comes to a 6.03% budget increase over FY25. We will decrease this number slightly, but we are proposing what we believe our students need.

The meeting adjourned at 6:45pm.

Documents Used:

MARCH 2025 BILL ROLL.pdf
Ytd_Budget_Report_March.pdf
FY26 Level Service Budget Projection.pdf
Article - Local Food for Schools and Childcare grant.pdf

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution in support of increase FY26 Elementary and Secondary Education Funding

Chair Krepchin seeked a motion to suspend the rules for a second reading due to budget season and the next meeting won't be until 3 weeks from now. and proceed to read the resolution

Mr. Green agreed to suspend the rules because it's actually more urgent than that, most likely source of the money is starting to be debated on Wednesday

MOTION: There was a motion by Mr. Green, seconded by Dr. Ackman, to suspend the rules for a second reading for the Resolution in support of increase FY26 Elementary and Secondary Education Funding
The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

Resolution in Support of Increased FY26 Elementary and Secondary Education Funding

WHEREAS the Somerville School District, like many school districts across the

Commonwealth, is currently experiencing significant financial challenges exacerbated by the limitations of the Chapter 70 funding formula; and

WHEREAS the "hold harmless" provision under the Chapter 70 formula does not accurately account for demographic and socioeconomic changes communities have faced over three decades, sometimes resulting in insufficient funding to meet the needs of their students and provide equitable education; and

WHEREAS the Massachusetts Association of Regional Schools (MARS), alongside the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents (MASS), the Massachusetts Association of School Business Officials (MASBO), the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA), and the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), has collaborated to develop a comprehensive K-12 funding proposal aimed at providing immediate relief for FY 26; and

WHEREAS this funding proposal seeks to utilize the surplus funding from the FY24 Fair Share Act to support essential increases in specific state budget line items, including but not limited to Circuit Breaker Reimbursements, and the inflation of the Chapter 70 formula, which directly benefits our district and its students; and

WHEREAS the proposed measures would not only alleviate the financial burden on the

Somerville Public Schools but also support the broader educational needs of students

across the Commonwealth, particularly in urban districts and those with increased demands for services; and

WHEREAS the Somerville School Committee recognizes the importance of

advocating for these budgetary measures to ensure that our students receive the quality education they deserve without compromising essential services and programs;

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

hereby expresses its strong support for any proposals to help districts meet the upcoming fiscal crisis, including the proposed budgetary measures outlined in the K-12 funding proposal, as put forth by MASS and its partners; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Somerville School Committee urges all stakeholders, including local legislators and community members, to advocate for the swift passage of

these critical funding measures in the FY 26 state budget; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Massachusetts State Legislature, the Governor's Office, and all relevant educational associations to demonstrate our commitment to securing equitable and adequate funding for the Somerville Public School District and all districts across the Commonwealth.

MOTION: There was a motion by Mr. Green, seconded by Dr. Phillips to approve the Resolution in support of increase FY26 Elementary and Secondary Education Funding

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

B. SC Spring Office Hours Announcement

Mr. Biton read the School Committee members' spring office hours

March 30, 2025. Sunday, 11:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m. Ellenor Barish (Ward 6). at True Grounds, 717 Broadway

March 31, 2025. Monday, 4:00-6:00 p.m. Ellenor Barish (Ward 6). at Diesel Café, 257 Elm Street

April 5, 2025. Saturday, 10:00-11:00 a.m. Emily Ackman Ellenor Barish (Ward 1)

April 8, 2025. Tuesday, 8:30-9:30 a.m. Leiran Biton (Ward 7). West Somerville Neighborhood School (front picnic tables).

April 11, 2025. Friday, 8:00-9:00 a.m. Andre Green (Ward 4). Winter Hill at Edgerly Pick-up

April 11, 2025. Friday, 8:30-9:30 p.m. Laura Pitone (Ward 5) and Ward 5 City Councilor Naima Sait at the Kennedy School, 5 Cherry Street

April 12, 2025. Saturday, 9:30-11:00 a.m. Andre Green (Ward 4). Winter Hill Brewing Co.

April 12, 2025. Saturday, 10:00-11:00 a.m. Laura Pitone (Ward 5) and Ward 5 City Councilor Naima Sait at Zaruma Gold Coffee, 37 Woodbine Street

April 15, 2025. Tuesday, 8:15-9:00 Ilana Krepchin (Ward 2) and Sarah Phillips (Ward 3) at the AFA outdoor classroom (co-hosted by the Argenziano PTA)

C. FY25 Somerville High School Diploma Request

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Phillips, seconded by Mr. Biton, to approve the FY25 Somerville High School Diploma Request for Dorime Sarha of Somerville, MA

D. Field Trip: (Recommended action: Approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Barish, seconded by Dr. Ackman, to approve for **May 1, 2025- May 3, 2025** 19 Students from CTE will attend a SkillsUSA Competition in Marlborough, MA Travel via SHS Bus, Student Cost 0, **May 9, 2025** Fourteen Student from Next Wave Full Circle will attend Mount Monadnock in NH. Travel via NW/FC School van, students cost \$0, **May 14, 2025- May 16, 2025** Thirty fourth grade students from the Healey School will visit Red Gate Farm in Ashfield, MA. Travel via bus, student cost \$400, **June 10, 2025** Ten students from next

wave full Circle will travel to Canobie Lake Park in Salem New Hampshire, travel by NW/FC school van, cost to student \$25, **June 13, 2025** Forty-seven eight grade students from Argenziano School will travel to Canobie lake park in Salem New Hampshire, travel by bus, student cost \$29

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

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

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Ackman, 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:

State
CS Engage-\$4,000.00- Science Dept. District Wide Grant Increase

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

F. Donation (Recommended action: Approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Ackman, seconded by Dr. Phillips, to recommend the Superintendent to acceptance, with gratitude, of the following donations:

| Donation | Donor | City, State | Value | Program |
|----------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Workshop Tools | Bosch Tools Corporation | Mt. Prospect, IL | \$10,346.92 | CTE- Carpentry Program |

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Superintendent Formative Assessment**
- B. MSBA Update**

IX. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

X. CONDOLENCES

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

XI. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:46 p.m.

Related documents:

Agenda
[Brown School Improvement Plan](#)
[East Somerville Community School Improvement Plan](#)
[Child Find Law Memo](#)

Submitted by: E Garcia

Attach Documents Starting on the next page

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – CITY HALL
REGULAR MEETING – APRIL 7, 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-AFq7pR0SM10vsJ0WNEg

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

- March 10, 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-AFq7pR0SM10vsJ0WNEg

Meeting ID: 869 0362 0322

Password: SPSSC24

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

- Brown School Improvement Plan
- East Somerville Community School Improvement Plan
- Child Find Law Memo

VI. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES**A. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee meeting: March 24, 2025**
(Ms. Barish)**MOTION:** To accept the report of Rules Management Subcommittee meeting for March 24, 2025**B. School Committee Meeting for the Educational Programs and Instructional Subcommittee: March 25, 2025** (Dr. Ackman)**MOTION:** To accept the report of the Educational Programs and Instructional Subcommittee for March 25, 2025**C. School Committee Meeting for the School Building Facilities and Maintenance: March 31, 2025** (Mr. Biton)**MOTION:** To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for the School Building Facilities and Maintenance for March 31, 2025**D. School Committee Meeting for the Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole: April 2, 2025**
(Dr. Phillips)**MOTION:** To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for the Finance and Facilities Meeting of April 2, 2025.**VII. NEW BUSINESS****A. Resolution in Support of Increase FY26 Elementary and Secondary Education Funding****B. SC Spring Office Hours Announcement****C. FY25 Somerville High School Diploma Request** (Recommended action: approval)
Dorime Sarha *Somerville, MA***D. Field Trips:** (Recommended action: Approval)**May 1, 2025- May 3, 2025**

19 Students from CTE will attend a SkillsUSA Competition in Marlborough, MA Travel via SHS Bus, Student Cost 0

May 9, 2025

Fourteen Student from Next Wave Full Circle will attend Mount Monadnock in NH. Travel via NW/FC School van, students cost \$0.

May 14, 2025-May 16, 2025

Thirty fourth grade students from the Healey School will visit Red Gate Farm in Ashfield, MA. Travel via bus, student cost \$400

June 10, 2025

Ten students from next wave full Circle will travel to Canobie Lake Park in Salem New Hampshire, travel by NW/FC school van, cost to student \$25

June 13, 2025

Forty-seven eight grade students from Argenziano School will travel to Canobie lake park in Salem New Hampshire, travel by bus, student cost \$29

E. 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:

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

State

CS Engage-\$4, 000.00- Science Dept. District Wide Grant Increase

F. Donation:(Recommended action: approval)

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

| Donation | Donor | City, State | Value | Program |
|----------------|-------------------------|------------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| Workshop Tools | Bosch Tools Corporation | Mt. Prospect, IL | \$10,346.92 | CTE-Carpentry Program |

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Superintendent Formative Assessment

B. MSBA Update

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 7 de abril 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-AFq7pR0SMl0vsJ0WNEg

Identificación de la reunión: 869 0362 0322

Contraseña: SPSSC24

Português - Para Interpretação

Para assistir à Reunião Regular do Comitê Escolar 7 de Abril 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-AFq7pR0SMl0vsJ0WNEg

ID da reunião: 869 0362 0322

Senha: SPSC24

Kreyòl ayisyen - Pou entèpretasyon

Pou gade reyinyon regilye Komite Lekòl la 7 Avril 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-AFq7pR0SMl0vsJ0WNEg

Reyinyon ID: 869 0362 0322

Modpas: SPSSC24

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