

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Monday, November 25, 2024 - Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m. – City Hall Chambers

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

Members Absent: President Ewen-Campen, Dr. Ackman

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 – 7 –Ms. Barish, Mayor Ballantyne, Mr. Green (arrived 7:10), Mr. Biton, Ms. Pitone, Dr. Phillips, and Ms. Krepchin **ABSENT** – 2 President Ewen-Campen and Dr. Ackman,

Chair Krepchin asked interpreters to introduce themselves:

Addy Penate-Spanish

Sueli DeCarney-Portuguese

Tia Santos-Haitian Creole

II. REPORT OF STUDENT REPRESENTATIVES

Student Representatives Jampa Lhanyitsang was present via Zoom and reported the following:

- On Wednesday November 27th, there's going to be a student pep rally, and it's going to be a variety of games, including musical chairs for seniors, and a bunch of races, including the wheelbarrow race and the three legged race as well.
- Thanksgiving football game, which is also the senior night, with the theme is going to be pajamas
- There was also recently a ping pong tournament run by the Asian Youth Club that had a very successful turnout, and it's also a fundraiser for marginalized communities in Asia. It's also a community service, club, clothing swap that's happening, and donations are available in the library.
- Somerville Theater is performing Mama Mia, the musical.

Chair Krepchin: added that the performances are going to be on Thursday, December 5, Friday, December 6, and Saturday, December 7. There's more information on that. I believe it's SHS.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- October 21, 2024
- November 4, 2024

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Barish, second by Dr. Phillips, to approve the School Committee minutes of October 7, 2024 and November 4, 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.

My name is Anne Haywood Baxter I live on 14 Westminster Street. I am a parent of two Somerville High Schoolers. First Year Somerville High School students and my comments affirm the importance of field trips and the importance of making sure students throughout the district have opportunities to go on field trips that add to their learning in ways that are not possible with classroom instruction alone. Greater equity is needed when it comes to which students are going on field trips and where students are going now in our city. Youth sports are one of the ways that families and

students from all over the city are able to join together. And I was on the sidelines of a youth soccer game last spring when I casually asked the parent next to me, when is your child going to Washington, DC? There was silence, and then came a reply filled with disappointment. My son's school doesn't make a trip to Washington. I felt terrible in that moment, and I felt even worse in the months to come, because I realized my kids had an opportunity and an experience that some students in this district may never have. My children had a learning opportunity that transformed their view of the world. And I know this because one day as I cooked dinner, I asked, What was your favorite part of the trip to DC? And I was surprised when my 14 year old said, visiting the Holocaust Museum, and then continued on describing how the experience touched them deeply, how they had continued to reflect on what they had learned in the months following the trip, and how they hoped to carry this learning with them for a lifetime. Within Somerville and close by, there are so many opportunities for rich learning outside of the classroom and as a parent, I wish that there were more field trips to take advantages of the resources available through local museums and colleges and community and government organizations, and to enjoy the rich offerings of arts in dance and theater and music. I offer these comments in deep gratitude for the ongoing work and commitment of many people in our school district as they move toward greater equity and inclusion. And in that spirit, I hope that field trips will be carefully considered as an area where greater equity is possible. Thank you.

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Report

Superintendent Carmona read his report which was as followed.

Thank you through the chair, and good evening to everyone. And thank you also, I know it's not customary to respond to the comments, but I saw the Argenziano students this morning heading out on a field trip, and it was so exciting to see them. Experiential Learning definitely helps our students make sense of the world and the learning. So thank you for sharing those thoughts.

- At our last meeting, we had fantastic presentations that focused primarily on our older learners (CTE and SCALE)
- This week, we will hear from SPS staff who support our *youngest* learners.
- Our SPS community often hears how we are committed to supporting the *whole child*. This commitment extends outside of the classroom, whether through out of school time opportunities for school-aged students, through post-secondary career training and workforce development, and also through our support of Somerville families from a child's infancy through school readiness.
- When our youngest learners enter our system, as early as age 3 (*ECIP at Capuano*), students and their families interact both directly and indirectly with our early childhood educators and staff.
- Before entering our system, our incredible team in the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative, along with our intricate network of city and community partners, supports families in a number of unique ways, often serving as ambassadors and families' first point of entry to our district.
- I am excited to share our work with you, through some of these dedicated team members.

First, I'd like to introduce Ruth Santos, Laura D'Angelo, Erica Silva, and Madeline Gillespie from the SFLC.

Our SFLC team provides such valuable support for families within our district, and often are the first point of contact for many of our most vulnerable students and families.

SFLC staff often wear many hats, supporting families in many different ways. Today, we're going to hear from our Early Beginnings Services team.

- **Early Childhood (SFLC)**

Ruth Santos- Thank you. It's a real pleasure to be here, to be able to shine a light on the Early Childhood work

that we do, and especially to be alongside Kathleen Bailer team, because in light of all the work that we do that's so interconnected, and really be able to shine a light on the continuum of services. So to create some context, the work that we're going to talk about is done through the CFC grant, the coordinated Family and Community Engagement grant, and SPS provides the in kind support for all of this work. So we're very grateful for that as well. The CFC grant has, however, been flat funded for 10 years now. Share her presentation and introduced her team which will present the following topics.

Laura DeAngelo is going to talk about play groups, parent support groups, parenting workshops.
Erica Silva is going to talk about our home visiting program and the community referrals that we make.
Madeleine Gillespie is going to share info about the cross sector nature of the work and the structures that we have in place supporting that.

Laura DeAngelo -Thank you, Ruth. Thank you everyone for the opportunity to be here. As Ruth was we are funded by the *CFC Grant* which allow us to run current programs

- **Playgroups:**
 - Operating in six locations in the community.
 - This fall, we are running 13 playgroups and 4 parent support groups.
 - Playgroups are offered in multiple languages: Mandarin, Nepali, Spanish, Portuguese, and English.
- **Parent Support Groups:**
 - A group in Spanish for families with children aged birth to 15 months.
 - A group for expectant and new parents.
 - A group for families of twins and triplets.

We're deeply grateful to our partners in the community, making these programs possible.

We face challenges, particularly the need for a permanent space.

Erica Silva- presented the following

Program Overview

- Families Served:
 - We serve 60 families across the city.
 - Each family receives 50 home visits per calendar year.
 - Families are provided with educational toys and books as part of the curriculum.

Demographics and Challenges

- Most families speak a language other than English.
- Many parents have not completed high school and face multiple daily stressors, including literacy challenges.

Support Services

- Referrals are made for various essential services, such as:
 - Food, housing, clothing, healthcare, childcare
 - Assistance for developmental delays
- Families often need additional support navigating the referral process, and we provide hands-on assistance to help them manage these complexities.

We work closely with community partners to ensure families receive the resources they need.

Thank you for the opportunity to share about our work. I'll now hand it over to Madeline to discuss our growth and future plans.

Madeline Gillespie: Good evening everyone. My name is Madeline Gillespie. I'm the coordinator of prenatal to school entry, partnership, development and alignment. My role is to connect partners and promote collaboration among organizations in Somerville working to support young learners and their families. I facilitate the first five Steering Committee, which formalizes the cross sector early childhood work in Somerville, and it's made up of members from the SFL see somerpromise and the SPS early ed and care department. We meet weekly to ensure collaboration and alignment on all things early childhood, and first five has been the force behind things like the week long, community wide engagement event, week of the young child, and the way we work together is serving as a model for cross sector work in other areas, such as out of school time. Other cross-sector work is the Early Childhood Advisory Council, or the ECAC, which meets four times a year and brings together around 30 early childhood stakeholders from across Somerville to learn about important issues in the field. Problem solve challenges, share resources and build community. Another key piece of the work involves supporting transitions of young children and their families into SPS, pre K and kindergarten. So this involves working with the enrollment team around information sessions, supporting liaisons with popsicle parties and open houses, getting ready for kindergarten, workshops and family guides, school specific, social stories and more. We would also love to think about ways to extend our home visiting programs into pre K and kindergarten. We are working with a Harvard grad school student to research existing models and other places.

Ruth Santos: To tie it all together, this is the story of a child now thriving in SPS. Their journey began with a referral from the SomerPromise SomerBaby Program to playgroups. Later, they joined the ParentChild+ Program, where developmental delays were identified, leading to a referral to Early Intervention.

At age three, the Access and Affordability Program connected the child to a community center for continued specialist support. Upon entering SPS, they received additional help through MTSS services in kindergarten.

This success reflects the enduring connections SFLC builds with families and community partners. These relationships often span years, with home visitors celebrating milestones like high school graduations. SFLC's collaborative approach creates a strong support network for families.

Thank you, and we're happy to answer any questions before Kathleen continues.

Mr. Green: That was impressive, as is the work you do. I'd love to follow up later with some demographics on the continuity of services. Specifically, I'm interested in understanding how many students are referred, who accesses services, what they look like, and identifying potential gaps or areas needing improvement

Ruth Santos: It's definitely work that we're looking into ourselves as well. We work very closely with the summer promise team and with Kathleen's team, and some of that tracking work has already started.

Ms. Pitone: I really appreciate how you frame this. I really love that people from all the different groups were able to come up and represent their work. I did have a specific question about the scope of play groups. And I kind of flipped. I looked at last year's, and it seems like this is not a critique at all. This is more about what's going on and what capacity you have. It sounds like we served a lot more families in 20 through 24 for play groups in particular, and I didn't get to look at all the numbers then we were able to serve this year. I'm curious, is that a capacity for people? Is that a capacity for space and or is it just a decision you made to focus on particular populations, and if you need more capacity, what the school committee or the district can do to support that question, again, not a criticism or reflection on what was done in previous years compared to this year for play groups and the number of families served.

Ruth Santos: So we had a full year of data. We're only halfway through right now. Probably the numbers will come up. We are challenged with space. The work that Laura does and Reina, who works very closely with her, means that they are, on any given day in six different locations, running around, trying to make things work. So we are always on the lookout for a permanent space, as we have had in the past for play groups, and I do think that that allows us to bump up our capacity and also to hold support groups in the same area. I think people get to know where to go, and it's much less confusing, any support on that front would be very appreciated

Chair Krepchin: Since we do have the mayor with us here this evening, I just wanted to flag if, since we're

talking about space needs beyond what SPS may currently have. If you or your staff think of anything, just putting it on your radar as the fact that they're looking for more spaces to have for groups.

Mr. Biton: Following up on Ms. Pitone's comments you mentioned earlier, sort of at the beginning, about the fact that this program has been level funded through the grant and then matching funds from the district. I'm wondering if, if you had a blank check, which we unfortunately don't have, but if you had a blank check, what would you envision for where this program could go? And, you know, Miss Piton mentioned the gaps, you know, such as they may be. How can we collaborate to help?

Ruth Santos: Well, there's a never ending need for play groups, we could literally, I think, double our playgroups and still be at capacity. So we would definitely love to be able to grow that. And I think Madeleine mentioned one of the other areas that we would like to look at as well, which is that we have this amazing, amazing home visiting program that serves a two year program, and then it stops somewhere between age three and four that the services end. We would love to be able to continue that program to the end of age four and then along into pre K, and even as a pilot model, be able to follow some of the families that we serve in the early years into pre K and kindergarten on a lighter level, to do a case study on what happens when we continue doing these home visits and supporting people into the early years. So that's something we're very much looking at how other people have done it and what would be needed to make that happen. Yeah, that's a wish list

Mayor Ballantyne: So in terms of space, I was thinking and trying to remember what was up on the screen, but I'm curious, you know, geographically, where you are looking for space, is my first question. And then I think of where some of the families, which I don't believe, were indicated up there, I know Clarendon Hill towers has a community space, Clarendon Hill redevelopment. The ribbon cutting should be by summer, is my understanding. But they also will have community space and the Mystic Learning Center, you know, has a space there. So are those neighborhoods where you are currently trying to get space?

Ruth Santos: They absolutely are yes, our goal would be to get a permanent space. We still sort of have bits of furniture from our old spaces, and we have materials. So our goal would be to get a space that we could set up and hold as our playgroup space, as we have done in previous years. But those are really good ideas to partner, additionally, with the people that we're partnering with.

Mayor Ballantyne: Excuse me, so you're looking for a city building for a space?

Ruth Santos: We always had a space within one of the schools where we were housed. So we were at the Powder House and then at Argenziano and the Cummings, and then at the Edgerly. We're so grateful to our community partners, so please don't get us wrong, they're amazing, and they have been so generous with their space, helping us out, but it's always preferable to have our own space if we can. But they're really great ideas for partners.

Mayor Ballantyne: Thank you for all your work too. I mean, you are all fantastic in early childhood. You know they are certainly fortunate that my next door neighbor was a preschool teacher. She taught me how to be a parent, I will say, and so the patience, the openness, the fun, the allowing to dream, and everything. So when my daughter was pulling all these toys out and she'd say to me, I was embarrassed as a first time parent, oh my gosh, she's making the room all bad. And she said to me, Katjana, that's what they're supposed to do. Isn't that wonderful. So there's a joke in our neighborhood about our neighbor who would always say, Yes, let the toddlers go to her house, because she'll let them pull everything out and just say, Isn't that wonderful? So thank you, because I've heard similar compliments to you all.

● Early Education Update

Dr. Jessica Boston Davis introduced Kathleen Bailer and the entire Early Childhood Education team here. It's really exciting to see you all up and they will talk, and they will be able to introduce themselves and talk more about their work, both within the Somerville public schools and with all of our community partners. So with that, please come on up.

Kathleen Bailer: Good evening, School Committee members, Mayor Ballantyne, Dr. Boston Davis, and community members. I'd like to introduce our team:

- Gina DiNunzio: Coordinator of the Somerville Partnership for Young Children.
- Nyralee O'Neill: BCBA and itinerant team member working citywide.
- Devanshi Desai: Head of School at Dandelion Montessori in Somerville.
- Liz Dean: Itinerant speech and language pathologist working across centers, including Dandelion.
- Courtney O'Connell: Itinerant lending library coordinator, ensuring materials are distributed citywide.

We also acknowledge team members who couldn't join us tonight.

I want to revisit the story of a young child supported by our system. The family faced challenges like a demanding work schedule and limited transportation, making walk-in services difficult. Through SFLC's referral, we provided speech services directly at a partner center, eliminating barriers. This itinerant model ensured consistent, accessible care, leading to significant progress and kindergarten readiness.

This story highlights the impact of our coordinated efforts from SFLC to SomerPromise, tuition assistance, and early education into SPS. It's a testament to the power of a caring, collaborative system supporting students' success.

Gina DiNunzio: Thanks, Kathleen. Our interconnected system provided high-quality early education to approximately 570 children last year. We added seven Head Start classrooms, bringing the citywide total to 144 classrooms.

Key highlights include:

- 33 targeted intervention referrals.
- On-site speech and language services for 25 children on IEPs across six centers.
- Behavioral support for 12 students across eight SPS buildings.

To meet growing demand, we've hired an occupational therapist to expand itinerant services. These efforts reflect both the need for and the impact of our system.

Liz Dean: Our work is grounded in the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), which focuses on early interventions to prevent the need for more intensive support later. MTSS has three key components:

1. Early identification and screening: We identify needs early, starting in preschool, to address challenges before they become barriers.
2. Tailored interventions: We provide support at various levels, from universal instruction for all children to targeted interventions for some, and intensive services for a few.
3. On-site service delivery: Bringing services directly to classrooms reduces transitions, eases stress for families, and supports educators in real-time.

For example, a child received speech therapy in her preschool classroom, ensuring accessibility and effectiveness.

Educators are crucial to our success. Our professional development helps them refine their practice and deliver high-quality instruction across the system. Our curriculum, which includes opportunities for storytelling, builds oral language skills and lays the foundation for literacy success.

Nyralee O'Neill: The collaboration between itinerant team members including speech pathologists, BCBA, occupational therapists, and educators—creates seamless interventions within daily routines. Many teachers have shared that on-site consultation helps them better support children with behavioral challenges, fostering significant social-emotional growth.

Tonight, we're joined by Devanshi Desai, director of Dandelion Montessori, one of our original partner centers, to share her experience with MTSS and its impact on her center and educators.

Devanshi Desai: Thank you, Nyrlee. I'm so happy and honored to be here as a Montessorian, we prioritize diversity, inclusivity, and accessibility to help every child reach their fullest potential. The support from the I Can Earn team last year was transformative, making our center more accessible and truly inclusive.

With 18% of our children on IEPs and 25% receiving services, Liz and Nyrlee's expertise helped parents feel confident and supported in a familiar space, eliminating barriers like income loss and time constraints.

This support has boosted morale, improved staff retention, and ensured continuity of care, directly benefiting children's growth. By meeting children where they are, empowering families, and uplifting staff, we are building a community that embodies the transformative power of early education.

Kathleen Bailer: Thank you, Devanshi, for your powerful testimony and partnership with the SPYC. Now, let's focus on the quantitative data. Devanshi shared how our work made a difference at her center, and this slide shows the CLASS scores, which assess adult-student interactions. We've been measuring these since 2016 in our partner centers. The blue line represents emotional support, the red line is classroom organization, and the green is instructional support. As you can see, instructional support has significantly increased over time, surpassing national expectations, which reflects the effectiveness of our itinerant model, coaching, professional development, and curriculum.

Additionally, we use the Kesi tool to assess incoming kindergarteners on early literacy, math, physical development, and social-emotional skills. The data shows consistent readiness across all domains, particularly in our partner centers. This growth is directly linked to the comprehensive system we've built, empowering educators and providing tailored support for students with special needs and multilingual learners. This approach ensures our students are prepared for school success.

Gina DiNunzio: Families in Somerville face significant barriers, including workforce disparities, geographic challenges, and complex systems. Our model addresses these by bringing services directly to children in their classrooms, ensuring equity and access. For example, the child we mentioned earlier benefited from on-site services and tuition support, overcoming challenges like transportation and work schedules.

To sustain and expand this impact, we seek to maintain funding from the \$1 million Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Grant. This will allow us to continue building partnerships, expand our multi-tiered support system, and strengthen kindergarten transitions. Our goal is for every child in Somerville to enter school ready to thrive. Thank you for your support, and we welcome your questions.

Chair Krepchin: Thank you so much for that. I just have a quick clarifying question. You talked about the \$1 million Commonwealth preschool grant. Is that something you expect that won't continue?

Kathleen Bailer: That's a good question. So we are in, we're in the third year of this grant. We have had this grant for 677, we're in the seventh year of the grant. Next year we are looking for a competitive grant. Somerville is highly thought of across the Commonwealth. We are a model for this work, I am confident that we will be poised to be given some of the grant money. However, I'm not too sure what that will look like, and especially because we're going to be competing. So, yeah, yeah. So we're going to be competing with districts that are gateway districts. And Maura Healey has announced that her priority is providing universal pre K to gateway cities. We are not a gateway city, so I do not know what that kind of funding is going to be looking for, and therefore I am asking for an investment for that sustainability.

Dr. Phillips: I may be looking at this all wrong, so please tell me if I am. But if my math is correct, it looks like we're serving with the program you're talking about, and our pre K and K classrooms, we're serving about 40% of the kids zero to five in Somerville. Does that sound right to you? From zero to five with the SFLC to no with your five? 570 plus the number we have in pre k plus the number we have in K.

Kathleen Bailer: So 570 is all of us. So one of the things that we're doing is, in our department, we're thinking as a system. So when we're telling you the numbers, that includes the community partner and our public school, so that 570 is all of our pre K that we're servicing, and then there's a little over 300 you know, 350 it's over 350 kindergarteners. Does that help?

Dr. Phillips: It's not really a question, but I know I've talked to Ruth about this, but I think the SFLC home visiting program, your program, and probably the basic needs program, all together, packaged up, would be like a killer educational innovation, research proposal. Those usually come out in May from the federal government, and it's a multi million dollar, multi year grant. But I think you guys are well positioned to get it. If we can get you the resources to write it.

Kathleen Bailer: That would be great if you can put both Ruth and I in touch and really Madeline that, actually Madeline, one of her big long titles is also grants so she would be our point person for that.

Ms. Pitone: I want to thank Dr Phillips for channeling the direction and ways to hopefully get more money. My question is slightly related. I wish I was offering a grant, but I'm not. So I want to quite understand the scope of students we serve versus the scope of students, like if we were to use the buzzword universal pre K. How many more students will we have to serve in that space? And I know you're not going to have an answer for this, but you know the understanding of what it would take to get there.

Kathleen Bailer: You are right on so we are in the process of doing a strategic plan. So we are just fifth. We just finished our needs assessment. We're just fine tuning some of the extra data that we need. And I'm expecting a first draft for that strategic plan in January, a sort of second final draft mid February, and a final strategic plan in March. And, and that strategic plan is exactly that I'm asking, like, what would it look like? And if, if we ever went to a universal pre K, how many children? What resources would we need and who's out there and what do they want? So we've been doing all of that. We had a family survey. We've had teacher surveys as well as we've been partnering with our directors and listening to them in addition. So I can't give that to you now, but I can in after March.

Ms. Barrish: I just want to thank both groups. I really appreciate the way You wove your work together in these presentations so that we can see how the puzzle pieces fit together the work that you do and the way you present it to us each time, it's just it's so clear and it's and so clear what a difference and how important this work is to to the students and their families. So I just want to say thank you again.

Dr. Carmona continued with his district report update which was as followso

First, a few words of congratulations and gratitude:

1) Our Director of Students Services, Liz Doncaster, recently received a prestigious honor from the "Committee for Children," for her "demonstrated ability to build a supportive learning environment where students thrive socially, emotionally and academically" through implementation of the Second Step Curriculum. Liz received the "Second Step Educator of the Year" and "District Innovator" Award. Could also plug the recent Facebook Live series.

2) Our Supervisor of Visual Arts, and art educator, May Chau, received the Francis Euphemia Thompson Award for Excellence in Teaching, one of the 2024 Common Good Awards from Massachusetts College of Art. May is receiving

the award for "her commitment to creating a collaborative and exploratory arts education environment." from MassArt, "Chau's approach encourages students to develop their creativity and critical thinking skills, fostering lifelong learning through art in one of MA's most diverse school systems."

Congratulations to Liz and May. We are so proud of you, and grateful for your amazing contributions to our district.

3) I also want to recognize our Director of Continuing Education at SCALE, Joselyn Marte. Joselyn is a FEMA reservist. Joselyn was activated and was called to serve last week and this week, in North Carolina. Thank you, Joselyn, for your selfless service.

I will also want to give you an update on the production kitchen at Argenziano. I know I shared that during our last joint school committee and city council meeting, we provided an update, and we share with you that we were disheartened by having to report that the initial bid process failed, which will cause a delay in getting that production kitchen up and running. So right now we're looking at February, if everything goes well, we will be able to do that construction over the week of February break. So again, you know, the production kitchen has an impact. I know that there was a question last time when we were at that meeting, and it was a question about financial impact, which, again, it hasn't been measured. But when I talked to the director, one of the things that she said is, imagine you're cooking at home versus buying, you know, something that already has been cooked. So there are some savings that can happen, but the biggest challenge is not providing access to some scratch cooking that students would have the benefit of otherwise, if we had access to that.

a) As discussed during last week's joint School Committee / City Council meeting, I am disheartened to have to report that the initial bid process failed, which will cause another delay in getting the district wide production kitchen up and running.

b) Our plan was to complete the bid process, and complete construction over the December break.

c) Unfortunately, the initial bid process failed, and the tentative construction timeline has been pushed back to February break.

Finally, as a reminder schools and district offices will close early this Wednesday, and will be closed Thursday and Friday for the Thanksgiving break. We wish everyone a restful long weekend with family and friends, if you plan to celebrate.

B. Personnel Report

- **November 2024**

Dr. Carmona announced the following retirements

Lisa Brewster-Cook English Teacher at Somerville High School retiring after 26 years of service

Laura Semple MLE Paraprofessional at the Healy school retiring after 1 year of service

Margaret Young Full Time Cafeteria Helper at Somerville High School/ Food Service Department retiring after 29 years of service

Peg Huben Science Teacher at Somerville High School retiring after 25 years of service

Deborah Farenga IEP Team Leader/ Team Chair District Wide retiring after 3 years of service

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

VI. REPORTS OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee: October 21, 2024 (Ms. Barish)

Rules Management Subcommittee

October 17, 2024

City Hall

The meeting was called to order at 5:38. Director of Enrollment Teresa Rodriguez, and Chief of Staff and Strategy Amara Anosike were present at the start of the meeting in addition to subcommittee members Leiran Biton and Ellenor Barish. There was one audience member.

The first item on the agenda was **Approval of Notes from September Meeting**. Mr. Biton moved to approve the notes with Ms. Barish seconding. The motion was passed.

Ms. Pitone joined the meeting.

Ms. Barish took agenda item four **JCA - Controlled Choice Student Assignment Policy** out of order and provided a recap of what was discussed at the previous meeting. Mr. Biton raised concerns about making sure students are placed at a school within the state-designated reasonable walking area of two miles. Members discussed how policy might address this while acknowledging that some families opt out of that "walkable" distance.

Discussion shifted to how policy might address transitions between schools and programs - e.g. Brown School fifth graders, SEI to general education classrooms, Capuano School to Kindergarten. Ms. Rodriguez suggested making the anticipated placements available upon request on Dec 1 every year.

Ms. Pitone asked if/when the district should do a wholesale review and adjustment of school assignment zones. Ms. Rodriguez explained that typically the list is updated over the summer if new streets/developments/buildings have opened. Ms. Pitone suggested that a review of the assignment zones should trigger from a major event like a school closure or rebuilding, enrollment study. Perhaps there should be a review at planned intervals of ten years, for example. Members noted that the policy should be explicit that assignment zones are not guaranteed. (E.g. if you move to a home in 2025, your zone might change before your first child attends school in 2028.) Ms. Pitone suggested that the end goal should be to assign as many students as possible to a school that is comfortably walkable.

Ms. Rodriguez asked if subcommittee members want to revisit sibling/proximity preference for preK. Some reasons behind the different approach were discussed. Pros and cons were discussed.

Mr. Biton expressed an interest in drafting revisions based on these discussions. He will work with Ms. Rodriguez and will consult with the legal team.

Ms. Barish took up the third item on the agenda: **BEDB-E - Regular Meeting Agenda Format** which was first discussed in January. She suggested that the body might add a paragraph to the language provided to describe what would be included in the consent agenda and how an item can be removed for discussion. MASC does not provide a reference policy for consent agendas, but this agenda falls in section B of the policy manual which Ms. Barish expects to be on the agenda next month as part of the comprehensive policy review. She will ask Alicia Mallon from MASC for guidance.

Remaining agenda items were tabled and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 6:40 pm.

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Barrish, seconded by Mr. Biton, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee October 21, 2024..

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

B. School Committee Meeting For School Buildings Facilities and Maintenance Meeting: October 28, 2024 (Mr. Biton)

Report to School Committee on the School Building Facilities and Maintenance Committee Meeting for October 28, 2024

To: Somerville School Committee

From: Leiran Biton, Chair of School Committee's Committee on School Building Maintenance

The School Committee (SC) School Buildings Facilities and Maintenance Committee met jointly with the City Council's (CC) School Building Facilities and Maintenance Special Committee on October 28, 2024, via Zoom. Members present were: Leiran Biton, chair; Laura Pitone, vice chair; and Sarah Phillips. 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: Jill Lathan, Commissioner of Public Works; Alicia Privett, Environmental Health Coordinator; XX, Legislative Clerk; Kimberly Hutter, Intergovernmental Affairs Liaison.

Mr. Davis called the CC meeting to order and established quorum with all members present. Mr. Biton called the SC meeting to order at 6:07pm and established quorum with all members present.

There were five (5) items on the agenda. The City provided a memorandum (attached) addressing each item on the agenda. Before addressing the items on the agenda, Mr. Davis noted that the discussion on usage of Revis Field has been settled with an agreement between SPS and Department of Public Works (DPW).

1) Update about efforts to eliminate rat infiltration in Somerville school buildings

Ms. Lathan and Ms. Privett provided updates about efforts to combat rat infiltration in SPS buildings. The DPW has worked closely with Inspectional Services Division (ISD) to identify signs of rat infiltration and opportunities to block rodent entry. The City and its consultants (Waltham Pest Services, or WPS) have been filling and covering holes that rodents can use to get inside, and replace and repair doors to block rodent entry. Rodents can squeeze through extremely tight spaces, so it is very difficult to entirely preclude their access. Ms. Privett stated she had not seen signs that rats are living or nesting inside schools. The City no longer uses rodenticides in its rodent control programs. WPS has been setting traps and collecting carcasses. SPS has performed walkthroughs with Ms. Privett and DPW to identify rodent access points. DPW has also been working to train custodial workers to properly dispose of waste food and drink to avoid spills during trash hauling, which has attracted rats.

Ms. Sait asked about composting efforts in SPS. Ms. Privett provided some historical background on such composting efforts, and expressed openness to working with SPS to reestablish composting in schools. Ms. Privett offered to get back to the Committee on a question about from where in the budget the composting comes. Mr. Davis expressed a desire to have composting in schools return, and introduced a motion to reintroduce composting in schools. Dr. Carmona shared a concern that composting in schools would lead to more food for pests and rodents. Dr. Phillips indicated composting was not one of the strategic priorities recently approved by SC, and suggested Ms. Privett work with Ms. Anosike to develop a plan to move forward. Mr. Biton suggested that students and educators should be driving the conversation. Mr. Clingan opined that passage of the motion would only precipitate a conversation between City and schools, and would not bind schools to any particular action. Ms. Pitone requested to get a report-out on the earlier schools composting pilot. The final motion "Requesting that the Commissioner of Public Works work with the Superintendent of Schools to present a plan to re introduce composting in the schools" was approved with three Yes votes by City Councilors.

2) PA Systems at multiple Somerville Public School buildings

Dr. Carmona indicated that some areas in some SPS buildings had inoperable or poorly operating PA system speakers. Some systems have been redone, especially at the Edgerly.

3) Play Structures at the Capuano Early Education Center schoolyard

Dr. Carmona provided background information on damage to play equipment at the Capuano schoolyard, including both physical damage to structures and water damage to the rubber surface. Mr. Biton asked what the cause of the damage was, and Ms. Lathan responded that these are public areas that are not monitored at night so damage may occur because of people not using the equipment appropriately. Ms. Lathan added that DPW will be conducting annual inspections of all parks equipment and identifying the condition and repair needs in a systematic way. Ms. Pitone suggested the City could keep spare parts around for items that frequently break, and consider for new parks the City could install equipment that uses parts from a uniform vendor to simplify the procurement process. Asked by Mr. Clingan when the damage to the Capuano schoolyard equipment was identified, Ms. Lathan responded it was first reported over the summer. Ms. Lathan relayed that procuring and installing replacement parts is not simple, and requires ordering specialty parts. The parts have now been received and are awaiting installation. Ms. Sait asked whether water damaged surfacing would be repaired. Ms. Lathan responded that the flooding is a bigger issue.

4) Update on the reliability and repairs of the elevator(s) at the Winter Hill at Edgerly School

Members expressed appreciation for the detailed elevator maintenance logs at all SPS schools. Dr. Phillips asked whether the situation that caused the Winter Hill at Edgerly elevator to cease operation, which was caused by work Eversource conducted while onsite, could recur at other schools in the District. Ms. Lathan expressed that it would be unlikely to occur because Eversource is not typically doing the work they did at Edgerly. That being a unique situation, there is not really a standard operating procedure to be put in place to prevent future incidents. Mr. Clingan asked about response time for fixing broken elevators. Ms. Lathan responded that when an elevator is reported as being out of service, it is immediately prioritized.

5) Update of the Ginny Smithers Sanders Pool closure and maintenance

Ms. Sait relayed that she has heard from many constituents that there is poor communication about the closure of the pool. She suggested that because maintenance happens on a yearly basis, the anticipated closures can be published and communicated ahead of time. Ms. Lathan indicated that the Director of Parks and Recreation (P&R) handles the communication of programming. Ms. Lathan noted that DPW has recently taken back all facilities and maintenance responsibilities, including for all aquatic resources such as the Ginny Smithers Sanders Pool. Ms.

Lathan indicated that last year maintenance was not performed, and DPW is attempting to align all planned and required maintenance to ensure continued performance of the pool. Ms. Sait reiterated that the P&R Director should communicate the reasons for the closure in addition to the dates of the closure. Mr. Davis stated that the Chief Administrative Officer should be able to coordinate this communication. Ms. Hutter said she would bring this item back to P&R. Ms. Sait made a motion for the administration to communicate to pool users and update the website around closures and pool maintenance. Mr. Biton indicated the importance of ensuring students have continued access to the pool for educational purposes. Dr. Carmona said the District has met with P&R to talk about how schools will use the pool facilities. During school hours, the pool is used for students. Ms. Sait asked why maintenance is conducted over the summer, as opposed to some other time of year. Ms. Lathan responded that August is a great time to work on it because of a lull in activities and because of the fiscal cycle. DPW will be consistently doing the annual maintenance in August to avoid closures that would impact activities to a greater extent.

The meeting adjourned at 8:08pm.

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Barrish, second by Mr. Biton, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for School Buildings Facilities and Maintenance Meeting for October 28, 2024

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

C. School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities Subcommittee: November 13, 2024
(Dr. Phillips)

Report of The Finance and Facilities Subcommittee, November 13, 2024, submitted by Sarah Phillips

The Finance and Facilities Subcommittee met on November 13, 2024, via Zoom. Members present were Sarah Phillips and Leiran Biton. Andre Green joined at 6:03 pm. Also in attendance was Interim Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Pat Durette and Superintendent Rubén Carmona.

Sarah Phillips called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. There were 1 attendee in the audience. There were two items on the agenda:

1) YTD Expenses Report

There have not been many changes since the last month. A few departments have encumbered the majority of their budget but Pat has spoken with those departments (Curriculum, ELL) and all seems to be normal.

2) October 2024 Local and Grant Bill Rolls

There was a motion by Andre Green, seconded by Sarah Phillips to approve the October 2024 local bill rolls. The motion passed unanimously.

3) Community Schools

Pat provided an overview of the materials provided by Rosanna. In terms of revenue, there was a million dollar plus carryover from the prior year. School Dept Revenue is actually the tuition families pay as of the moment this report was pulled. There are about \$300,000 in tuition payments to deposit. Mass reimbursements is the funding SPS receives from students on EEC vouchers. Approximately 30 students receive these vouchers. In terms of expenditures, salaries are the biggest. To date, salaries have been over one million dollars. Last year, professional and technical services went to pay for outside staff. Community Schools is fully staffed at this moment. In addition to the students receiving EEC vouchers, we are giving scholarships to 139 students. 63% of scholarships given are full scholarships. The last page is purchased goods and services for Community Schools getting vendors for. Almost a million dollars in services have been purchased. There is about \$130,000 left that's not dedicated to programming.

The committee pushed the district to ensure that much of the Community Schools surplus is spent to expand access to programming.

4) Contracting for Goods and Services

Pat provided an overview of the procurement process. She reviewed MA procurement law– 30B. If you are purchasing something less than \$10,000/year you do not need to go through a formal procurement process. From \$10,000-\$100,000/year we have to solicit 3 bids in writing, and we have to take the lowest bid. The city puts together these contracts with the scope of services and the vendor and district sign and city reviews. This process usually takes a month. Anything over \$100,000 requires sealed bids and proposals, which takes time. RFPs need to be written and advertised for two weeks. There is usually some

time for vendors to respond. Then, the district opens the bids. Depending on the type of proposal we either score bids to make a

1

decision or are required to go with the lowest bid. When we select the vendor, we follow a similar process with other contracts. This process usually takes two months. Once a contract is signed, the district can create a purchase order. Some purchases are done using cooperative bidding, which works differently. Leah Arrondondo does all the contracts for the district and tracks each step of this process closely. Pat would like to move contracting up earlier in the spring to ensure purchase orders are ready to go when the year starts.

The meeting adjourned at 7:01 pm.

Documents Used:

Scholarship Amount 2024-2025.pdf
Procurement of Supplies and services.pdf
OCTOBER BILL ROLL.pdf
Expenses.pdf
Community Schools Budget.pdf

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Barrish, second by Mr. Biton, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Facilities and Facilities subcommittee for November 13, 2024

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

D. School Committee Meeting for Education Program & Instruction Subcommittee Meeting:
November 14, 2024

Education Programs Subcommittee – November 14, 2024

Meeting called to order at 2:45 pm

ATTENDANCE:

Emily Ackman

Jessica Boston Davis

Ildefonso Arellano

AUDIENCE:

Jackie Piques

Leigha Charboneau

Liz Eldridge

SPECIAL EDUCATION DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Dr. Ackman opened the meeting, introduced Dr. Boston Davis and Director Arellano. She noted that, without quorum, there cannot be votes, but the presentation on special education would go forward. She turned the meeting over to

Dr. Boston Davis who introduced Director Arellano who shared his presentation.

Overview

- Updated Special Education Program and Services Description
- Audit on Inclusion Program and Inclusion Practices
- Technology to Support Special Education Students and Staff
 - Learning Ally
 - GoalBook
 - Academic Readiness Intervention System (ARIS)
- Specialized Reading Program - Sonday System

Special Education Services and Programs

The Special Education Department's website was recently updated. Families have access to information on services and programs offered to our special education students.

- [Special Education Programs and Services webpage](#)
- [Special Education webpage](#)

Audit on Inclusion Programming and Practices

This school year, the Special Education Department has prioritized conducting a comprehensive audit of our inclusion programs and practices. The audit would focus on the following key elements:

- Strengths, challenges, and areas of growth in our inclusion practices.
- How students with disabilities are included in the general education settings.
- The effectiveness of accommodations and modifications.
- Review of collaboration between general education and special education staff.
- Recommendations for improving inclusive practices moving forward.

Tools to Support Special Education Students and Staff

LEARNING ALLY

- Online library of audiobooks for students who struggle with decoding, fluency, and/or reading comprehension
- Using audio books can help students improve reading fluency and building vocabulary
 - Students have to qualify for the program, but do not need an IEP or 504 plan.
 - Educator can create accounts for their students.
 - Since Learning Ally is web-based, students can access assigned books from home as well.
 - Books are available in Spanish and Portuguese.
 - Dr. Davis noted that Ms. Seward is leading training on Learning Ally for educators in grades 6-8 in December.

GOALBOOK

- Online platform to support special educators in developing comprehensive Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) that focus on:
 - Data-driven present levels
 - Measurable standard-aligned goals
 - Research-based specially designed instruction

ACADEMIC READINESS INTERVENTION SYSTEM (ARIS)

- Curriculum designed for students diagnosed with Autism and Developmental Delays.
- Provides students with foundational skills in language, social interactions, motor development, and academics readiness.
- AIM (Adapt, Include, Motivate) Program will pilot using the ARIS curriculum to supplement and provide entry points in order to access the SEE (Somerville Early Education) Every Child: Teaching and Learning Framework.

Specialized Reading Program Training - Sonday System

- The Special Education Department will be offering training on the Sonday System for its special education teachers.
 - The Sonday System is an Orton-Gillingham approach to reading intervention. The multisensory reading program, grounded in the science of reading, supports students from pre-K through 8th grade reading levels.
 - One or more special educators at every school.
 - Educators have been trained in Wilson

Director Arellano also noted that he believes these initiatives are student focused, and help get teachers what they need to best support their students.

He also expressed appreciation because the general education curriculum roll-out has been collaborative and inclusive of the special education department and special education teachers, who are also included in curriculum reviews as well.

Meeting ended at 3:18 pm

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Barrish, second by Mr. Biton, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Educational Program & Instruction Subcommittee Meeting for November 14, 2024

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

Ms. Pitone: I was not able to attend the Ed program subcommittee, and I know that D.r Ackman is not here, but I think Dr Boston Davis was at the meeting. I had a question about the audit for inclusion. I was curious if that audit is being done internally, or if we have an external partner coming in and auditing inclusion? And if you could speak to it briefly, that'd be great.

Dr. Boston Davis: Thank you for the question. As you know our special ed, as you may know our special education director presented around special education as it relates to all things academic and education programs. And he did mention that there will be, he's looking into an audit with external partners. The details for that, I would have to refer back to the notes and connect with the director, but otherwise that is the high level answer to your question.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. School Committee Office Hours

Chair Krepchin: That brings us to new business school committee office hours. Someone asked about this, and I will admit that I completely dropped the ball. We have, in the past, done coordinated fall office hours, so I put it on the agenda for discussion. If we want to try to do something before the end of the year, we can wait till the first of the year. I don't know anyone's thoughts, or if anyone is open to coordinating them.

Mr. Green: I would strongly recommend waiting till January. The weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas are famously stressful in education, and I just and for parents, and I just don't think it's a good time to kind of add one more thing to the event plate, but we should plan to do it in January.

Ms. Pitone: I support that. I think, in general, if we can do them in the fall, and this is not a critique, because obviously I didn't raise my hand and say we haven't done them. It's been an intense fall from a political standpoint. So generally, we'll do them in October or even early November. But I agree with Mr. Green that January, and then if we also want to do a spring, so we're still doing it twice, that's an option as well.

Chair Krepchin: Thank you, and that is why I started this by apologizing for not bringing it up earlier, because we typically do them in October, and we didn't. All right, so we will discuss it again and try to put something together in January.

B. SEU Unit D SCALE MOU

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Barrish, seconded by Dr. Phillips, to authorize the chair to sign the SEU Unit D SCALE MOU

C. Addendum to Contract with the Superintendent

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Barrish, seconded by Mr. Green, to authorize the chair to sign the Addendum to contract with the superintendent.

D. MSBA- Enrollment Contract

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Phillips, Seconded by Ms. Barrish *That the Chair of the School Committee, for the Somerville Public Schools which is currently Ms. Ilana Krepchin, is hereby appointed and authorized by and on behalf of the District to execute and deliver on behalf of the District the Enrollment Certificate and any amendments thereto (the "Agreement"), as required by the Massachusetts School Building Authority (the "MSBA") in connection with a project for construction of repairs and renovations or new construction for the Winter Hill Community Innovation School, and to thereby bind the District to the terms and conditions of such Agreement.*

Chair Krepchin: All right, now we have the MSBA enrollment certificate. Dr Carmona, did you want to give us a bit of quick background on that.

Dr. Carmona: Yes, definitely my pleasure, as you know, pretty much this is the end of the eligibility cycle, which ends with the conclusion of the certificate of the enrollment process. You have a packet in which you receive the information from MSBA as to the rationale of the actual numbers that they came up with. Those numbers have been an ongoing discussion with the city and the district in terms of, what is the ceiling, what is the highest capacity that this, this combined facility, if you will, will have based on their calculations under their assessment. So the number, the final number, is 925, and they accounted for multiple things as you can see in your document. But again, what we're doing today is basically finalizing that phase, which is having the chair, the mayor and myself sign that document, and we require an authorization for the chair to do that. So once that is completed, we basically will be hand delivering that to the city, and then will be brought to MSBA. And with the intent that we will be a will we hope that we will appear at the December MSBA board meeting for a vote, and so they have to approve that, and they vote, and that's the final part of the process. So we're hoping that is in December. So there's the December data. We don't make it on the December day, we will have to do it for the February one. So it is extremely important that this be completed and get delivered on time.

Ms. Pitone: I am just curious. I don't have a problem with moving this forward, but I am curious, what does plus pre K students mean? Is that an expectation that we're going to have a single classroom, multiple pre K classrooms, and if we don't have this information, it's not going to stop me from approving this, but I just thought if anybody knew more what that meant, I'd appreciate that.

Dr. Carmona: We are only in the eligibility phase. That other question as to how that is configured, would be in the feasibility phase. But basically, the answer that I received around that was that 925 students is the maximum that we can have a space for. So what? However we configure that is up to us, based on, again, the school building feedback on that eligibility process. But basically, that's the ceiling. Originally, the numbers were in the seven hundreds, and so after the conversation about the tightness of our space in our district, they kept on going and adjusting that number.

Ms. Pitone: I appreciate you expanding the definition to say that it wasn't just looking at the population at the Winter Hill or the population at the brown but looking at the population district wide and where we need to create capacity. So thank you for sharing that.

Mr. Green: I find myself in a position of waiting at the same district and the city for their seemingly at least somewhat successful negotiations. I've spent a good chunk of time this weekend trying to figure out how, well, first of all, how the MSBA came out their projections, and I still haven't figured that one out, but given their projections,

how we got this higher number. And so I want to thank the district in the city for successfully negotiating that number upward. That is slack we desperately need as a city.

Dr. Carmona: That is correct, and you know is good news is that right, that we have a enrollment has somewhat steady, and we are facing, also some challenges in terms of those that is faced, but that calculation comes from also looking at the entire district and saying the slate, the retention rate as well as the add a 15% increase to those numbers. So in case you know, there are fluctuations on migration and any other patterns that affect enrollment.

E. FY24 Somerville High School Diploma Request (Recommended action: approval)

Mario Andrade Sola

Somerville, MA

MOTION: There was a motion to by Dr. Phillips, seconded by Mr. Biton to approve FY24 Somerville High School Diploma for *Mario Andrade Sola of Somerville, MA*

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

F. Acceptance of FY23 Grants Funds (Recommended action: approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Pitone, 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

- **Coordinated Family Community Engagement - \$13,157.00-** Funding Increase
- **Proficiency Based Outcomes in Languages Other Than English-\$29, 405.00-** Stipends & World Language Assessment Tools
- **Mass Cultural Council – SHS- \$5,000.00 -** Boston Chamber Music Society to continue to advance technical & fundamental instruction skills, develop performance skills & enhance social & artistic engagement of SHS Orchestra students.
- **Mass Cultural Council – WHCIS-\$5,000.00-** Arts integration SEL puppetry residence
- **Mass Cultural Council – Healey- \$5,000.00-** Arts integration SEL puppetry residence
- **Mass Cultural Council – Capuano-\$5,000.00-** Arts integration SEL puppetry residence
- **MCC Serhaver El Sistema- 22,000.00-** Afterschool Music Education Program

Private

- **Mass Child Psychiatry- \$30,000.00-** Mental Health Activities & Services

Mr. Green: This is just for the public to know. As someone who has been active in architecture issues and has actually served on the jury that awarded these prizes in the past, I don't think people know that service actually gets played on a curve. We are considered to be so good at art education that we don't really win these awards. We don't really get these prizes. So to get three of them in the cycle speaks to our extraordinary work of our Arts team and our grand development team as securing that bag, and in the same year that we're finally getting awards for our faculty in arts education, does speak to something that we are doing right, even relative to the high standards arts community has for Somerville. So I think we should all be very proud of that.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Dr. Carmona: I think the next phase of the MSBA, the feasibility study, and the first part of that is forming the project. And that is one thing that the MSBA has to approve when it comes to hiring the OPM, and so there's the OPM as well as the designer and architect. So there's a couple of things that have to be done in the form in the project phase, which is the visibility phase, and then that the duration of that also depends on a couple of things, like hiring

someone requires some procurement loss, like three months to hire someone, both the OPM as well as the designer and architect, also the involvement that the SBC will have in the process in approving those that selection. So again, that next phase is kind of a close to a year length phase of the feasibility, and it requires that we do, recruit some of the folks who will be doing the high level work. But I mean that information, I think, is probably will be one information that should be shared through also the city, in terms of, like, the major decisions that will be happening that hiring, as I said, is done through the city, and then the architect and designers also in collaboration with the school building committee.

Ms. Pitone: Is there going to be a format that the school committee gets updated on the construction advisory group. I think that's what stands for in terms of this very specifically about the timeline in the process. You know, obviously we're not going to get updates in every single meeting, and I'm not expecting that. But as the timeline flushes out and as the process continues to flush out, I think we should know where they're going with it.

Dr. Carmona: We can ask our school committee representative to give us updates as the process goes along.

Mr. Green: When I have them, I'll give them my promise, and hopefully I'll have some as soon as our next meeting.

IX. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Dr. Phillips: On behalf of the school committee and all the families at AFA, I just want to give a big thank you to the mayor. If you were at last week's joint building committee, you might have learned about the urgent need for a new classroom at AFA, or the risk of needing to displace 18 kids this year and about as many kids in the next couple years. And, you know, last week, the joint building committee got a memo saying that, you know, given all the unknowns, we can't provide a timeline at this time for a new classroom. And as of today, we learned that that classroom screen lighted, and it's going to be built. So I want to say thank you very much for everything that you and your team have done to meet our kids' needs.

Chair Krepchin: I have an item the graduation we require we approved, which reminded me of what Ms. Pitone learned when we were at the NASC conference.

Ms. Pitone: I was at a presentation that was talking about the ballot question about MCAS not going to be not is not going and moving forward, not being a graduation requirement. I think it gets enacted either May December 5 or December 6, one of those days. And what we learned was that for any student that is at that point in time, under 22 which is kind of the time horizon for our obligation to service students, they can apply to if they didn't receive a diploma, and if the only thing that kept them from receiving the diploma was passing the MCAS that they can either if they're on, we're on an IEP team, or in the special education process, they can ask for A team meeting and make that request. If they are not, they can still make the request, I think, through the high school, as long as they meet all the other graduation requirements. So there were, I guess there's a request in there that the district do some homework and figure out who those students were. And again, it's not going to be a huge list, but even if it's two kids, five kids, 10 kids. We all know that a student with a diploma is going to be in a better position in their future career. So obviously, check, double check all of this with legal counsel, but this is from a presentation from lawyers. It wasn't just someone thinking this was a great idea, but to identify who those students are and make our best effort to contact them and let them know that there's an opportunity for them to get their diploma.

Dr. Boston Davis: Thank you for that update. We have been regularly talking about this, along with the principal's team. So that is something that I did not yet know. We've been kind of trying to learn as much as we can, like I think many districts are, so that's very helpful, and we will indeed do that.

Mr. Green: I just had some things I'd like to put on agendas for subcommittees through you for next provides the facilities I'd love to discuss how much for our budget comes from the feds. And, you know, I think we are all aware that money may, at the very least, may come with some things attached in the future that we may not be comfortable with. So I'd like to know what that dollar amount looks like. Similarly, those with limited rules, could

revisit some of the sanctuary city sections we passed in 2017, 18, and see their places. We'd be able to make them stronger as the assault seems like it'll be strong and also be stronger this time around.

X. CONDOLENCES

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

Joseph Hercule – Beloved uncle of Angie Surpris Interpreting and Translations for the SFLC Department

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned 8:25 p.m.

Related documents:

Agenda

[Early Childhood](#)

[Early Education Update](#)

Personnel Report

Submitted by: C. Legaski

Attach Documents Starting on the next page

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – CITY HALL
REGULAR MEETING – NOVEMBER 25, 2024 – 7:00 P.M.**

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2024, 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-AFq7pR0SMI0vsJ0WNEg

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. 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-AFq7pR0SMI0vsJ0WNEg

Meeting ID: 869 0362 0322

Password: SPSSC24

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- October 21, 2024
- November 4, 2024

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

- Early Childhood (SFLC)
- Early Education Update (Ms. Bailer)

B. Personnel Report

- November 2024

VI. Report of Subcommittees**A. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee: October 21, 2024 (Ms. Barish)**

MOTION: TO accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee for October 21, 2024

B. School Committee Meeting for School Buildings Facilities and Maintenance Meeting: October 28, 2024 (Mr. Biton)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for School Building Facilities and Maintenance Meeting for October 28, 2024

C. School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities subcommittee Meeting: November 13, 2024 (Dr Phillips)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities Subcommittee Meeting for November 13, 2024

D. School Committee Meeting for Education Program & Instruction Subcommittee Meeting: November 14, 2024 (Dr. Ackman)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Education Program & Instruction Subcommittee Meeting: November 14, 2024

VII. NEW BUSINESS**A. School Committee Office Hours****B. SEU Unit D SCALE MOU**

Motion: to authorize the chair to sign the SEU Unit D SCALE MOU

C. Addendum to Contract with the Superintendent

Motion: to Authorize the chair to sign the Addendum to contract with the superintendent

D. MSBA- Enrollment Certificate**E. FY24 Somerville High School Diploma Request (Recommended action: approval)**

Mario Andrade Sola *Somerville, MA*

F. 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:

State

- Coordinated Family Community Engagement - \$13,157.00- Funding Increase
- Proficiency Based Outcomes in Languages Other Than English-\$29, 405.00- Stipends & World Language Assessment Tools
- Mass Cultural Council – SHS- \$5,000.00 - Boston Chamber Music Society to continue to advance technical & fundamental instruction skills, develop performance skills & enhance social & artistic engagement of SHS Orchestra students.
- Mass Cultural Council – WHCIS-\$5,000.00- Arts integration SEL puppetry residence

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

- Mass Cultural Council – Healey- \$5,000.00- Arts integration SEL puppetry residence
- Mass Cultural Council – Capuano-\$5,000.00- Arts integration SEL puppetry residence
- MCC Serhaver El Sistema- 22,000.00- Afterschool Music Education Program

Private

- Mass Child Psychiatry- \$30,000.00- Mental Health Activities & Services

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 25 de noviembre 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 25 de Novembro 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 25 Novanm 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

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

4

November 25, 2024

Reyinyon ID: 869 0362 0322
Modpas: SP55C23

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.

Somerville Public Schools					
Education • Inspiration • Excellence					
November 2024					
RESIGNATION FOR PURPOSE OF RETIREMENT:					
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	
RESCINDED/DECLINED OFFER:					
AFAS/CS	FT Lead Teacher	Yesenia Reales	NA	Declined Offer	
Food Service	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Sophia Hanna	NA	Declined Offer	
Food Service	Intermittent Cafeteria Helper	Angie Vixama	NA	Declined Offer	
SHS	Senior Clerk 2	DeniseCapotasto	NA	Rescinded Resignation Notice	
RESIGNATION NOTICES:					
BR/HLY	School Based Social Worker	Brooke Lyons-Justus	12/03/24		
DW/Food Svcs	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Surinder Kaur	11/08/24		
ESCS	PT Utility Aide	Claudia Guerrero	08/28/24		
ESCS/CS	FT SPED Lead Teacher	Daniel Louis	10/22/24		
SCALE	PT Teacher	Christine Dennis	10/30/24		
SHS/MLE	Welcome Center Liaison	Ana Nascimento	11/27/24		
SHS	School Building Substitute Teacher	Tarn Stephanos	11/12/24		
SCALE	PT ELL Level 3 English Teacher	William Barfus	06/14/24	Being hired for another SPS position	
SCALE	PT ABE Math Teacher	William Barfus	06/14/24	Being hired for another SPS position	
ASSIGNMENT ENDED:					
SHS/Athletics	Athletics Coach	Brian Axelrod	10/30/24		
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Sandara Moccaldi	06/30/24	Being hired for another SPS position	
LEAVES OF ABSENCES:					
AFAS	Dean of Students	Karen Grenier-Mernin	10/07/24-10/11/24		
AFAS	Physical Education & Health Teacher	Kristi Savage	01/23/25-04/23/25		
AFAS	Grade 3 Teacher	Angela Landau	10/09/24-04/17/25	Revised	

AFAS	Grade 1 SEI Integrated Teacher	Alyssa Bamgarten	08/26/25-06/17/25	Revised	
AFAS/FS	PT Cafeteria Helper	Sandra Brown	12/13/24-09/10/25		
CAP	Speech & Language Pathologist	Laura Nicastro	11/04/24-11/13/24		
CAP	SPED AIM Teacher	Katherine Delta	12/14/24-01/30/25		
Central/HR	Director of Human Resources	Mariana MacDonald	11/22/24-12/06/24		
Central/SPED	Assistant Director of Special Education	Marisa MacDonald	11/22/24-01/20/25		
DW	Provisional Grades 3-12 Stings Teacher	Lu Yu	12/02/24-03/14/25		
DW	Academic Evaluator	Jennifer Zacharias	10/21/24-06/20/25		
DW	Mathematics Academic Coach	Matthew Burch	02/05/25-04/08/24		
DW	ESL Specialist	Julia Allen	11/05/24-03/07/25		
DW	Itinerant BCBA	Nyrallee O'Neill	11/27/24-03/13/25	Revised	
ESCS	SPED Resource Room Teacher	Kirsten Spence	09/17/24-11/09/24		
ESCS	Music Teacher	Immei Wong	01/25/25-04/11/25		
ESCS/CS	PT Assistant Teacher	Neelam Sehli	09/19/24-10/11/24	Revised	
HLY	Grade 2 Teacher	Dolores Theolien	08/26/24-10/29/24	Revised	
HLY	Grade 5 Science/Social Studies Teacher	Rachel Russ	01/13/25-04/17/25		
KEN	SEEL Teacher	Hannah Stalberg	12/31/24-06/17/25		
NW/FC	Math/Counselor Teacher	Sally Brith	01/07/25-02/24/25		
NW/FC	Head Clerk	Jessica Roffi	10/11/24-10/25/24		
SFLC	Student Enrollment Specialist	Fernanda Alves	09/09/24-11/01/24	Revised	
SHS	Science Teacher	Maureen Quigly	09/16/24-11/16/24	Revised	
SHS	College & Career Counselor	Kayla Schutte	08/26/24-12/20/24	Revised	
SHS	Physical Education & Health Teacher	Maura Goodwin	09/04/24-11/16/24		
SHS	Science Teacher	Toni Grossenbacher	01/09/25-04/10/25		
SHS	Assistant Principal	Paul Cooley	12/19/24-03/06/25		
WHCIS/CS	OST Site Director	Dejah Euvrard-Brewington	11/12/24-04/16/25		
WHCIS	SPED AIM Paraprofessional	Melissa Callahan	10/08/24-10/22/24		
WHCIS	Grade 1 Teacher	Catharine Keeffe	02/07/25-05/16/25		
WHCIS	SPED AIM Paraprofessional	Emily Martins	12/01/24-02/27/25		
WSNS	Adjustment Counselor	Nicole Podoloff	08/26/24-12/13/24	Revised	
WSNS/CS	OST Site Director	Joshua Leibovitz	11/12/24-02/10/25	Revised	
INTRA-DISTRICT PERSONNEL TRANSACTIONS:					
AFAS/Food Svc	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Ana Orellana Martinez	Location Change	NA	08/28/24
AFAS/CS	FT Lead Teacher	Sandra Moccaldi	New Assignment	Stepahnie Santiago	12/02/24
CAP/Food Svc	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Paula Digaetano	Location Change	NA	10/21/24
DW	BCBA Specialist / Home Trainer	Cara Campbell	Title Change	NA	08/26/24
WHCIS	BCBA Analyst Specialist	Sarah Burke	Title Change	NA	08/26/24
ESCS/Food Svc	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Angeline Jean Louis	New Assignment	NA	10/21/24
ESCS/Food Svc	PT Cafeteria Helper	Bertha Sanchez	New Assignment	NA	11/13/24
ESCS/Food Svc	FT Cafeteria Helper	Katrina Walton	PT ot FT Cafe Helper	Dayana Alphonse	11/13/24
HLY/Food Svc	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Daniele Femla	New Assignment	NA	09/05/24
HLY	Building Substitute Teacher	JennaLyn Pflieger	New Assignment	Sam MacMillan	11/04/24
KEN/Food Svc	PT Lunch Attendant	Glenda Martinez	Location Change	NA	08/28/24
SCALE	PT Financial Literacy Teacher	Being hired for another SPS position	Reassignment	New	11/11/24
SCALE	PT Bridge Teacher	Antoinette Czekanski	Additional Assignment	New	11/12/24

SCALE	PT Spanish High School Equivalency Reading/Writing Teacher	Carmen Schumann	Additional Assignment	New	11/12/24
SHS	SPED Life Skills Teacher	Elizabeth Gurski	Reassignment	T.Babbitt/N. Damato	08/29/24
WHCIS	School Building Substitute Teacher	Katherine Weigle	Location Change	Katherine Weigle	10/07/24
WHCIS	BCBA Analyst Specialist	Jennifer Hayward	Title Change	NA	08/26/24
WHCIS	BCBA Analyst Specialist	Melissa Starr	Title Change	NA	08/26/24
WHCIS	BCBA Analyst Specialist	Rebecca Julian	Title Change	NA	08/26/24
WHCIS/Food Svc	FT Lunch Attendant	Reeta Verma	New Assignment	NA	08/26/24
WHCIS/CS	Provisional OST Site Director	Daniela Turner	Temp New Assignment	Deijah Eurvard Brewington	11/20/24
WSNS/CS	Provisional OST Site Director	Seana Read	Temp New Assignment	Joshua Leibovitz	11/20/24
WSNS/ESCS/Food Svc	PT Lunch Attendant	Delmis Aviles	Location Change	NA	10/22/24
WSNS	School Building Substitute Teacher	Cole Martell	New Assignment	Ronan Fitzpatrick	10/24/24
WSNS/Food Svc	PT Lunch Attendant	Kyra Passanisi	Location Change	NA	11/18/24
NEW HIRES:					

AFAS	Long Term Substitute Teacher - Provisional Grade 3 SEI Integrated	Megan Smith	Angela Landau	No/Yes	10/30/24
CAP/CS	High School Helper	Nancy Nimako	New	No/No	10/17/24
Central/Payroll	Principal Account Clerk - Payroll Coordinator	Barbara Small	Vivian Rivera	No/No	11/25/24
CS	PT Therapeutic Specialist	Alexa Ryan	Anastasia Brennan	No/No	10/21/24
CS	Substitute Teacher	Makaila Witham	NA	No/No	12/08/24
DW	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Patty Peterson	NA	No/No	10/21/24
DW	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Vijayalaxmi LNU	NA	No/No	11/25/24
DW	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Baldish Kaur	NA	No/No	11/26/24
DW	Intermittent Lunch Attendant	Khadeja McKinney	NA	No/No	11/26/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Bisrat Woldemariam	NA	No/No	10/07/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Patrick Mulligan	NA	No/No	11/12/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Delilia Pires	NA	No/No	12/15/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Brian Guest	NA	No/No	11/07/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Grace Gaucher	NA	No/No	11/14/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute Teacher	Bailey Apple	NA	No/No	11/21/24
DW	School Building Substitute - Special Education	Paige White	New	No/No	11/12/24
DW	Intermittent Substitute School Nurse	Delaney McCarthy	NA	No/No	11/14/24
ESCS	Provisional SPED Resource Room Teacher	Kelly Murray	Kirsten Spence	No/Yes	10/22/24
ESCS	El Sistema Violin Teaching Artist	Dmitri Ascarrunz	New	No/No	10/17/24
ESCS/El Sistema	High School Mentor	Gina Chagnon	New	No/No	11/04/24
ESCS/El Sistema	High School Mentor	Fletcher Kelleher	New	No/No	11/04/24
HLV/CS	High School Helper	Ryan Ribeiro-Bisetti	New	No/No	10/18/24
SCALE	PT Bridge Teacher	Marha Parinussa Flynn	Keyana Parks	No/No	11/20/24
SCALE	PT Education and Career Advisor - Morning	Carmen Sofia Canales Chacare	New	No/No	11/18/24
SCALE	PT Education and Career Advisor - Evening	Carmen Sofia Canales Chacare	New	No/No	11/18/24
SFLC	Multilingual Services Interpreter/Translator	Vanusa Teixeira	Elaine Metzker	No/No	10/28/24
SHS	Building Substitute Teacher	Carlos Lu	New	No/No	10/21/24
SHS	Provisional Band Director and Instrumental Specialist	Ashton Bowles	Timoty Moyer	No/No	10/07/24
SHS	Long Term Substitute Teacher: Provisional ESL Teacher	Martha Parinussa Flynn	Samuel Blomberg	No/No	11/26/24
SHS	Long Term Substitute Teacher - Provisional Physics	Eliza Ray	Michael Freemant	No/No	11/25/24
SHS	Standardized Test Proctor	Claire Buesser	Yearly Appointment	No/No	12/01/24

SHS	School Building Substitute Teacher	Charlotte Reynolds	Tarn Stephanos	No/No	12/02/24
WHCIS	Provisional SPED AIM Paraprofessional	Liz Hernandez	Kashima Riley	No/No	10/29/24
WSNS	Provisional Library/Media Specialist	Absaroka Mann-Wood	Meagan Ross	No/No	12/09/24