

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Monday, October 7, 2024 - Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m. – City Hall Chambers

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

Members Absent: Mayor Ballantyne and President Ewen-Campen

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00p.m. Chair Krepchin asked Superintendent Carmona to call the roll, results of which were as follows: PRESENT – 7 – Ms. Barish, Mr. Green, Mr. Biton, Ms. Pitone, Dr. Ackman, Dr. Phillips and Ms. Krepchin. ABSENT – 2 - Mayor Ballantyne, President Ewen-Campen.

Moment of Silence

Dr. Phillips recognized the passing of Aida Corredor who served the district for twenty years as the first Spanish speaking Liaison in the SPS Enrollment Office parent information center from 1995 to 2015. She touched many with her kindness and love.

Chair Krepchin called for a moment of silence in her honor followed by a salute to the flag of the United States of America.

Chair Krepchin asked interpreters to introduce themselves:

Addy Penate- Spanish

Sueli DeCarney- Portuguese

Angie Surpris- Haitian Creole

II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

Student Representative Anna Sophia Protopapas reported as follows:

- Spanish Heritage month celebrated with movie night at the library and salsa classes to begin.
- Student reps meet every Wednesday, and outreach will begin to elicit student feedback on what traditions and events are enjoyed and in particular ways to enhance the senior experience.
- Seniors are focused on college applications.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Mr. Green suggested making a priority this year of increasing the student representative role on the Committee to make it more beneficial to the student rep and members alike.

Chair Krepchin asked that the following agenda item be taken out of order.

III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. Resolution in support of the 23-24 Winter Hill Eighth Grade’s Work and Request

Chair Krepchin welcomed the Winter Hill eighth grade students. Ms. Pitone stated that the Committee had advised the Mayor to make the work and request of the eighth grade as a starting point of her City Construction Advisory Committee to advise on the structure of the Winter Hill school construction plan going forward.

MOTION: There was a motion made by Mr. Green and seconded by Mr. Pitone to approve the following resolution:

***RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE 2023-24 WINTER HILL EIGHTH GRADE'S
WORK AND REQUESTS***

WHEREAS, the 2023-2024 Winter Hill Eighth Grade, as representatives of the student body, did awe-inspiring work collecting meaningful data from both the Brown and Winter Hill Communities regarding their hopes and concerns over the future of their buildings; and

WHEREAS, they voiced important requests regarding their involvement in key decision-making processes and future developments at their school; and

WHEREAS, fostering a collaborative environment between the school building committee and the Wildcats is essential for ensuring that the voices of current and future students are heard; and

WHEREAS, continuing to engage each year's Winter Hill eighth graders in meaningful dialogue about upcoming decisions will empower them to gather input from younger students, enhancing their sense of ownership in their school community as well giving decision makers much needed community feedback; and

WHEREAS, the demolition of 115 Sycamore Street presents a unique opportunity for catharsis and closure for the Wildcats, allowing them to participate in a symbolic act of moving forward; and

WHEREAS, ensuring that younger and future Wildcats have access to adequate recess activities and play materials is critical for their development and overall school experience; and

THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Somerville School Committee thanks the 2023-2024 Winter Hill eighth grade for their hard work, resilience and leadership; and

Be it Further Resolved that the Somerville School Committee supports their requests to:

1. Involve the Wildcats in major decision-making moments of the School Building Committee, ensuring that their insights and opinions are valued and considered.
2. Establish regular communication with next year's eighth graders regarding upcoming decisions, facilitating opportunities for them to survey younger grades.
3. Invite current Wildcats as well as WHCIS alums to participate in the demolition of 115 Sycamore Street, fostering a sense of closure and connection to their school history.
4. Prioritize the acquisition of recess activities and play materials for younger and future Wildcats, ensuring they enjoy a fulfilling school experience.
5. Involve past, present, and future, Wildcats, in the groundbreaking and ribbon-cutting ceremonies for the new Winter Hill, celebrating their contributions and marking a significant moment in their educational journey.

RESOLVED, a copy of this resolution be shared with each of the 2023-2024 eighth graders and a framed copy shared with the Winter Hill Community; and

RESOLVED, Copies of this resolution and the 2023-2024 Eighth Grade report be shared with the Mayor, the School Building Committee, and the Mayor's Community Advisory Group.

The motion was approved unanimously.

Dr. Carmona thanked Ms. Brady and each member individually by name for their hard work. He added that anytime that we get to highlight and celebrate student work is one of the biggest bright spots of his week and welcomed them back tonight to formally honor the work done last year. He recognized that at least one student from last year's class has volunteered to serve on the City's Construction Advisory Group, and he was proud to hear that one of you is a representative of our student body. He also thanked the parents at home, "you should be proud of your children."

Ms. Barros and Ms. Grady joined in their expressions of pride and congratulations to the students.

Recess followed with a cake celebration.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Barish and seconded by Dr. Ackman to approve the minutes of September 9 and September 23, 2024, School Committee meeting.

The motion was approved unanimously.

VI. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Report – Dr. Carmona

For my district reports, I always like to find the common themes and how our plans and updates come together to tell the story of our district.

Today, we have a number of updates from various departments and cross-sector work that will highlight a number of ways in which we support our students. In reviewing today's presentations, I found that these are a perfect example of what we mean when we say that we provide *wraparound supports* for students.

Student success is not based solely on academic achievement. Rather, it is a combination of factors, based in programs and resources we provide in our schools. For many students, our schools provide many critical services outside of academics. Our schools are places where they have access to trusted adults, receive free, nutritious meals, have varied opportunities to participate in out-of-school time opportunities and athletics, and in the classroom they learn not only about core subjects like math and ELA, but also have a robust social emotional curriculum and access to social workers and mental and behavioral health services.

I am endlessly proud of the Somerville Public Schools and what we provide for our community. Do we still have a lot of work to do? Yes, we do. But with the right mix of academic and wraparound supports, our students have a fantastic starting point.

- **School Safety (Ms. Kersten, Ms. Doncaster and Ms. Green)**

At this time I would like to invite Student Services Director, Liz Doncaster, joined by SHS Principal Alicia Kersten and Next Wave / Full Circle Principal Margaret Green to share information and updates on programs and supports we have in place for student safety and wellbeing.

Ms. Doncaster reviewed her PowerPoint presentation on school safety including the following highlights:

- School safety overview
- Proactive/preparation safety measures in place across the district.
- Safety drills and emergency response team.

Ms. Green continued with the presentation:

- Next Wave Jr. high and Full Circle high school – protocols/procedures.

Ms. Kersten continued with the presentation:

- Somerville High School – district protocols/procedures.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Discussion ensued including the following highlights:

- Focus on enhancing school culture and intentionally fostering relationships where "every child is seen and heard" has resulted in a positive shift.
- Change in culture from security personnel to community engagement specialists has been a tremendous addition to both the high school and to the Full Circle/Next Wave team which has served as a model for alternative education in other communities.
- Culture built on mutual respect.
- Assistance provided if needed to students after dismissal with down-time between start of athletics/jobs, etc.
- Students not involved in after-school activities provided feedback on need for drop-in teen center modelled on boys and girls clubs, etc.
- Collaboration with library staff in weekly meetings on fostering constructive use of the library.
- Policy on cellphone use initiated at the middle school level has improved classroom engagement while honoring need for access outside of classroom time for legitimate need for access re outside responsibilities; parent/student surveys will assess results of policy on general school culture.

- **Assessment/MCAS Presentation (Ms. Eligene)**

Dr. Boston-Davis reported that DESE had released the annual MCAS scores and accountability data for districts across the Commonwealth. While our district shows, overall, relatively stable scores from 2023, the investments and goals we regularly share with you are proposed major factors in continuing to address academic recovery following the COVID pandemic. In releasing the data last month, Education Secretary Tutwiler had a great quote: "Change in education is a process, not an event. The road back from the pandemic is not short." Remembering those words, she invited Director of Data, Assessment, and Accountability, Samantha Eligene, to share highlights of our 2024 data.

Ms. Eligene reviewed her PowerPoint presentation including the following highlights:

- Spring 2024 MCAS and Accountability results.
- Key takeaways.
- Comparison of grades 3-8/10 ELA
- Percentages in data by subject and demographics
- High school level data
- 2024 accountability results by school
- What are we doing to advance students on the path to academic recovery and reduce opportunity gaps

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

In response to Chair Krepchin's question on intervention services from the state, Ms. Eligene stated that in the case of East and Winter Hill, she is meeting with the state to discuss how the school improvement plan can be utilized to improve student outcomes. Grants are available to schools to support interventions.

In response to Mr. Biton's question, insofar as gaps between subgroups in multiple subject areas show patterns statewide, what comparable districts are doing in making progress to close gaps, Ms. Eligene stated that, although she may look to Medford public schools as a comparable district, she surveys best practices of schools generally for interventions to meet their goals, and ensuring that we have "the right ingredients in place."

Dr. Phillips noted that as a researcher of student outcomes, insofar as two-thirds is determined by what is happening outside of school and one-third by what is happening in-school, "if poverty is not addressed, we will not close the achievement gap."

Mr. Green expressed his opinion that there are huge gaps in the system because "no one has solved the (systemic) problem that we don't educate poor kids well." Additionally, as a society we have not addressed the level of trauma that children endured during the pandemic as more than one million people died, "mostly poor, black and brown and are still dying." We need to address learning loss by meeting children where they are now. "If it takes a longer time to read, so be it." We need to change "how we measure success and what we do to be successful....to see real changes in results."

Dr. Carmona stated that while there may be correlation to zip code in MCAS measurement, it is a data point. The current initiative on the ballot is to take away the punitive side of MCAS of which the district is fully onboard. He noted that as part of Hispanic Heritage month he heard from poor families asking the district basically to do better for them, and the district needs to hear their voices.

Ms. Pitone asked whether, insofar as the state provides resources to schools identified as requiring assistance intervention at a higher level, what is being done internally by a particular school to show a higher level of accountability. Dr. Carmona stated that the MCAS process is complex as the school needs to do better to norm better and systematically regenerate new outcomes with new initiatives to roll out math and literacy programs.

Mr. Biton noted the need to "tease out what the data is trying to tell us and what actions will be most effective to address continued discrepancies and overall decline in the numbers.....to find the right solutions."

Dr. Ackman noted that racist questions have not been stricken from MCAS, and she commended the district to improve outcomes in curriculum in which students see themselves and for Dr. Carmona's efforts to reach out to all families and make them feel welcome.

Ms. Pitone noted that moderate and substantial growth from every school with target populations has shown areas of growth and should be celebrated, with Healey as the most diverse school that has had substantial growth toward target. Ms. Eligene noted that there has not been any substantial changes in the makeup of the Healey school to account for this growth.

- **Equity in Sports (Ms. Kersten and Mr. Vieira)**

Dr. Carmona stated that the district is incredibly fortunate to have an athletics program that offers a very wide variety of opportunities in which our students participate, and an athletics director who is both proactive in instituting innovative opportunities, as well as responsive to the hopes and interests of our students. He invited Principal Kersten and Stanley Vieira, Athletics Director to present an overview of the programs and the department's work and the amazing opportunities we have for equitable access to sports.

Principal Kersten stated that she and Mr. Vieira addressed questions in equity and reviewed the PowerPoint presentation including the following highlights:

- Questions of equity.
- Access: monitoring demographic information and removing barriers.
- Overview of offerings and number of participants (winter 2022 – fall 2023).
- Sports participation by gender – winter SY23-fall SY24.
- More demographic information.
- Teams with the highest percentage.
- Data indicates equitable distribution.
- Total number of paid coaches and experience level of coaches/co-ed.
- Overall unfirm cost.
- Overall equipment and supplies cost.
- Note on other sources of funding.
- Equitable experience.
- Continued commitment.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Dr. Ackman noted that a summer soccer clinic attended by her children and sponsored by the recreation department indicated that revenues would support the high school soccer team. Mr. Vieira stated that it was a student initiative in which he was not involved as a coach. From an equity perspective he noted that there are some long-standing 501(c)(3) organizations that support certain sports and operate under the umbrella of the student activity department.

Ms. Barish noted that there was zero participation by females in the football team. Recalling her high school experience of working out with the football team in the off-season weight room and its lifelong wellness and empowering benefits, she asked what outreach efforts were made to encourage girls to participate in that sport and other sports like golf. Mr. Vieira stated that there have been several females over the last ten years that have participated in football. A student joined in the off-season last year but did not continue. Outreach efforts starting at the middle school are being made to reduce anxiety among females about applying for the sport and others and taking advantage of the facilities. The fitness room is open every day but Wednesday from 2:45-4:45PM and every day from 7:00-7:45AM.

Mr. Green stated that he was not surprised that, despite efforts, "the athletic population is richer, whiter and more male as a whole." Creating opportunities before high school for interest in the sport is needed. He asked as a district at what point of the program is success measured and what is the district's goal in the athletic program.

Mr. Vieira stated that a lot can be done in reaching out to children before middle school and working with the recreation department to partner on offerings to the elementary grades. He stated it was important to provide resources for children to "fall in love with any sport." Mr. Green agreed that "we need to find more entryways" for children into the sport.

Discussion ensued including the following highlights:

- Offer freshman and junior varsity team options to allow exploration and non-competitive physical activity exercise programs like dance and yoga.
- Funding of athletic programs is not sought from the district but in collaboration with community and City partnerships.
- Insofar as summer sports clinics run between one and two hours, families that require all day childcare cannot participate; program redesign for summer sports clinics to increase access and participation.
- Providing as much access as possible to all families “takes a full City” and increased sources of funding is needed.
- Students committed to the sport of football show improvement in attendance and grades.
- Somerville is blessed with generous community partners invested in investing in sports facilities.
- Feedback from surveys is important on understanding the student athlete experience.
- Captain’s Council representing two members per team meets once a month to discuss a variety of topics including community service to church food banks, leadership, accountability and building spirit in collaboration with other teams and building lifelong skills.

- **Inclusive Lunch Memo (Dr. Carmona)**

To close out today’s district report, there is a memo from Food and Nutrition Services Department Director, Lauren Mancini, in your packets. The memo provides detailed reminders of department practices and protocols, information about where and how food is prepared and distributed district-wide, and the kinds of scratch-made options available for all students. Our Food and Nutrition Services Department team is skilled, hardworking and provides a really great and varied menu for our district. I want to thank Lauren and her team for all that they do.

- **Food for Free Markets**

Speaking of food and nutrition, I am very happy to share that the SFLC Family Liaison Team is excited to enter into our third year of partnership with Food for Free to bring monthly free food markets to SPS families. Each month, roughly 300 families from across the district shop at the markets at East Somerville Community School and West Somerville Neighborhood School, where they may choose from a wide selection of fresh vegetables, fruits, and pantry items. We especially want to thank our SLFC staff, community volunteers, Tufts University students, SPS parents, and Food for Free, for coming alongside our family liaisons to make these markets possible.

- **Hispanic Heritage Month (Ms. Gallitano)**

Chair Krepchin tabled this agenda item until next meeting.

VII. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee: September 23, 2024 (Ms. Barish)

Rules Management Subcommittee Report for 9/23/24

The meeting was called to order at 5:38 pm.

Subcommittee members Leiran Biton, Laura Pitone, and Ellenor Barish were present at the start of the meeting along with Alicia Mallon from the MASC. There was one person in the audience.

There were four items on the agenda

Approve June Rules Report

Laura Pitone moved to approve the report from the June Rules Management Subcommittee meeting, seconded by Leiran Biton. The motion passed unanimously.

MASC Policy Review Project

Ms. Barish took the fourth item on the agenda out of order, inviting Ms. Mallon - a field director for MASC - to provide the subcommittee with an outline of the policy review project.

- MASC staff pulls current SPS policies from the online database one lettered section at a time and creates a document comparing them to the MASC Reference Policies, which Ms. Mallon then reviews.

- Ms. Mallon provides subcommittee members and SPS administration with a set of documents: SPS policy, MASC reference policy, her recommendations based on what we have provided (in addition to existing policies, we shared handbooks and collective bargaining agreements with Ms. Mallon), and a “with changes” document incorporating her recommendations into our policies. Ms. Mallon will try to send these documents at least a week prior to meeting with the Rules Subcommittee to discuss them, giving us all time to review them and to send any questions to Ms. Mallon before meeting.
- The Rules Subcommittee and appropriate administrators meet with Ms. Mallon to discuss the recommendations for each lettered section and to finalize changes. When Rules passes a section out to the full School Committee, Ms. Mallon provides a draft with all changes discussed for the full School Committee to consider.
- When satisfied with the revisions of a lettered section of the policy manual, the full School Committee votes to approve the changes “in form,” which means the changes are not immediately adopted. Once all lettered sections have been approved, a final motion will put all of the revised policies into effect. Ms. Mallon will provide language.

(Ms. Anosike joined the meeting.) At various points in the process, there are opportunities to consult with SPS administrators, legal counsel, etc. If the School Committee makes changes to policies outside of but concurrently with this process, Ms. Mallon should be notified. (This should not be difficult as we send revised policies to MASC for posting to the electronic policy manual.) The pace of the project depends on how frequently our School Committee wants us to meet with Ms. Mallon, whether we meet through the summer, etc. It could take as little as a year or as many as three.

Creation of a Distribution of Notices Policy

Several months ago, Ms. Anosike shared the Douglas School District’s policy KHC, Distribution of Notices. Ms. Barish asked Ms. Anosike if the Douglas policy includes everything she would want to see in a policy for SPS. Ms. Anosike thinks it’s a good start but wonders if principals think the policy is realistic. Ms. Barish wondered if the language is tight enough about the superintendent’s role in approving district-wide communications from outside organizations. Ms. Mallon suggested that the district could create a document for outside organizations to complete to request distribution of notices.

Ms. Pitone asked if we need to address that announcements should not be “of a political nature.” Ms. Anosike suggested that principals will know not to approve anything of that type. Ms. Mallon pointed out that KHA and KHB might cover that. Leiran added that those policies don’t address political *speech*. Ms. Mallon suggested referencing policies that address political speech, saying “Principal will approve based on district policy,” for example.

Mr. Biton asked how this policy might address something hung on the wall; at the high school, the principal has to approve posters, for example. Ms. Mallon suggested that this would be addressed in the handbook which could be referenced in the policy.

Finally, Ms. Pitone wondered how the policy might address the labor of distribution - counting notices and sorting them into mailboxes. Ms. Barish suggested that could be part of the “Request for Distribution” document recommended by Ms. Mallon. Ms. Anosike said she would check in with the SFLC about this.

Ms. Anosike will reach out to principals and the SFLC.

JCA - Controlled Choice Student Assignment Policy

The subcommittee moved on to the final item on the agenda, a redlined draft of JCA provided by Teresa Rodriguez, Director of Enrollment. The first suggestion was that we remove the word Grandfathering from the policy. If the section needs a heading, it could be Stability of Assignment.

Mr. Biton asked why the “Closest School Fairness” was removed, noting that the Superintendent expressed a commitment to the Neighborhood School model and wondering how this change might be in conflict with that. Ms. Barish expressed concern that the current language may introduce a liability saying that students can “safely walk” to a particular school. Ms. Pitone pointed out that Neighborhood School appears nowhere in the policy but that proximity and assignment zones are addressed.

The Enrollment Director had asked if the PreK lottery and the Brown School transition should be covered in the policy. Ms. Barish noted that while the Brown School process is essentially the same each year, the capacity and needs change so much that it looks a bit different year-to-year. Ms. Pitone suggested that district-wide PreK might be more appropriate to address in a district-wide policy than the school-specific Brown School transition. Ms. Barish wondered

if letting the public know when to expect capacity/needs numbers to be released and where to find information would be appropriate - perhaps that is a reference to a handbook or a webpage.

Ms. Barish made note that the final section references K-8 in heading but 1-8 in the body.

Ms. Anosike will go back to the Enrollment Office with these questions and suggestions.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:37 pm.

**B. School Committee Meeting for School Buildings Facilities and Maintenance Subcommittee:
September 18, 2024 (Mr. Biton)**

**Report to School Committee on the School Building Facilities and Maintenance Committee
Meeting for September 25, 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 September 25, 2024, via Zoom. Members present were: Leiran Biton, chair; Laura Pitone, vice chair; and Sarah Phillips. City Councilors present were: Jesse Clingan, vice chair; and Naima Sait.

Attending the meeting from Somerville Public Schools (SPS) were: Rubén Carmona, Superintendent; Amara Anosike, Chief of Staff; Alicia Kersten, Somerville High School (SHS) Principal; Stanley Vieira, SPS Athletics Director; and Michelle Kelly, SHS Athletic Trainer.

Attending the meeting from the City of Somerville were: Richard Raiche, Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management (IAM); Peter Forcellese, Legislative Clerk; Jill Lathan, Commissioner of Public Works; Neha Singh, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs.

Mr. Davis called the CC meeting to order at 6:03pm and established quorum with all members present. Mr. Biton called the SC meeting to order at 6:05pm and established quorum with all members present.

There were eight (8) items on the agenda. Several of the items were tabled to a meeting at a later date due to timing constraints. This is noted in the enumerated items below.

1) MSBA Update

Mr. Raiche provided the update for the City. The City has submitted its compliance certification to MSBA, and formed a school building committee which was approved by MSBA. The City met with MSBA staff in August and expects to wrap up the enrollment projections with MSBA. The maintenance and capital planning

information has been submitted and everything else is on target. City Council will need to rescind prior authorization and reauthorize the local funding for the study using the correct language. The City is on target for the timelines established by MSBA. Next steps will establish an agreement between City and MSBA to define scope of feasibility study, which would be presented at a board meeting in December.

Dr. Phillips asked about whether not having a decision about whether to combine Brown and Winter Hill, and where to build, from the construction advisory group (CAG) would limit that ability of the City to develop cost estimates. Mr. Raiche responded the decision on whether to combine would be made by next fall. Mr. Pitone requested for information to be shared about the composition of the MSBA school building committee (SBC). Mr. Clingan asked about the timing of the debt exclusion override that would be necessary to begin construction. Mr. Raiche responded that the override would be sought for 2026 once the hard cost estimate is ready. Mr. Clingan expressed disappointment about the slowness of the timeline. Ms. Sait requested that a project website be dedicated for updates. Mr. Raiche responded that the website has been established at somervillema.gov/msba. Mr. Raiche also provided updates about IAM hiring to support the project. Ms. Pitone suggested that an older Winter Hill building project website is still active with different content than the "msba" website, and may be a source of confusion. Ms. Pitone asked if the decision on the scope of the project is made earlier than fall 2025, the City be positioned to be on an earlier timeline with MSBA. Regarding the older website, Mr. Raiche clarified that the older Winter Hill building project site is being "sunset" and migrating any relevant content to the "msba" website. Regarding the timeline, Mr. Raiche indicated the timeline of the CAG can be accelerated if the project is ready to move forward earlier than currently anticipated. Mr. Clingan asked for clarification on the timing of a ballot question for debt exclusion could be influenced based on the timing of a decision, and asked for confirmation that the CAG would not delay the building project. Mr. Raiche outlined the steps needed to be taken, per state statute, after being given the green light from MSBA in December, and confirmed that the CAG would not delay the building project. Mr. Biton asked for clarification on the number of options available to the City for siting, and Mr. Raiche specified that there had been five project options initially offered, though the option of rebuilding the Winter Hill at Sycamore St and shifting Brown School to an expansion of Kennedy School cannot be funded by MSBA, so that is no longer being considered; the other four options consider uses at either Sycamore or Trum Field, i.e., two sites. Dr. Phillips stated her view that combining the Brown and Winter Hill schools would require revisiting school assignments rather than simply moving families from the Brown to the new combined building. Dr. Phillips also asked for the CAG to consider futures uses for spaces left behind if the recommended project combines buildings. Mr. Raiche indicated the CAG will explore those details.

2) Update on the Construction Advisory Group

Stacie Smith from Consensus Building Institute (CBI), consultant for the City, presented CBI's task, progress to date, current approach, and addressed the purpose, mandate, and members of the CAG. Ms. Smith stated the first meeting of the CAG would be Tuesday, October 8 from 6-8:30pm at Somerville High School room 205. Ms. Smith also indicated no educators had yet expressed interest in joining the CAG, and the City is still seeking educator representation.

Dr. Phillips shared perspectives from Brown and Winter Hill families and educators that CAG effort may be redundant since those affected have already shared their priorities, and recommended a "spiral" approach focusing on those most affected and then doing broader outreach. Ms. Pitone highlighted the fiscal and strategic importance of this decision for the next 50-100 years. Mr. Biton asked for details about the CAG applications and selection. Ms. Smith explained that CAG meetings will be open to the public and recordings will be posted along with other meeting materials, and indicated the CAG facilitation team selected members from the applicant pool based on criteria: two Brown parents were selected from three applicants; two Winter Hill parents were selected from more than seven applicants; two broader-SPS parents were selected from two

applicants; and two business community members were selected.

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

This item was kept in committee.

4) Update restrictions at Reavis field

Ms. Lathan described efforts that DPW takes to ensure the City's fields are in safe condition for all users including students. She noted that best practices is to not allow heavy static loads or equipment that could harm long term sustainability of synthetic turf fields, and described the implications of using football chutes and sleds on synthetic turf. Ms. Lathan indicated the warranties for Reavis field states no heavy static loads and use of sleds/chutes would result in damage that would require repair. Dr. Carmona stated that reasonable use of this field has been a problem and noted that SPS has responsibility for the care and control of school facilities including Reavis field. In response to a request for background information from Mr Clingan, Mr. Biton clarified that the SHS football team had concerns about not being allowed to practice using sleds/chutes at Reavis field. Ms. Kersten indicated the sleds and chutes are essential to ensuring the safety of the players and that the new equipment purchased by SPS are supposed to not harm synthetic turf. Mr. Vieira indicated that students are being treated for injuries that could be prevented through the use of proper equipment, and that other schools he has called are using this equipment on synthetic turf fields. Ms. Kelly stated that the sleds are considered best practice for safely and effectively simulating game conditions to reduce the risk of injury to players. Dr. Carmona would like a third-party assessment of the new equipment and its impact on the turf and noted the importance of the timeline for resolution of this issue.

Ms. Pitone noted the disconnect about warranty and the use of the equipment, the importance of plans and a budget for maintenance to allow for use of the field, and inquiring who has the authority to decide what can be used on the field. Mr. Davis expressed his frustration that this is being discussed before this committee given that field use is under SPS purview and the mayor is member of the School Committee, and City Council does not have control of this, adding that he's not inclined to entertain any further discussion on the matter. Mr. Davis further commented that this is the mayor's job to sort out how the field is used and that this should have been resolved in the proper forum prior to football season. Mr. Davis made it clear that he is upset that this internal dispute needed to come before the committee. Dr. Phillips stated she would be happy to introduce a motion or resolution at a School Committee meeting if warranted. Ms. Singh noted that the administration has presented two options to SPS and the goal is to collaborate and come to an agreement. Mr. Biton indicated support for Dr. Phillips's potential resolution and for DPW and SPS to find a mutually agreeable solution.

5) PA Systems at multiple Somerville Public School buildings

This item was kept in committee.

6) Play Structures at the Capuano Early Education Center schoolyard

This item was kept in committee.

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

This item was kept in committee.

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

This item was kept in committee.

The meeting adjourned at 7:57pm.

MOTION: there was a motion by Ms. Barish and seconded by Dr. Phillips to accept the report of the Rules Management Subcommittee and the report of the Joint School Buildings Facilities and Maintenance Subcommittee.

The motion was approved unanimously.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. MASC Conference Delegate and Resolution

Chair Krepchin asked members to consider being the Committee’s delegate at the conference on November 6th. The vote will be taken at the next meeting for delegate and approval of resolution.

B. Superintendent 24-25 Self-Assessment and Goals

Chair Krepchin announced that the agenda item will be discussed at the time of the Superintendent’s evaluation.

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

MOTION: there was a motion by Ms. Barish and seconded by Dr. Phillips to approve diplomas for the following students: Josue Alfaro Herrera of Waltham, MA, Kathleen Barbosa of Somerville, MA and Patricia Quintana De Leon of Somerville, MA.

The motion was approved unanimously.

D. Field Trips (Recommended action: Approval)

MOTION: there was a motion by Mr. Biton and seconded by Ms. Barish to approve the **October 9-11, 2024** field trip for forty-six 6th grade students from West Somerville Neighborhood School to visit Nature’s Classroom in Great Barrington, MA. Travel via bus, student cost \$160.

The motion was approved unanimously.

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

MOTION: there was a motion by Ms. Pitone and 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: Adult Education & Family Literacy - \$816,646.00 – SCALE Continuation grant.

Federal: Strengthening Career & Technical Education - \$87,945.00 – CTE Department.

The motion was approved unanimously.

F. Donation (Recommended action: Approval)

MOTION: there was a motion by Ms. Barish and seconded by Mr. Biton that the School Committee accepts with gratitude the donations listed below:

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Program
Monetary	Bob’s Discount Furniture	Manchester, CT	\$2,500	East Somerville Community Schools
Personal Protective Equipment	MA Emergency Management Agency	Franklin, MA	\$10,473.00	CTE Department

The motion was approved unanimously.

IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS (continued)

C. Superintendent 23-24 Summative Evaluation

Dr. Phillips began the discussion on the Superintendent evaluation.

QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

Discussion ensued and members thanked Dr. Phillips for making a complicated and challenging process as simple and straightforward as possible, and thanked Dr. Carmona for his successful first year of superintendency. Even as the amount of work to be done is daunting at times, the real place for growth is ensuring that there is sufficient time for relationship building across the district and with the City. The Committee pledged to support him in its shared commitment to continued success in leadership.

The vote on the evaluation will take place at the next meeting.

B. Superintendent 24-25 Self-Assessment and Goals

Dr. Carmona reviewed his written report summarizing his self-assessment and goals, which is attached hereto. Goals included a) ensuring a vigorous quality of curriculum; b) creating a portrait of the "Somerville learner; c) replicate early childhood model in collaboration with the City for out-of-school time; d) improve access to information via the website to ensure communication across demographics to increase communication between families and educators; e) develop a system that is "nimble enough" to allow systematic issues facing the district and its long-term future; and e) increase racial and cultural diversity amongst staff

Dr. Phillips then reviewed the timeline (attached) for the next evaluation process, which will also be voted at the next meeting. Discussion ensued on the logistics thereof.

Dr. Carmona thanked the Committee for its positive feedback and the importance of continuing to build positive relationships with all stakeholders. He was appreciative of the fact that the entire team was invested in doing "God's work or Mohammed's work" or whatever deity with whom one identified.

C. MSBA Update

Dr. Carmona reported that there are no new updates in terms of the MSBA timeline and deliverables. However, the Construction Advisory Group process is moving forward. The CAG's first meeting is scheduled for tomorrow evening from 5:30 to 8 p.m. at Somerville High School. Going forward, the meetings will be a mix of in-person and virtual meetings. All meetings will be recorded and rebroadcast but are also open to the public.

X. ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Mr. Biton announced that a) a follow up joint meeting of facilities and maintenance is scheduled for October 28th at 6:00p.m.; and b) Ward 7 joint office hours is scheduled on October 19th from 2:00-2:30p.m. at the Café on Holland St.

He also requested that the Superintendent provide an update on the situation with the Bunsen burners both at the middle and highs schools.

Ms. Barish announced winter sports registration begins October 1st and ends in December.

Ms. Pitone announced that SEPAC is hosting a social tonight at 6:30-8:30p.m. at the Neighborhood Restaurant on Bow St.

XI. CONDOLENCES

Condolences expressed at the beginning of the meeting.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

The Meeting was adjourned at 9:33p.m.

Related documents:

Agenda

[Assessment/ MCAS presentation](#)

[Equity in Sports presentation](#)

[School safety presentation](#)

[Inclusive lunch memo](#)

[Superintendent 23-24 Summative Evaluation](#)

[Superintendent 24-25 Goals](#)

[Superintendent 24-25 Evaluation Timeline](#)

Submitted by: C. Barraford

ATTACH DOCUMENTS STARTING ON THE NEXT PAGE

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – CITY HALL
REGULAR MEETING – OCTOBER 7, 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-AFq7pROSMI0vsJOWNEg

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-AFq7pR0SMl0vsJ0WNEg

Meeting ID: 869 0362 0322

Password: SPSSC24

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Sept 9, 2024
- Sept 23, 2024

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Report

- Hispanic Heritage Month Acknowledgment (Ms. Gallitano)
- Assessment/ MCAS Presentation (Ms. Eligene)
- Equity in Sport (Ms. Kersten & Mr. Viera)
- School Safety (Ms. Kersten, Ms. Doncaster & Ms. Green)
- Inclusive Lunch Memo

VI. Report of Subcommittees

A. School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee: September 23, 2024 (Ms. Barish)

MOTION: TO accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for Rules Management Subcommittee for September 23, 2024

B. School Committee Meeting for School Buildings Facilities and Maintenance Meeting: September 25, 2024 (Mr. Biton)

MOTION: To accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for School Building Facilities and Maintenance Meeting for September 25, 2024

VII. NEW BUSINESS

G. MASC Conference Delegate and Resolution

H. Superintendent 24-25 Self-Assessment and Goals

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

<i>Josue Alfaro Herrera</i>	<i>Waltham MA</i>
<i>Kathleen Barbosa</i>	<i>Somerville, MA</i>
<i>Patricia Quintana De Leon</i>	<i>Somerville MA</i>

J. Field Trips (Recommended action: Approval)
October 9, 2024 -October 11, 2024

Forty-six 6th grade students from West Somerville Neighborhood School will visit Nature’s Classroom in Great Barrington, MA. Travel via bus, student cost \$160.

K. 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

- **Adult Education & Family Literacy -\$816,646.00**-SCALE Continuation Grant

Federal

- **Strengthening Career & Technical Education-\$87,945.00**- CTE Department

I. Donation (Recommended action: Approval)

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

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Program
Monetary	Bobs Discount Furniture	Manchester, CT	\$2,500	East Somerville Community Schools
Personal Protective Equipment	MA Emergency Management Agency	Franklin, MA	\$10,473.00	CTE Department

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- B. Resolution in Support of the 23-24 Winter Hill Eighth Grade's Work and Request
- C. Superintendent 23-24 Summative Evaluation
- D. 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 7 de octubre a las 7:00, en vivo desde casa, visite el siguiente enlace y elija **GovTV**: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/communications-and-community-engagement/somerville-city-tv>

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

https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_EB-AFq7pR0SMI0vsJ0WNEg

Identificación de la reunión: 869 0362 0322

Contraseña: SPSSC24

Português - Para Interpretação

Para **assistir** à Reunião Regular do Comitê Escolar 7 de outubro às 7:00, ao vivo de casa, visite o seguinte link e selecione **GovTV**: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/communications-and-community-engagement/somerville-city-tv>

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

https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_EB-AFq7pR0SMI0vsJ0WNEg

ID da reunião: 869 0362 0322

Senha: SPSC24

Kreyòl ayisyen - Pou entèpretasyon

Pou **gade** reyinyon regilye Komite Lekòl la 7 oktòb a 7:00, an dirèk nan kay la, vizite lyen sa a epi chwazi **GovTV**: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/communications-and-community-engagement/somerville-city-tv>

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

https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_EB-AFq7pR0SMI0vsJ0WNEg

Reyinyon ID: 869 0362 0322

Modpas: SPSSC23

