

School Reopening Update

November 16, 2020

Internal Factors

Building &
Ventilation
Achieve “Low
Risk” Score

In-Person
Social
Distancing
and Other
Safety
Measures In
Place

Start
Phased
Re-Opening

Routine COVID-
19 Testing and
Contact Tracing
Protocols
Operational

External Factors

Community
transmission rates

Positivity percentage

Evolving science and
research

Availability of material
and human resources



**Internal
Factors**

In-Person
Social
Distancing
and Other
Safety
Measures In
Place

Safety Measures

- ▶ School & Classroom Setup
 - ▶ Desks & tables spaced 6 feet apart - ✓
 - ▶ Sinks or sanitizer stations in classrooms - ✓
 - ▶ Virus shields placed in some high traffic areas - ✓
 - ▶ Isolation room in every school - ✓
 - ▶ In-building protocols - ✓
- ▶ Enhanced Cleaning
 - ▶ Plan for enhanced daily cleaning & sanitizing - ✓
 - ▶ DPW purchased more electrostatic sprayers to disinfect buildings - ✓

Safety Measures - continued

- ▶ Masks, Face Shields, Gloves
 - ▶ SPS has ordered 270,000 masks that meet BOH health and safety guidelines; 24,000 pairs of gloves; and hundreds of face shields - ✓
- ▶ Bus Transportation
 - ▶ Significantly limited; One student per row on bus

**Internal
Factors**

Building &
Ventilation
Achieve "Low
Risk" Score

Building Assessments - Update

- ▶ Assessment reports for all buildings released 11/10
 - ▶ <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/sites/default/files/School%20Building%20Covid-19%20Risk%20Assessment%20and%20Mitigation%20Plan%202020Nov10.pdf>
- ▶ Group 1
 - ▶ Contract execution for J.C. Cannistraro in process
- ▶ Group 2
 - ▶ Notice of award issued to T.J. Gallagher 11/13
- ▶ Group 3
 - ▶ Bids received 11/12

Building Assessments - Next Steps

- ▶ Group 1
 - ▶ Contractor to develop detailed schedule/workplan
 - ▶ Schedule & start work
- ▶ Group 2
 - ▶ Process contract
 - ▶ Contractor to develop detailed schedule/workplan
- ▶ Group 3
 - ▶ Issue notice of award (anticipated 11/16 or 11/17)
- ▶ Release building schedules/workplans as finalized

Building Completion - Update

- ▶ Bad news: equipment lead time is longer than initially scheduled
 - ▶ Group 1 buildings will not be completed in early December
 - ▶ Expect initial schedules from contractor tomorrow
- ▶ Good news: Group 2 and 3 buildings are trending ahead of schedule
 - ▶ Expect initial schedules from contractors next week

Building Occupancy – Next Steps

- ▶ Our priority remains getting students in school as soon as possible
- ▶ We recognize that these schedule shifts will require recalibrating occupancy plans
- ▶ We will update School Committee (with presentations at 12/7 and 12/21 meetings) as contractors finalize schedules

**Internal
Factors**

Routine COVID-19 Testing and Contact Tracing Protocols Operational

Board of Health COVID-19 Testing Order

- ▶ Requires K-12 schools to submit a COVID-19 transmission prevention implementation plan to the Board of Health
- ▶ Must require ongoing testing of teachers, employees, and others providing ongoing services in school buildings

Final BOH order:

<https://www.somervillema.gov/sites/default/files/boh-order-school-testing-final-11-2-2020.pdf>

To meet the BOH order

- ▶ The Testing Working Group is recommending:
 - ▶ A School Committee policy requiring that all students and staff be tested regularly and receive the flu vaccine
 - Provides for medical exemptions
 - ▶ A draft transmission prevention implementation plan that will be updated as necessary to reflect the final School Committee policy

Testing Work Group

- ▶ Amy Bantham, ICS consultant
- ▶ Kristen Stelljes, SomerStat Director
- ▶ Glenda Soto, Argenziano Prinicipal
- ▶ Liz Gaskell, SPS parent
- ▶ Doug Kress, HHS Director
- ▶ Jeff Curley, SPS Chief of Staff
- ▶ Omar Boukili, COVID-19 Incident Commander
- ▶ Tim Snyder, COVID-19 Deputy Incident Commander

Draft Transmission Prevention Implementation Plan - Testing

- ▶ Why require COVID-19 testing?
 - ▶ Understanding how the virus is impacting our students, teachers, and staff allows us to make decisions in real time based on our own situation, not a guess based on what's happening around us
 - ▶ For this to work, we need to understand how the virus is moving across the entire in-person SPS community

With required COVID-19 testing we will be able to:

- ▶ Quickly identify COVID-positive individuals who are asymptomatic and pre-symptomatic to prevent further spread in school and community
- ▶ Trace close contacts of positive individuals
- ▶ Isolate and quarantine positive or potential positive individuals
- ▶ Rule out COVID-19 for individuals who present COVID-19-like symptoms, allowing earlier return to school

Criteria Used to Select Approach + Testing Partner

- ▶ **Flexibility:** Partner and City/SPS have ability to change approach to adapt to changing phases and situation
- ▶ **Sustainability:** We have the ability to maintain logistics and cost over time
- ▶ **Acceptability:** Staff and students feel comfortable taking the test; it is as non-invasive as possible and individuals can easily access the tests
- ▶ **Reliability:** We have confidence in the results we are getting (high specificity is especially desirable)
- ▶ **Ability to test minors:** Partner has ability to work with a student population
- ▶ **Rapid results:** Test results are ideally returned within 24 hours after receipt of samples

Criteria used to evaluate 23 testing options

COVID-19 Testing Partners Selected

	Ginkgo Bioworks/ Immune Observatory	Tufts University/ Broad/Cataldo
Flexibility	Legal agreement between district and Ginkgo for in kind donation, can book now for November but likely not Thanksgiving week	Incentive to work with Somerville, developing methodology for surrounding communities targeting Somerville and Medford, ongoing relationship
Sustainability	Free, one-time donation for staff baseline only City administers test	\$25 per individual test (shared cost = \$12.50), \$40 per pool of 8-?, City hires Cataldo to administer test at \$75 per staff per hour and \$28 PPE per staff per day
Acceptability	Saliva	Anterior nasal Anterior nasal, pooled
Reliability	PCR: 100% all	PCR: 100% all
Ability to Test Minors	No	Yes
Rapid Results	Within 24-72 hours, includes overnight shipping	Within 24 hours, local lab

Draft COVID-19 Testing Plan

- ▶ **Baseline:** Tufts + Broad individual PCR anterior nasal testing; Cataldo swabbing (students); Ginkgo Immune Observatory PCR saliva test (staff)
- ▶ **Screening:** Tufts + Broad PCR, anterior nasal; Cataldo staff performing swabbing
 - ▶ 2x / week for staff
 - ▶ 1x / week for students
- ▶ **Symptomatic:** HHS will facilitate appointment with CHA/mobile testing

Robust contact tracing essential component throughout

COVID-19 Testing Schedule

- ▶ Scheduling testing will be offered Tuesdays and Fridays
- ▶ Testing will be held in the gym
- ▶ Each classroom will be assigned a set testing time

Tuesdays	Fridays
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Phase 2a+b students• Cohort A students• All in-person teachers• All in-person staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cohort B students• All in-person teachers• All in-person staff

Draft Transmission Prevention Implementation Plan – Other Components

- ▶ Masks
- ▶ Social distancing & sanitation protocols
- ▶ School bus safety protocols
- ▶ Seasonal flu vaccine required for all staff and students
 - ▶ Medical exemption

Deciding to Open & Close Schools

November 16, 2020

Pillars of School Reopening

- ▶ Physical upgrades to ventilation systems
- ▶ Social distancing and PPE
- ▶ Health and safety protocols
- ▶ De-densification
- ▶ Robust COVID-19 testing program for everyone

When to reopen?

- ▶ Waiting for suppression or very low prevalence is not an option.
- ▶ Reopening decision should be primarily based on our ability to track and understand transmission in schools:
 - ▶ Community prevalence is NOT the indicator of when schools should be opening or to what degree
 - ▶ Community prevalence illustrates one small piece of what would be relevant to our school system (staff living outside the district, most demographics represented in our testing data are not related or representative of our school system...)
 - ▶ Relying solely on community prevalence data puts us at the mercy of systems we do not and will not be able to control
- ▶ Reopening should be primarily driven by our ability to create a safe environment for staff and students and have real time data about any possible COVID transmission within the schools.

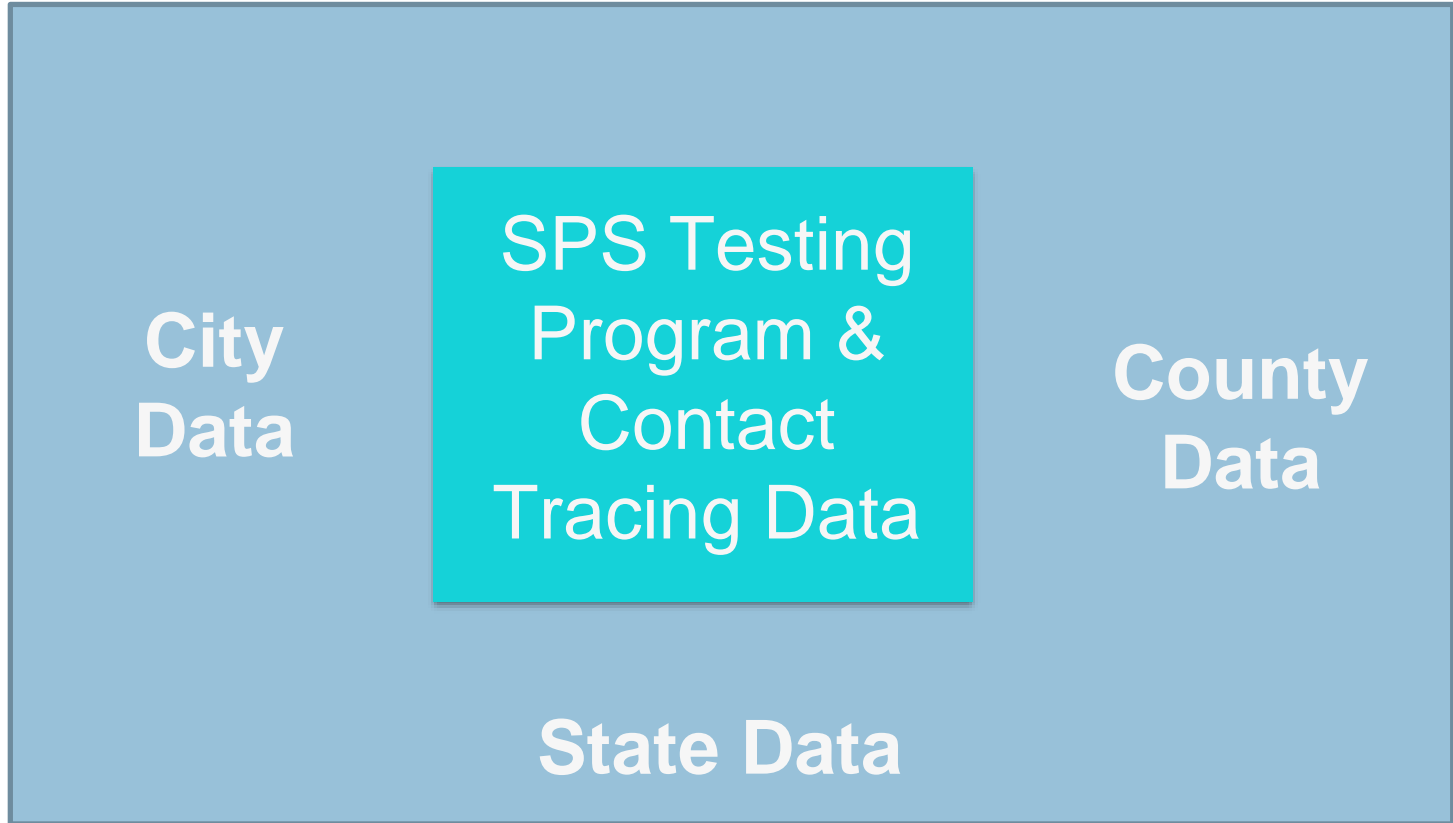
Decision Making once Schools are Open

- ▶ Based on the robustness of our testing protocol, we believe we will have the ability to keep school open for in-person learning longer or give us the data necessary to potentially not have to close
- ▶ As a result, our decision making about adding additional phases or closing school will be primarily guided by the data we're getting from our SPS testing program and contact tracing
- ▶ City, county, and state data will be used to help us understand the broader context

Communications around positive cases and closures

- ▶ Decisions around closing schools will be made on a classroom by classroom and school by school basis, depending on the data collected in each school.
- ▶ SPS will be establishing a communications protocol to guide communications with families around positive cases once we are back in school

Decisions will be based on SPS Data and informed by our broader context



SPS Testing Program & Contact Tracing Data

Transmission Prevention & Operational Areas of Interest

- ▶ Classrooms returned to remote learning
- ▶ Staff availability to support in-person learning
- ▶ ASHRAE risk score for school buildings
- ▶ COVID Test result turnaround time
- ▶ Implementation of COVID health mitigation measures
 - ▶ Consistent & correct use of masks
 - ▶ Social distancing to the largest extent possible
 - ▶ Hygiene and respiratory etiquette
 - ▶ Sanitization & disinfection protocols
 - ▶ Contact tracing capacity & quality

SPS Testing Program & Contact Tracing Data

Health Areas of Interest

- ▶ SPS case counts (disaggregated by school and cohort)
- ▶ Positivity rate
- ▶ Source of infection for positive cases (disaggregated by SPS, household, community)

Potential Future Indicator:

- ▶ Positive secondary infections from SPS positives

SPS indicators will be tracked by school and for the district as a whole

City
County
State

Health Areas of Interest

- ▶ Average daily incidence per 100,000 (14 day)
- ▶ 14 day rolling average of cases
- ▶ Positivity Rate
- ▶ Community testing rates and capacity
- ▶ Contact tracing capacity and quality

How indicators will be used

- ▶ These indicators help us assess and understand the risk of transmission we are facing across SPS and the community, they are not and cannot be thresholds that individually would trigger a closure.
- ▶ Decision making about closures will be dynamic and will factor in what is happening across all indicators with, ultimately greater weight given to SPS specific indicators, to balance provision of in-person learning and the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff
- ▶ As long as we are able to effectively test, isolate, and trace, we believe will be able to keep the schools open to in-person learning

We have to learn as we go

- ▶ We need to be flexible and learn as the COVID pandemic evolves and as the school year advances.
- ▶ This may mean that indicators will change.
- ▶ These decisions will be informed by the reality on the ground.

SPS Indicators: Transmission Prevention & Operational

- ▶ ASHRAE risk score for school buildings
- ▶ % of staff available to support in-person learning (disaggregated by instructional and support staff)
- ▶ % of test results returned within 24 hours
- ▶ % of classrooms returned to remote learning

SPS Indicators: CDC Mitigation Measures

- ▶ % of schools reporting high compliance with mask wearing
- ▶ % of schools reporting high compliance with social distancing requirements
- ▶ % of schools reporting high compliance with hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- ▶ % of schools in compliance with school cleaning and disinfection protocols

SPS + City Indicators: Contact Tracing

- ▶ % contacts reached within 48 hours
- ▶ % household contacts completing individualized testing plan
- ▶ % community contacts completing individualized testing plan
- ▶ # cases identified as coming from an SPS source

% indicators will be disaggregated by community and SPS contacts

Measuring Compliance with Mitigation Measures

- ▶ Principals will be asked to report on compliance informed by teachers and staff for (reporting guidance under development):
 - ▶ Mask usage
 - ▶ Social distancing
 - ▶ Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette
- ▶ DPW Building Foreman will be asked to report on compliance with cleaning and disinfection protocols based on supervision of custodial staff
- ▶ HHS contact tracing team will report on the capacity and quality of the contact tracing operation

SPS Indicators: Health

- ▶ Weekly case counts (disaggregated by school and cohort)
- ▶ SPS % positivity (individual)

City/County/State Indicators

- ▶ Average daily incidence per 100,000 (14 day)
- ▶ % positivity (with higher education testing)
- ▶ % positivity (without higher education testing)

Somerville Indicators

- ▶ 14 day moving average of new cases
- ▶ # of Somerville community members tested in last complete week

School Closure Advisory Group

SPS and the City will establish an advisory group to review data and make recommendations to the Mayor and Superintendent. This group will include representatives from:

- ▶ Somerville Public Schools
- ▶ School Committee
- ▶ COVID Incident Command System (ICS)
- ▶ Parent community

Updated SPS Dashboard Coming Soon

Overview of Reopening Metrics

1. New Cases Per Day
2. Percent Positive Tests
3. Screening Test Turnaround Time

Dashboard last updated on 11/12/2020.
Dashboard will be updated on Thursdays.

Metric #1: New Cases by Day (as a rate per 100,000, averaged over the last 14 days)

