



# Somerville Public Schools

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Mary E. Skipper, Superintendent

8 Bonair Street · Somerville, MA 02145-3246

[mskipper@k12.somerville.ma.us](mailto:mskipper@k12.somerville.ma.us) · [www.somerville.k12.ma.us](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us)

T 617-629-5200, x6005 · F 617-629-5611



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Dear Families and Staff:

With the transition of our 7th and 8th grade students to the hybrid in-person model this week, we now have approximately 3,000 students back in our classrooms. Despite the dreary weather conditions, 7th and 8th grade students and staff were excited to reconnect in person. We look forward to having our PK-8 students transition to full in-person learning, five days a week starting the Monday after April Break. **PLEASE NOTE: There will be a 2-hour delayed start on Monday, April 26th for all in-person students to allow for in-person teachers and staff to participate in rapid COVID testing that morning.**

### April Break COVID Testing & PK-8 Transition to Full In-Person Week After April Break

There will be no classes during April Break next week, and all district offices will be closed on Monday, April 19 in observance of Patriots Day. COVID-19 assurance testing will be available over the April Break as noted below. All staff and students are **strongly encouraged** to maintain their testing schedule during April Break, so as not to lapse in the SPS Assurance Testing Program and to help continue to keep our community safe. Students in Cohort A should test on Tuesday, and students in Cohort B should test on Thursday during one of the designated times listed in the table. Staff are recommended to complete at least one test during April Break.

APRIL BREAK TESTING SCHEDULE		
April 19-23		
	TUESDAY APRIL 20	THURSDAY APRIL 22
ESCS	8:00-10:00AM 3:00-6:00PM	8:00-10:00AM 3:00-6:00PM
Healey	8:00-10:00AM 3:00-6:00PM	8:00-10:00AM 3:00-6:00PM
Kennedy	8:00-10:00AM 3:00-6:00PM	8:00-10:00AM 3:00-6:00PM

When classes resume on Monday, April 26, all Grades PK-8, Special Education, ELL, and designated programs will be back to in-person education five days a week for those who have not opted for remote learning. **PLEASE NOTE: There will be a 2-hour delayed start on Monday, April 26th for all in-person students to allow for in-person teachers and staff to participate in rapid COVID testing that morning.**

All students and staff will test on Monday, and then again on Thursday. Testing during April break, while not a requirement for returning to in-person education, is **strongly encouraged**. In summary:

- Teachers and staff will return Monday during their normal hours and test at their school from 8:00-10:00AM.

- Students learning in-person will return on a two-hour delay and participate in COVID testing shortly after arriving at their school. Our updated [Schedule of Phases](#) reflects the 2-hour delayed start on 4/26 for in-person students only.
- April 26 start times for students who are in-person are 10:45 for pre-K and 10:15 for grades K-8. The select groups of high school students who are in-person at SHS will also start 2 hours later than their regular start times on Monday, April 26.
- For students learning remotely from home, the school day will begin at the regular time on Monday, April 26.
- We will resume regular start times for all students on Tuesday, April 27.
- All in-person students and staff will complete another pool test on Thursday, April 29.
- Any individuals who need to retest due to their pool testing positive will do so on Tuesday and Friday. Somerville HHS staff will call staff and families if they need to retest. If you do not hear from anyone, your pool test was negative.

### **Grab-and-Go Meals Distribution During and After April Break**

Grab-and-Go meals will also be available over the April Break on the following schedule.

- Wednesday, April 21: 9:00-11:00 a.m. at the Healey, Winter Hill, ESCS, and WSNS
- Friday, April 23: 9:00-11:00 a.m. at the Healey, Winter Hill, ESCS, and WSNS

Starting Monday, April 26, Grab-and-Go meals will only be available for pickup at the main entrance of the new Somerville High School from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. No ID is required for Grab-and-Go meals, and families are encouraged to take as many as they need.

### **Somerville High School & Brown School**

Somerville High School students/families should receive a survey today asking for feedback on possible in-person options. The data from this survey will assist in our planning efforts as we continue to await additional guidance from DESE on high school students. We expect to receive that guidance in the next 2 weeks, and continue to actively look at options for the space we have at the new Somerville High School building to be able to bring back more SHS students.

This week, we received clearance to **return students and staff to the Brown School building this school year**, which also will provide us additional space to be able to return more of our SHS students to in-person learning. Brown School students will remain in the modular classrooms (“Mods”) through the week of April 26-30. We are finalizing plans to move the Brown School classrooms from the Mods to the Brown over the weekend of May 1st. We will provide additional information on the use of the Mods once we review the survey data and receive guidance from DESE, but we are excited to have additional much-needed space for our high school students.

### **April Break Travel Advisory and Safety Reminders**

We hope the coming April Break offers students, families and staff the opportunity to rest and recover, and to enjoy some outdoor time as the weather gets warmer. Travel increases the chance of spreading and getting COVID-19. CDC recommends that we do not engage in non-essential travel at this time. If you plan to travel over the break, we respectfully ask that you be aware of the [state’s COVID-19 Travel Advisory](#) and continue to follow all health and safety protocols to help ensure a smooth and safe return to full in-person learning for our PK-8 students after the break. We appreciate everyone’s commitment to following the recommended safety practices throughout this pandemic, and ask for your continued vigilance.

### **COVID-19 Vaccination Update**

Starting Monday, April 19, all residents 16 and older will be eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. You can pre-register for a vaccine appointment at a state site by visiting [vaccinesignup.mass.gov](https://vaccinesignup.mass.gov) or by calling 211. You can also visit [vaxfinder.mass.gov](https://vaxfinder.mass.gov) to find vaccine appointments at other sites. The City of Somerville is also available to help those who face barriers to accessing vaccines, including needing transportation or language assistance. If you are currently eligible to receive a vaccine and need help accessing a vaccine, please call 311.

We appreciate the incredible work of our students and staff, whether they’re in-person or remote. Thank you for your commitment to teaching and learning throughout this very challenging year. We are also grateful for the continued support of our families and partners. Have a safe and enjoyable April Break.

Respectfully,

Mary Skipper, Superintendent of Schools