



# Somerville Public Schools

Education • Inspiration • Excellence

**Mary E. Skipper, Superintendent**

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Dear Families and Staff:

We are excited to have most of our PK-8 students back to full-time in-person learning and to continue supporting our remote learners with a designated cohort of teachers working directly with our remote students. We have 2,867 (85%) of our PK-8 students back in our classrooms, and nearly 490 (15%) who chose to remain fully remote. Students and staff are quickly settling into their new routines. This weekend, we will be moving the Brown School classrooms from the modular classrooms (Mods) at the Somerville High School campus back to the Brown School. We look forward to welcoming Brown School students and staff back to their home on Monday, May 3. The move also offers much-needed classroom space at the Mods as we prepare to bring back more Somerville High School students.

### **Somerville High School**

On Tuesday, April 27, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) issued guidance requiring all districts to give every high school student the option for full in-person learning by May 17. Approximately 300 Somerville High School (SHS) students already attend school in-person, including many students in our highest-needs programs and in our Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. Our intent is to return SHS students to in-person learning by May 17 based on the preferences indicated by families in the recent SHS survey, and we are working actively to resolve our space constraints. We are also working closely with our unions to determine how best to provide in-person and remote learning, given the unique nature of the high school schedule, and to minimize disruption to students' schedules and their learning. As always, our plan will be designed to provide the best in-person and remote educational experience possible for all students. We are really excited about SHS students being able to return and will keep families informed throughout the week next week as return plans for SHS students are finalized.

We recognize the difficulty that Somerville High School students, families, and staff have faced due to the complexity of our building situation, and very much appreciate your perseverance and understanding as we continue to work through this challenge.

### **Class of 2021 Graduation**

Somerville High School and Next Wave/Full Circle teams are continuing to work on Class of 2021 graduation plans. As more people are vaccinated and COVID-19 requirements continue to relax, our intent is to have in-person graduation celebrations for our Class of 2021. We will keep families informed throughout the week next week as plans are finalized.

### **Special School Committee Meeting of the Whole**

All families and staff are invited to attend a Special School Committee Meeting of the Whole on Monday, May 3, at 7:00 p.m. for a presentation on Advancing Equity and Anti-Racism in our District, which will include an update on our equity efforts with a focus on some of the work of our School-Based Equity Specialists and the Advancing Equity Task Force, an update on School Committee and District legal requirements and responsibilities, an update on our restorative justice practices, and information on the District/Somerville Police Department Memorandum of Understanding. The full meeting agenda and a Zoom link to Monday night's meeting are available [here](#).

### **School Committee Office Hours**

Somerville School Committee members are hosting in-person and virtual office hours. Members of the community are invited to join them and share your questions, concerns, and comments. Visit [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/SC-Spring2021OfficeHours](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/SC-Spring2021OfficeHours) for office hour dates, times, locations, and links.

### **Grab-and-Go Meals**

Grab-and-Go meals are now available for pickup at the main entrance of the new Somerville High School from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Mondays through Fridays. No ID is required for Grab-and-Go meals, and families are encouraged to take as many as they need.

### **Summer Programming**

We are continuing to work with the City on developing a comprehensive menu and schedule of summer academic and enrichment programming offered by SPS, other City departments and various local and regional community partners. Information is available at [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/summer](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/summer), and will continue to be updated as programs are finalized.

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

High School students and parents are reminded that as of Monday, April 19, all residents 16 and older are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine. You can pre-register for a vaccine appointment at a state site by visiting [vaccinesignup.mass.gov](http://vaccinesignup.mass.gov) or by calling 211. You can also visit [vaxfinder.mass.gov](http://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.

Respectfully,

Mary Skipper, Superintendent of Schools