



# Somerville Public Schools

Education • Inspiration • Excellence

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

June 19, 2020

Dear SPS Families and Staff,

On this last day of the 2019-2020 school year, I look back with pride and great gratitude at the collective work of our students, staff, families, partners, and community at large. When we closed our schools on March 11<sup>th</sup> in response to the emerging threat of Covid-19, we had no way of knowing how long the closure would last and what the impact would be. What we did know was that our community would come together as it always does in times of crisis. Thank you.

As we close out the most challenging school year in our history, we do so knowing that we have much work to do over the next several weeks in preparing for the coming year. We have already begun that work and are committed to working tirelessly to develop a re-entry plan that will best serve the needs of all our students within the guidelines established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to ensure the health and safety of our students and staff. Our planning will continue to be informed by the input and feedback we have received. Thank you to all of you who have shared your suggestions and concerns, either through the Remote Learning Survey or otherwise. The complexities that this global pandemic presents cannot be understated. We will continue to keep you informed throughout the summer as we finalize our re-entry plan.

We are living through a historic time in our country. Protests across the world in response to the killings of our black community members, sparked by the ruthless killing of George Floyd by a white Minneapolis police officer a few weeks ago, have resulted in a long-overdue anti-racism call to action for all of us. It is fitting that as we close out our school year on June 19, 2020, we remember the importance of Juneteenth, the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. It was on June 19, 1865 – two and a half years after President Lincoln’s Emancipation Proclamation – that Union soldiers led by Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas with word that the war had ended and that all enslaved were now free. It has been 155 years since that fateful day, yet here we are. If we are to uphold our vision of a free and just society, we must move with urgency and clarity to eliminate systemic racism. This work must be a priority in our District if we are to be true to our mission of increasing equity, access, and opportunity for ALL students.

Thank you for all you have done and continue to do to support our students. We will stay in touch over the summer with weekly updates. We will also continue to update our website resources and encourage you to check them regularly. Have a safe summer.

## **NEW/UPDATED INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

**Reminder - Somerville Museum Invites Class of 2020 to Share Thoughts and Experiences:** Class of 2020! The Somerville Museum would like to collect your thoughts and experiences about your life during the past few months. This is a historical moment. The COVID-19 Pandemic and the killing of George Floyd by a police officer has sparked international mass protests and political upheaval. The Somerville Class of 2020 has been particularly impacted. The Somerville Museum wants to hear your voices and make sure your history is recorded. Click on the link below to learn more about how to share your experiences. The Museum will add your responses to the Collection for the Museum to use freely at a later date. We hope to use this collection in future exhibits and as primary source material for future study.

<http://somervillemuseum.org/classof2020historicalcollectionproject/>

**Today's Shout-Out:** Congratulations to the SCALE Class of 2020 graduates! Video links to all the Class of 2020 graduation ceremonies are available on the Somerville Educational Channel's YouTube account at: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCm3UNFw1a7-NN7yKtaCurhw/videos>.

**Just for Fun:** The Harvard Museums of Science & Culture have launched new at-home resources, such as a deep dive into [Extraordinary Things](#) in their collections. There are also story times, podcasts, and many free as well as fee-based activities throughout the summer at [HMSC Connects](#). For more fun and interactive activities, visit [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/justforfun](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/justforfun).

## LIST OF RESOURCES, CONTINUING PROGRAMS AND IMPORTANT LINKS

### Curriculum and Other Online Resources

- High quality grade-level home learning resources: [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/home-learning](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/home-learning)
- If you are having trouble with your device, please submit a request for support using this [Somerville Public Schools Remote Tech Support Contact Form](#).
- Language Support for Technology Questions: SPS parents/students who need language assistance with technology should call 311 or email [311updates@somervillema.gov](mailto:311updates@somervillema.gov). A bilingual educator will contact you to assist you. Dial (617) 666-3311 if you are calling from a number outside of Somerville.
- SPS Remote Learning Plan can be accessed at [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/RemoteLearning](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/RemoteLearning)
- List of resources on "talking about racism": [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/talking-about-racism](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/talking-about-racism)

### Continuing Programs and Resources

- **Breakfast and Lunch Grab-and-Go Meals:** Starting Monday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> and throughout the summer months, Grab-and-Go Meals will be distributed only on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9-11 a.m. at ESCS, Healey, WSNS, and Winter Hill. No ID required.
- **Other food-related resources in the city,** visit [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/food-resources](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/food-resources).
- **Distribution of Diapers:** Distribution of free diapers to families with babies or young children will continue on **Wednesdays from 9:00-11:00a.m.** Starting Wednesday, June 24<sup>th</sup>, diapers will be distributed only at ESCS and WSNS through the end of July, while supplies last.
- **Comcast Internet Essentials:** We want to remind families that Comcast is offering two months of free internet service to families in need, through their Internet Essentials program. ***If you qualify for the school free/reduced lunch program, you are eligible for this important service.*** Information on how to apply and sign up for Internet Essentials from Comcast is available at: <https://internetessentials.com/>
- **\$50 SNAP Match at Union Square Farmers Market through June:** Did you know? SNAP shoppers and P-EBT recipients can now leverage a dollar-for-dollar SNAP Match up to \$50 dollars per market through June. Between now and June 27, SNAP & P-EBT customers will have significantly increased access to healthy food sourced from local food producers at the Union Square Farmers Market, thanks to the generous support of the Somerville Job Creation and Retention Trust. See the "how-to" SNAP informational videos below to find out how the match program works. [Click here](#) for more information about fresh and affordable food resources during Covid-19. SNAP Match Video: [English](#); SNAP Match Video: [Portuguese](#)

### Important Covid-19 Links & Information

- Visit [www.somervillema.gov/coronavirus](http://www.somervillema.gov/coronavirus) for the most current information on COVID-19 and resources available in our community.
- Talking to your kids about COVID-19: [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/TalkingAboutCoronavirus](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/TalkingAboutCoronavirus).
- Basic supports for families during COVID-19: [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/relief-our-families](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/relief-our-families).

Respectfully,

Mary Skipper, Superintendent