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Summer 2020 Weekly Update

June 25, 2020

Dear Somerville Public Schools Families and Staff,

Earlier today, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) released their initial [Return to School Guidance](#) for schools reopening this fall. The initial guidance prioritizes the opportunity for in-person learning, with comprehensive health and safety requirements. A summary of the guidance is available in [this press release](#), also issued by DESE earlier today. In partnership with the City, we will be evaluating these guidelines and determining what they mean to Somerville Public Schools. We are also reviewing feedback from the Remote Learning Survey that we administered earlier this month. Thank you for your response to the survey. We will be seeking additional feedback from students, staff, and parents/guardians on our planning throughout the summer.

We began our school walkthroughs this week to start outlining school-specific protocols and needs that would support a safe and appropriate return to school this fall. School Principals and District Cabinet Team members have been reviewing best practices as we awaited guidance from the state. Now that the initial guidance for fall 2020 is out, we will be working with school-based teams, a City/District team, and our staff unions to begin developing our hybrid learning plans.

We will continue to keep you updated weekly. Please look for a new SPS Back to School website resource over the next 2-3 weeks as we develop our fall 2020 plan.

NEW/UPDATED INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Reminder – Summer Programming Opportunities: A list of summer enrichment programming opportunities is available at www.somerville.k12.ma.us/summerlearning. We will continue to add information about local and other online programs as we learn about them. Please visit the site often.

This Week's Shout-Out: Congratulations to Florence “Fluffy” Bergmann for being recognized by the Massachusetts Commission on the Status of Women (MCSW) as a [Class of 2020 Commonwealth Heroine](#). Nominated by state legislators, the MCSW describes Commonwealth Heroines as “women who don’t always make the news, but truly make the difference.” You can learn more about the Class of 2020 Heroines [here](#). Fluffy is a Somerville High School graduate and has been the director of the [Mystic Learning Center](#) for more than 40 years, and an incredible partner in our schools. Among her many roles in the community – as a mentor, educator and advocate – she has also served as a member of the School Improvement Council at the Healey School. After spending a lifetime supporting and mentoring youth, Fluffy is retiring this year and leaves the MLC in a strong position to continue building on the outstanding work she started. She also recently learned that the MLC had been awarded a Cummings Foundation \$100K for 100 grant to help sustain the program over the next four years. A heartfelt congratulations, thank you, and best wishes to Fluffy!

Just for Fun: Build a cardboard box arcade like [Caine's Arcade](#). For more fun and interactive activities, visit www.somerville.k12.ma.us/justforfun.

PROGRAMS, RESOURCES AND LINKS

Programs and Resources

- **Breakfast and Lunch Grab-and-Go Meals:** Starting Monday, June 22nd and throughout the summer months, Grab-and-Go Meals will be distributed 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.
- **Distribution of Diapers:** Free diapers to families with babies or young children available for pickup on Wednesdays, 9:00-11:00a.m. at ESCS and WSNS through the end of July, while supplies last.
- **Comcast Internet Essentials:** Comcast has extended their offering of 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](#)

Curriculum and Other Online Resources

- High quality grade-level home learning resources: 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. A bilingual educator will contact you to assist you. Dial (617) 666-3311 if you are calling from a number outside of Somerville.
- List of resources on “talking about racism”: www.somerville.k12.ma.us/talking-about-racism

Important Covid-19 Links & Information

- Visit 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.
- Basic supports for families during COVID-19: www.somerville.k12.ma.us/relief-our-families.

Respectfully,

Mary Skipper, Superintendent