



Somerville Public Schools

Education • Inspiration • Excellence

Mary E. Skipper, *Superintendent*

8 Bonair Street · Somerville, MA 02145-3246
mskipper@k12.somerville.ma.us · www.somerville.k12.ma.us
T 617-629-5200, x6005 · F 617-629-5611

September 11, 2020

Dear SPS Parents/Guardians and Staff,

We are one week away from the start of the 2020-21 school year and are very much looking forward to welcoming and re-engaging with our students. Teachers have been working hard to finalize their classroom schedules and get their virtual classrooms ready for your students.

Principals will be sending out class schedules and cohort assignments today. Students in each class will be divided into two cohorts (Cohort A and Cohort B) to facilitate our eventual phased return to partial in-person instruction. These same cohort assignments will be used for the new free outdoor enrichment programming that Community Schools (pre-K and K) and Parks & Recreation (grades 1-8) will be offering.

As we prepare for the start of the school year, we are also continuing to work with the city on developing a virus surveillance testing plan and on ensuring that our school buildings are ready for a return to in-person teaching and learning. In partnership with the City, we will be jointly hosting a Schools Reopening Town Hall meeting on Monday, September 21st at 5:30pm to provide an update on those efforts. Spanish, Portuguese, and Haitian Creole interpretation will be available. The meeting will be hosted on the Zoom teleconferencing platform. Visit www.somervillema.gov/virtualltownhall at the start time of the meeting to join live or get call-in information. The meeting will also be live-streamed on City Cable TV and the Educational Channel (Channels 13 & 15 on RCN, Channels 15 & 22 on Comcast), on the City's YouTube channel (www.youtube.com/SomervilleCityTV), and via the City Website at www.somervillema.gov/TV (select "Watch Live Stream").

Below, we have outlined some of the key information that you will need as you and your children make final preparations for the first day of school, which is next Friday, September 18th for students in grades 1-12 and the following Friday, September 25th for pre-K and Kindergarten students.

Have a safe and enjoyable weekend. We will be in touch again next week before the first day of school.

Respectfully,

Mary Skipper, Superintendent

Classroom Schedules and Expectations: Schools will be sending out classroom schedules and cohort assignments today. Schedules will have a timeline for the regular full school day that includes a combination of live online guided instruction or support, as well as time for students to work independently on meaningful assignments connected to what they are learning in their guided instruction. All curriculum will be aligned to DESE grade-level standards. Click [here](#) for additional details.

Attendance: Systems are in place to track daily attendance. All students are expected to attend and engage in all synchronous and asynchronous activities designed by their teachers for the full school day. Click [here](#) for additional details.

Grading and Assessments: Our comprehensive system to assess student progress includes teacher developed classroom assessments, quarterly grade reports, local common assessments, and statewide standardized tests. Assessment data is used to help individualize instruction based on student needs. Students at all grade levels will receive frequent constructive feedback from educators on synchronous and asynchronous work. In addition, students will receive feedback on their quarterly grade reports using traditional grading structures. Click [here](#) for additional details.

School Materials and Supplies: Elementary schools are preparing supplies for their students to pick up. In grades 1-8, the district is supplementing this effort with an initial set of grade-level items to support curriculum. Schools will be reaching out to families with information on when and where to pick up these materials.

Technology: Our goal is to ensure that every student has a dedicated device to support their learning. Please contact your school if your student needs a Chromebook or if you do not have internet access at home and need a Hotspot. If you are having trouble with your device and need some remote tech support, please submit a request for support using this [Somerville Public Schools Remote Tech Support Form](#). Please visit <https://sites.google.com/k12.somerville.ma.us/parents/home> if you are using a device provided by Somerville Public Schools for Parent/Guardian Resources to support remote learning.

Breakfast and Lunch: Starting Monday, September 21st, SPS Food & Nutrition Services will distribute breakfasts and lunches Monday-Friday, 11:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at the following schools. Parents and students can pick up meals at any site and should go to their most convenient location. Please note that we are not offering a Somerville High School site because of construction. SHS and Next Wave/Full Circle students can pick up at any neighborhood school.

- Argenziano School
- Capuano Early Childhood Center
- Brown School
- East Somerville Community School
- Healey School
- Kennedy School
- West Somerville Neighborhood School
- Winter Hill Community Innovation School - Four 10' x 10' tents

Fresh breakfast and lunch will be available following the posted menu (www.somerville.k12.ma.us/fns). Parents or students can pick up free meals; no ID is required.

Snacks: Afternoon snacks will be provided by Food & Nutrition Services for students participating in Community Schools and Parks & Recreation after school programming.

Free Enrichment Programming: Community Schools (pre-K and K) and Parks & Recreation (grades 1-8) will be offering free outdoor enrichment programming to provide students with opportunities for safe, social interaction starting September 21st based on their cohort assignment. This programming is weather dependent and all current health and safety guidelines including mandatory use of masks and social distancing will be in place. Based on the interest survey families completed last week, we anticipate that we will have enough space to accommodate all interested families.

Formal registration will open on Monday, September 14th. As a reminder, students in Cohort A can apply for Thursday/Friday programming. Students in Cohort B can apply for Monday/Tuesday programming. Visit www.somerville.k12.ma.us/afterschool-enrichment-program for more details on grade-level program times and locations. Please be prepared to indicate which cohort your child is in when you register. Schools will be sending out cohort assignments today. Register for the free 12:30-2:30 pre-K/K Community Schools programming at www.ezchildtrack.com/parent2/ParentLogin.aspx?c=CSafterschool. Register for the free

Grades 1-8 Somerville Parks & Recreation programming at <https://www.somerville.com/info/default.aspx>.
Click the “Register Now” bar to get started.