

CONNECTIONS

A Newsletter from the Somerville Public Schools – February 1, 2020

News & Notes

Animal Experts at the Argenziano in Grade 1

Ms. Jane Campos' Grade 1 class at the Argenziano School recently did some impressive research. Each student chose a mammal, insect, or reptile as a project topic. They started their research in the library, finding source materials about habitats, diets, movement and important characteristics. One student proudly announced that their animal was a predator!

After developing a written presentation, the students worked with found materials to build sculptures of their research subject. They used materials like toilet paper rolls and strawberry boxes, then painted and added important detail. Ms. Campos invited parents to come in to see their students' projects, and to enjoy a performance of a poem about Martin Luther King, Jr.



West Somerville Neighborhood School's Fun Run a Great Success by Any Measure

The track lights lit up the school gymnasium and parents and teachers were on the sidelines to cheer for the students. The Boosterthon DJ played "Fill Me Up, Buttercup" and then "High Hopes" on the sound system in the corner. Last Friday, January 17 was West Somerville Neighborhood School's Fun Run.

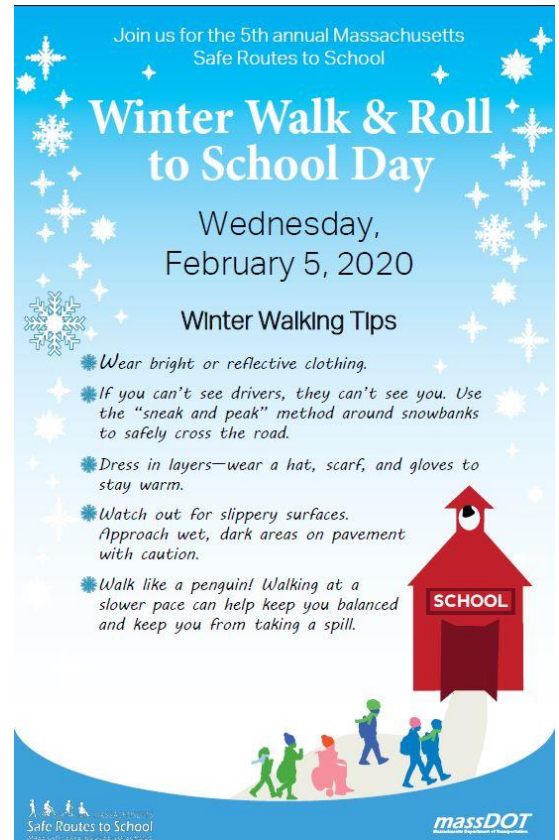
The event not only raised funds for the school's PTA, it also promoted health and wellness and a strong sense of school community. In the week leading up to the Fun Run, students sought pledges toward each lap they ran in the gym. All tallied, the school community received pledges from all 50 states and 13 countries, and raised over \$30,000. The funds are used to pay for special assemblies and activities, and to defray the cost of offsite learning excursions such as the third graders' trip to visit Plimoth Plantation, the sixth graders' trip to Nature's Classroom, and the eighth grade trip to Washington, DC.

Winter Walk & Roll to School Day

On Wednesday, February 5th, Somerville students will be joining students across the Commonwealth in promoting wellness by walking or rolling to school in celebration of the 5th annual Massachusetts Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Winter Walk & Roll to School Day. Sponsored by the MA Department of Transportation, this annual event not only promotes healthy and active lifestyles, but also helps reduce the environmental impact in communities.

Schools across the district will be supporting the Winter Walk & Roll to School Day in a number of ways with some distributing stickers or other items promoting this annual SRTS event, cheering students on as they cross the “finish line” upon arriving to school, and inviting community partners and staff to attend and participate. In the past, several schools have also invited students who take the bus to take a few laps around the playground before heading to class.

SRTS offers helpful winter walking tips to help ensure a safe and enjoyable experience (<https://www.mass.gov/doc/winter-walk-to-school-day-flyer-2020/download>). Thanks to school wellness champions, Shape Up Somerville, school PTAs, school family and community liaisons, and other community partners who help coordinate and promote this event, Somerville students are “walking the walk” in support of healthy and active lifestyles.



What's Happening

SHS Ultimate Frisbee Fundraising Event – Saturday, February 1, 2020

The Somerville High School Ultimate Frisbee Teams invite you to stop in at Chipotle in Davis Square (274 Elm Street) this Saturday, February 1st, between 5:00-9:00 pm. Mention that you are supporting “SHS Villen Ultimate” and 33% of the proceeds from your purchase will be donated to the team.

Somerville High School Open House – Thursday and Friday, February 6 & 7, 2020

Somerville High School invites you to get a first-hand look at the SHS teaching and learning experience by visiting the school during one of their upcoming Open House events. Guests will have an opportunity to visit classrooms, meet educators and other staff, and hear about the SHS experience from students. A morning (8:15-10:00am) and an afternoon (12:15-2:00pm) session will be offered each day on Thursday and Friday, February 6th and 7th. No advance registration is required.

Road to the Future Transition Fair – Thursday, February 6, 2020

Families of middle and high school age students with disabilities are invited to come and learn about: agencies and services that may be helpful to your college or workforce bound child; educational, employment, and independent living options and opportunities; and networking and family support possibilities. The [Road to the Future Transition Fair](#) will take place in the main cafeteria of Cambridge Rindge & Latin School (459 Broadway, Cambridge). This event is hosted by Cambridge Public Schools OSS Transition Services in collaboration with Somerville Public Schools. RSVP to Brittaney Courier, bcourier@k12.somerville.ma.us (617-625-6600 x6201) or Sandra Copman, scopman@k12.somerville.ma.us (617-625-6600 x6855).

Somerville Partnership for Young Children (SPYC) Offers Tuition Assistance

The Somerville Partnership for Young Children (SPYC) is accepting applications for 2020-2021 Preschool Tuition Assistance for 3 and 4 year olds through January 31, 2020. Income-eligible Somerville residents with a child who will be 3 years old by August 31, 2020 can apply for tuition assistance for preschool programs at partner centers. The goal of SPYC, a collaboration between Somerville Public Schools, Head Start, and participating child care and preschool partners, is to expand access to high quality early education for Somerville children and families. To find out if you're eligible for tuition assistance for one of the partner centers and to apply, visit <https://somervillechildren.org/tuition-assistance/>. Explore www.somervillechildren.org to learn more about SPYC. Developed with the support of the Early Education and Care's CPPI grant, SPYC is part of Somerville's commitment to developing a coordinated early education system through a mixed delivery model that expands access to high quality programs for all children.

Healey School Accepting Donations for Book Fair – through February 14, 2020

Book Fair News from the Healey! We decided to do something a little off the beaten path this year for our annual book fair. This year, we will accept gently used books from bookshelves all over Somerville to sell for our book fair.

Why? Our mission is to make sure every child in our school has access to age-appropriate books and can go home with a book, expanding their home library. This also helps parents clean out books their kids may have outgrown, which makes room for new books while lessening our carbon footprint. We also thought this was a great way to invite the larger Somerville Community to participate in the process. All the money raised will go back to Healey Families to help fund offsite learning opportunities and activities throughout the year.

Goal? Our goal is to collect a diverse selection of new or gently used books from the community (and publishers if anyone has connections!) and sell the books for \$1.00-\$5.00 a book. The goal is to make sure every child goes home with at least one book, regardless of their ability to pay. The hope is to collect 1,000 age-appropriate books for the Healey School's 438 students by February 14, 2020.

What we need: New or gently used children's books from all over Somerville; books for children in Pre-K through 8th grade; bilingual or dual language books; diverse characters in books, volunteers to help sort books and prepare the space for the book fair in late February.

What happens to the leftover books after the book sale? We have plans to keep books accessible for the kids all year round while also making sure books in good condition are not thrown away. We plan on constructing a little library (take a book/leave a book) for the first floor where we have books available to take for visitors and students year-round. Your old books can have a positive impact on kids and our community, so please consider donating your books at the Healey School's front desk, or see if your school has a donation box for Healey volunteers to pick up on February 14th. (Only new or gently used Pre-K-8 children's books can be accepted.)

Questions? Please email Melissa McCue-McGrath (m.mccue@gmail.com), and thank you for your donation!

Upcoming School & District Events:

Visit www.somerville.k12.ma.us and click on the "calendar" link at the top of the page for a list of upcoming activities in our schools and in our District this month.

- **Monday, February 3, 5:00-7:00pm: Kennedy School Parent/Teacher Conferences** (5 Cherry St.)
- **Tuesday, February 4, 3:00-5:00pm: Next Wave/Full Circle Parent/Teacher Conferences** (8 Bonair St.)
- **Tuesday, February 4, 5:30-7:00pm: Argenziano School Council Meeting** (290 Washington St.)
- **Wednesday, February 5: Safe Routes to School Walk & Roll to School Day**
- **Wednesday, February 5, 5:30-8:00pm: Healey School Parent/Teacher Conferences** (5 Meacham St.)
- **Thursday, February 6, 8:15-10:00am: Somerville High School Open House** (81 Highland Ave.)
- **Thursday, February 6, 12:15-2:00pm: Somerville High School Open House** (81 Highland Ave.)
- **Thursday, February 6, 3:00-5:30pm: Somerville High School Parent/Teacher Conferences** (81 Highland Ave.)
- **Friday, February 7: MythMasters Assembly** at the Brown School (201 Willow Ave.)
- **Friday, February 7, 8:15-10:00am: Somerville High School Open House** (81 Highland Ave.)
- **Friday, February 7, 12:15-2:00pm: Somerville High School Open House** (81 Highland Ave.)
- **Friday, February 7, 6:30-8:00pm: Brown School Tropical Dance** at the Argenziano School Cafetorium (290 Washington St.)
- **Friday, February 7, 7:00-10:00pm: SHS Thespian Inductions & Festival Performances** at the Somerville High School Auditorium (81 Highland Ave.)

- **Saturday, February 8: Somerville High School at MA Thespian Festival**, Acton-Boxborough Regional High School (36 Charter Rd., Acton MA)

Upcoming School Committee Meetings:

Find the complete School Committee schedule, agendas and meeting minutes (as approved) online at www.somerville.k12.ma.us/school-committee.

- **Monday, February 3, 6:00-7:00pm: Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting** at the City Council Chambers, City Hall (93 Highland Ave.)
- **Monday, February 3, 7:00-9:30pm: Regular School Committee Meeting** at the City Council Chambers, City Hall (93 Highland Ave.)
- **Monday, February 10, 7:00-8:30pm: Annual School Committee and PTA Council Meeting** at the Central Office Conference Room (8 Bonair St., 2nd floor)

Somerville Family Learning Collaborative Workshops, Events, and Resources:

Find a complete list of SFLC events and workshops at www.somerville.k12.ma.us/families.

The Somerville Family Learning Collaborative (SFLC) enhances the capacity of families and schools to support children's learning and well-being by collaborating with community partners and promoting welcoming, responsive schools and programs. Take a look at the work and impact of the SFLC "by the numbers" in this [2018-2019 report](#).

- **SFLC Parent/Guardian English Classes.** Parents/guardians of Somerville students can practice and strengthen their English language skills while learning about and becoming more involved with their child's education. The SFLC works in collaboration with The Welcome Project to provide classes held in the morning and evening. The spring session runs from January 28 to May 14, 2020. Registration is ongoing. Parents/guardians can register by contacting Jennifer Ochoa, the SFLC/East Somerville Community School's Family and Community Liaison at jochoa@k12.somerville.ma.us or at (617) 625-6600, ext. 3706.
- **Serve and Inspire Volunteer Orientation.** New to volunteering with the Somerville Public Schools? Attend an orientation to learn about district schools and how SPS volunteers serve, inspire, and support student learning. Please contact SPS Volunteer Coordinator Jen Capuano at jcapuano@k12.somerville.ma.us or call (617) 629-5475 for more information, accommodations needed to attend, and to RSVP. Thursday, February 13, 6:00-8:00pm at the SFLC Cummings School Building (42 Prescott St., Room 12).
- **Sharing Our Stories Support Group – Final Session.** Join SFLC staff and fellow Somerville parents on Thursday, February 13, 7:00-8:30pm for a support group for families with young children who have special needs. Raising a child who does not always fit in can be challenging. This free, open-ended group offers adults the opportunity to share joys, concerns, frustrations, questions and resources about their experiences. Facilitated by Amy Bamforth, LICSW. SFLC Center at the Cummings School Building (42 Prescott St.)

Looking Ahead:

- **Tuesday, February 11, 9:15am: Tufts Beats** performs for 2nd and 3rd graders at the Argenziano School (290 Washington St.). Sponsored by the Argenziano PTA Arts Council.
- **Tuesday, February 11, 3:00-5:30pm: Argenziano Parent / Teacher Conferences** (290 Washington St.)
- **Tuesday, February 11, 5:30-7:00pm: ESCS School Improvement Council Meeting** at the East Somerville Community School Library (50 Cross St.)
- **Tuesday, February 11, 6:00-7:30pm: WHCIS Governing Board Meeting** (115 Sycamore St.)
- **Wednesday, February 12: Half-Day Wednesday for PK-8** (PK dismissed at 11:30am; K-8 dismissed at noon)
- **Wednesday, February 12: PTA-Sponsored Spirit Day at the West Somerville Neighborhood School (177 Powder House Blvd.)**
- **Wednesday, February 12, 8:30-9:30am: Healey School Grades 7 & 8 Family Breakfast** (5 Meacham St.)
- **Wednesday, February 12, 1:45-3:00pm: SHS Science & Engineering Fair and Exhibition at Somerville High School** (81 Highland Ave.)
- **Wednesday, February 12, 5:00-6:30pm: WSNS School Council Meeting** at the West Somerville Neighborhood School Library (177 Powder House Blvd.)
- **Thursday, February 13, 3:00-5:30pm: East Somerville Community School Parent / Teacher Conferences** (50 Cross St.)

- **Thursday, February 13, 6:00-8:00pm: Serve and Inspire SPS Volunteer Orientation** at the Cummings School Building (42 Prescott St.)
- **Thursday, February 13, 7:00-8:30pm: SFLC Sharing Our Stories Support Group, Final Session** at the SFLC Center, Cummings School Building (42 Prescott St., Room 14)
- **Saturday, February 15, 9:30am-1:30pm: Roots & Shoots and Brown School Leadership Team Fundraiser to Benefit Somerville Backpack Program** at Somerville Winter Farmer's Market at the Armory
- **Monday-Friday, February 17-21: February Vacation** – All Schools closed; District offices closed on Monday, February 17th only

Community News & Events

Community Growing Center. The Somerville Community Growing Center is polling its supporters and friends regarding what the Center's theme for 2020 should be. Every year, the Growing Center selects a theme around which to develop and orient programming, and is seeking input from Somerville families about this year's theme.

Visit https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdkSb8mkKT8_ueTJNeLLEp5cd14Z6ELtwCO8eZdWg_dhfhJ3g/view_form to vote.

Somerville Media Center. Bored? Out of school early? Want to make cool media projects with your friends? Sign up for SMC's Media Exploration Adventures! Media Exploration Adventures are a brand new workshop series for youth in Somerville on Half Day Wednesdays. Each session includes targeted, hands-on, collaborative media production activities where youth develop their media skills in a fun, safe, supportive environment. The class also includes snack and a brief parent showcase with a light dinner from 5:30-6:00pm. Sign up for one or all of them! Program held at the Somerville Media Center (90 Union Square). Fees vary; scholarships available. Youth eligible for free or reduced lunch can attend for free. Visit www.somervillemedia.org/youth-media-2/media-exploration-workshops/?mc_cid=324a737c00&mc_eid=eb2a28602b for dates and to register. To learn more about Somerville Media Center and other great SMC programs, visit www.somervillemedia.org/.

Silent No More. The Adi and Jerry Greenberg Foundation and CICA presents a No Limits Production of Silent No More on Saturday, March 7th, 7:30pm at the Regent Theater (7 Medford St. in Arlington, MA). The production features a collection of inspiring life stories by individuals with hearing loss. Tickets are \$25. For seat reservation for ASL Interpreters and Captioning, please email rsvp@nolimitsfordeafchildren.org. For more information, visit http://regenttheatre.com/details/no_limits_presents..._silent_no_more.

The Duhamel Star. Is there someone in the Somerville Public Schools that you would like to celebrate? The Duhamel Education Initiative (DEI) invites you to recognize them with a Duhamel Star – a certificate of appreciation given as a donation to DEI in the honoree's name. You can express your gratitude with a personal message and grow student engagement in SPS through your donation to DEI's grant fund. Duhamel Stars can be purchased at any time. For more information and to order a Duhamel Star, visit www.duhamelsomerville.org/duhamel-star.html#.

Somerville Parks & Recreation. Check out the Somerville Parks and Recreation Department website (www.somervillerec.com) for information about their February Vacation Floor Hockey program, and other programs and events available this winter. A full list of classes, clinics, events, youth and adult league sports, and activities, as well as cost for each is available at <http://www.somervillerec.com/info/activities/default.aspx?type=activities>.

Middle Grades Writer's Den. Writer's Den is a free weekly evening creative writing workshop open to all Somerville students in grades 4-8. Creative weekly activities and fun writing prompts, storytelling, script writing and more keep students eager to write and share their writing. Publishing opportunities and snacks. Co-Directors Alan Ball, Cara Feinberg, and Allyson Sherlock invite all students in grades 4-8 to join the fun. Parent/guardian permission required. Writer's Den takes place Wednesdays and some Mondays (except vacation weeks or if schools close due to inclement weather). Visit the district website (www.somerville.k12.ma.us/events/calendar) for Writer's Den meeting dates for the rest of the school year. The workshops take place at the Healey School Library, 5 Meacham St.

City & District Employment Opportunities

Consider joining a winning team! Current city and district opportunities include:

- [Crossing Guard](#), Police Department, City of Somerville
- [Public Space Planner](#), OSPCD – Public Space and Urban Forestry, City of Somerville
- [Program Coordinator](#), Parks & Recreation Dept., City of Somerville
- [Accounting Analyst](#), Auditing Dept., City of Somerville

Visit <https://www.somervillema.gov/jobs> for a complete listing of current open positions in the City of Somerville.

- [Senior Clerk – Full Year](#), Somerville Center for Adult Learning Experiences (SCALE), Somerville Public Schools
- [Boys Freshmen Baseball Coach](#), Athletics Department, Somerville Public Schools
- [Middle School Cross Country Coach](#), Athletics Department, Somerville Public Schools
- [FT Lead Teacher, Community Schools Afterschool Program](#), Brown School, Somerville Public Schools

Visit <https://www.schoolspring.com/jobs/?employer=16902> for a complete listing of current open positions in the Somerville Public Schools.

Our Commitment to the Whole Child

VISION: "We believe in developing the whole child — the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical potential of all students — by providing students with the skills, opportunities, and resources that will nurture innovative ideas, foster pride in diversity, inspire students to become lifelong learners and empower them to enrich their communities."