

CONNECTIONS

A Newsletter from the Somerville Public Schools – November 15, 2019

News & Notes

Mastering the #HighlanderHabits

This year, Somerville High School unveiled its new graduate profile, which is a list of eight #HighlanderHabits that all Somerville High School students are expected to master before they graduate. Each month, the school is highlighting one of the habits with the faculty, staff, and students to increase awareness about the #HighlanderHabits and build student capacity in that skill. At the end of the month, teachers nominate students whom they feel have exemplified the habit, and those students are then recognized for their achievement.



The Highlander Habit of the Month for October was Growth Mindset, which includes demonstrating the ability to:

- persevere through difficult tasks and obstacles;
- take ownership of own learning by reflecting on learning, being aware of one's strengths and weaknesses, and taking the initiative to improve;
- be willing to take risks; and
- demonstrate passion and curiosity for learning.

Congratulations to the first cohort of Somerville High School students to receive Highlander Habit of the Month awards, for their outstanding work in demonstrating a Growth Mindset. The October Highlander Habit of the Month award winners are: Lindsay Ferraina, Kalsang Chodon, Victor Henriquez Garay, Jadrianis Vega Garcia, Owen Hughes, Henry Yanes Arbaiza, Ryan Westgate, and Sophonie LaFerriere.



Buddy Reading at the East Somerville Community School

by Jessica Pires, Second Grade Teacher

This month, the second graders in Ms. Pires' class began Buddy Reading with sixth graders from Ms. Allen's class. Together, they help each other read words they are stuck on, apply their reading strategies, and think more deeply about the text. Students take their time to ask and answer questions, make predictions, and retell the story. This is a fantastic opportunity for both grade level students to practice speaking and listening to each other while

they also strengthen their reading skills. As we continue to Buddy Read throughout the year, we will focus on building our vocabulary to help us become stronger readers! We will build our vocabulary as we stumble upon new, unknown words in our texts. Second graders and sixth graders will work together to record the new word, define it, sketch it, and apply the word in context. Here is a quick look into what our classroom looks like during Buddy Reading time!

Highlander Theatre Company Presents “In the Heights” Musical Production

The Highlander Theatre Company kicks off its 2019-2020 season later this month with its biggest production of the year, “In the Heights”. “In the Heights” is a universal story of a vibrant community in New York’s Washington Heights neighborhood – a place where the coffee from the corner bodega is light and sweet, the windows are always open and the breeze carries the rhythm of three generations of music. The story is also about a community on the brink of change, full of hopes, dreams and pressures, where the biggest struggles can be deciding which traditions you take with you, and which ones you leave behind.

“In the Heights” is the winner of the 2008 Tony Awards for Best Musical, Best Score, Best Choreography and Best Orchestrations, and is presented through special arrangement with R & H Theatricals, www.rnh.com. Tickets are on sale now for four upcoming performances of the Highlander Theatre Company’s production at the Somerville High School Auditorium (81 Highland Ave.). Read all about this year’s musical production in this recent article: <https://somerville.wickedlocal.com/news/20191108/somerville-students-sing-about-gentrification-and-immigration-in-heights>.

- Thursday, Nov. 21 @ 7PM
- Friday, Nov. 22 @ 7PM
- Saturday, Nov. 23 @ 2PM and 7PM

Visit www.highlandertheatre.org to purchase tickets online for any of the upcoming productions of “In the Heights” and to learn more about the 2019-2020 Highlander Theatre season. *(photos for this article courtesy of Jeanine Farley)*



What’s Happening

Somerville SEPAC Hosts Presentation on the 14-year Transition Training – November 18

The Somerville Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) invites you to a presentation by Mass Advocates for Children on the 14-year Transition Training. The presentation takes place Monday, November 18, 6:00-8:00pm at the West Somerville Neighborhood School cafeteria (177 Powder House Blvd.), and will address the transition planning and services required for youth with disabilities ages 14-22. The training will focus on both the transition special education services that prepare youth for employment, independent living and further education and discuss mechanisms to plan for services students may require when they exit special education as well as transition to the adult human service system. Using case examples, parents and professionals will learn strategies that may help students receive important transition services mandated by special education laws. Parents and professionals will also gain an understanding on Chapter 688, the federal law that helps plan for youth with disabilities after they leave school.

“Share the Warmth” Winter Coat Drive

Throughout November and December, the Clothing Closet of the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative (SFLC) will be collecting donations of new and gently used winter clothing. With the colder weather, there is an urgent need for winter coats, snow pants, gloves, warm socks, and winter boots. Donations of children’s garments 5T-16 and boots sizes 5-13, and adult garments S-XXL and boots sizes 6-12 would be most appreciated. Drop-off locations are at all SPS schools during regular school hours and at the SFLC Center located at 42 Prescott Street. Please contact Francina Reyes at (617) 625-6600, x6994 or freyes@k12.somerville.ma.us with any questions.

Next Wave/Full Circle Holiday Wreath Fundraiser

With the winter season at our doorstep, it’s that time of the year again! Next Wave/Full Circle is holding its annual Holiday Wreath fundraiser. The purchase of a beautiful 14” balsam wreath with a red velvet bow for \$18.00 apiece will not only brighten up your décor, but will also help fund student activities, field trips, and incentives for the school’s reward system. Wreaths will be delivered to schools the first week in December. To place an order, contact Agnes Gallant at agallant@k12.somerville.ma.us.

Families Together Somerville (FTS) Volunteer Informational Meeting – December 4, 6:00pm

Families Together Somerville is a family-to-family mentoring program, which pairs first generation college-going juniors’ families with another Somerville family that has direct experience with the college application process. Through a structured program of family-matching and support, the college-experienced parents/guardians will serve as guides and mentors to the selected juniors and their families as they work through the many phases of the college application process. The program is committed to the idea of empowering the students and families being mentored, and will match them with families who can work in that spirit.

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, November 18: Make-up Picture Day** at the Healey School (5 Meacham St.)
- **Monday, November 18, 6:30-8:00pm: Brown Schoolyard Design Meeting** at the Brown School (201 Willow Ave.)
- **Monday-Wednesday, November 18-20: WSNS 6th Grade Nature’s Classroom Trip**
- **Tuesday, November 19, 3:00-4:00pm: Capuano School Council Meeting** at the Capuano Conference Room (150 Glen St.)
- **Wednesday, November 20, 6:00-8:00pm: SHS School Improvement Council Meeting** at Somerville High School, Room 230 (81 Highland Ave.)
- **Wednesday, November 20, 2:30-5:30pm: Winter Hill “Fill a Bag” Event** at the Winter Hill Community Innovation School Cafeteria (115 Sycamore St.)
- **Thursday, November 21, 5:00-7:30pm: East Somerville Community School Parent-Teacher Conferences** (50 Cross St.)
- **Thursday, November 21, 5:00-7:30pm: West Somerville Neighborhood School Parent-Teacher Conferences** (177 Powder House Blvd.)
- **Thursday, November 21, 7:00-10:00pm: Highlander Theatre Company Musical Production of “In the Heights”** at the Somerville High School Auditorium (81 Highland Ave.)
- **Friday, November 22, 6:00-8:00pm: WSNS PTA-Sponsored Movie Night** at the West Somerville Neighborhood School (177 Powder House Blvd.)
- **Friday, November 22, 7:00-10:00pm: Highlander Theatre Company Musical Production of “In the Heights”** at the Somerville High School Auditorium (81 Highland Ave.)
- **Saturday, November 23, 2:00-5:00pm: Highlander Theatre Company Musical Production of “In the Heights”** at the Somerville High School Auditorium (81 Highland Ave.)
- **Saturday, November 23, 7:00-10:00pm: Highlander Theatre Company Musical Production of “In the Heights”** at the Somerville High School Auditorium (81 Highland Ave.)

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, November 18, 6:00-7:00pm: Finance and Facilities Subcommittee Meeting** at the Central Office Conference Room (8 Bonair St., 2nd floor)
- **Monday, November 18, 7:00-8:30pm: Regular School Committee Meeting** at the Central Office Conference Room (8 Bonair St., 2nd floor)
- **Wednesday, November 20, 6:00-7:00pm: Rules Management Subcommittee 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 Playgroups – Session 1, October 7-December 13, 2019.** Somerville parents and caregivers with infants, toddlers and preschool children meet and play in age and language-based groups that gather weekly at the SFLC Center (42 Prescott St.) and the Capuano (150 Glen St.). Drop-in groups are available.
- **SFLC Playgroup Family Talk Story Time.** Celebrate Family Literacy Month at the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative (SFLC) drop-in Playgroup with a special story time featuring children's author Ellen Mayer on Wednesdays, November 13th and 20th, 10:00-10:30am each day at the SFLC Center (42 Prescott St.). Join the SFLC Family Talk Campaign – learn how to make reading fun and ways that you can engage your child in conversations about books.
- **IMPACT: Arts and Conversation Group.** IMPACT (Immigrant Multilingual Parents Art and Conversation Together) is a weekly arts and conversation group for immigrant families with children in the Somerville Public Schools looking to connect with other families in the community. IMPACT meets every Friday, 9:00-11:00am at the SFLC Center (42 Prescott St.). The group is offered in partnership with the Beautiful Stuff Project and with support from Cambridge Health Alliance.
- **Share the Warmth Winter Coat Drive.** With the arrival of winter, the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative Clothing Closet is accepting donations of new or gently used winter clothing to support families in need. Please check the "What's Happening" section of this newsletter for details. Thank you for your support of this effort.

Looking Ahead:

- **Tuesday, November 26: Picture Absent/Retake Day** at the Kennedy School (5 Cherry St.)
- **Wednesday, November 27: Half Day for all students** – Start of Thanksgiving Break. 11:30am dismissal for PK students; noon dismissal for K-12 students
- **Wednesday, November 27, 10:00am: SHS Football Pep Rally** at the Somerville High School Auditorium (81 Highland Ave.)
- **Wednesday, November 27: WSNS PTA-Sponsored Spirit Day – Mustache Day** at the West Somerville Neighborhood School (177 Powder House Blvd.)
- **Wednesday, November 27, 8:45-9:30am: WSNS 1st Grade Foundations Party** at the West Somerville Neighborhood School (177 Powder House Blvd.)
- **Thursday and Friday, November 28 & 29: Thanksgiving Break** – All schools and district offices CLOSED
- **Tuesday, December 3: Picture Retake Day** at the Winter Hill Community Innovation School (115 Sycamore St.)
- **Tuesday, December 3, 8:30am-1:30pm: School Open Houses** at all SPS PK/K-8 schools (Argenziano, Brown, ESCS, Healey, Kennedy, WSNS, WHCIS, Capuano)
- **Wednesday, December 4: WSNS School Picture Re-Take Day** at the West Somerville Neighborhood School (177 Powder House Blvd.)
- **Wednesday, December 4, 8:30am-1:30pm: School Open Houses** at all SPS PK/K-8 schools (Argenziano, Brown, ESCS, Healey, Kennedy, WSNS, WHCIS, Capuano)
- **Wednesday, December 4, 1:00-2:00pm: WSNS K and SMILE trip** to Wheelock Family Theatre

- **Wednesday, December 4, 6:00pm: Families Together Somerville (FTS) Volunteer Informational Meeting** at the Somerville High School modular building (81 Highland Ave.)
- **Thursday, December 5, 8:30am-1:30pm: School Open Houses** at all SPS PK/K-8 schools (Argenziano, Brown, ESCS, Healey, Kennedy, WSNS, WHCIS, Capuano)
- **Thursday, December 5, 5:00-7:30pm: Brown School Parent-Teacher Conferences** (201 Willow Ave.)
- **Thursday, December 5, 5:45-7:30pm: Kennedy Literacy Maker Night, Grades K-3** at the Kennedy School (5 Cherry St.)
- **Friday, December 6, 6:30-8:30pm: PTA Holiday Craft Fair** at the Argenziano School (290 Washington St.)

Community News & Events

Puppet Palooza. The Somerville Arts Council (www.somervilleartscouncil.org) invites you to take one last adventure with Puppet Palooza 2019: Tales from Around the World! Stories have always been a connective thread that brings cultures together. For this series, featured performers bring those stories to life. Puppet Palooza 2019 is a series for free puppet performances in East Somerville, showcasing local, national, and international performing companies. Great for kids and adults and 100% free. The following events will take place at Connexion (149 Broadway).

- Wednesday, Nov. 20, 6:30pm – Tanglewood Marionettes presents “An Arabian Adventure”

Boston International Kids Film Festival. The Boston International Kids Film Festival (BIKFF) invites you to enjoy a series of short films, screenings, and workshops in Somerville this month. Highlights include:

- Saturday, Nov. 16, 10:00am – short films for ages 10 and under at the Somerville Theatre
- Saturday, Nov. 16, 3:30pm – short films for middle schoolers at the Somerville Theatre
- Sunday, Nov. 17, 10:00am – FREE screenings of animated films for ages 10 and under at Lesley University College of Art and Design in Cambridge
- Sunday, Nov. 17, noon – FREE workshops in storyboarding where children can learn how to draw pictures that will ultimately tell a story that becomes a film
- Sunday, Nov. 17, 1:30pm – The Somerville Theatre we will be showing [MICROPLASTIC MADNESS](#), an inspiring documentary on the local and global plastic pollution public health crisis as told through the point of view of 5th graders from Brooklyn, NY. Students from the film will be at the theatre to speak after the screening.

Visit www.bikff.org to learn more about these and other events.

Somerville Community Growing Center Benefit Event at Flatbread Pizza. The Somerville Community Growing Center invites you to a benefit fundraiser at Flatbread Pizza in Davis Square (45 Day Street in Somerville). A portion of all pizza sales on Tuesday, November 19 between 5:00 and 9:00pm will be donated to the Somerville Community Growing Center. Eat in or take it to go! Learn more about this and other upcoming Community Growing Center events at www.thegrowingcenter.org.

Somerville Health and Human Services Flu Vaccines. With cold and flu season upon us, the City of Somerville Health and Human Services is offering free flu vaccines for Somerville residents ages 3 and older (children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian). While there is no charge for vaccinations, attendees are asked to bring an insurance card if available, including Medicaid cards. Upcoming Flu Clinics include:

- Thursday, November 21: Council on Aging / project Soup (165 Broadway), 4:30pm-6:30pm
- Thursday, December 5: Somerville City Hall (93 Highland Ave.), 5:00pm-7:00pm

Somerville Parks & Recreation. Whether you're interested in figure skating lessons, learning about the movements and music of Capoeira Angola (an Afro Brazilian martial art disguised as a dance), a fitness or sports program or clinic, or finding out about swim programs and times, Somerville Parks & Recreation has you covered. Register and learn more about the many Somerville Parks & Recreation programs at: www.somervillerec.com.

Debate Spaces, a local non-profit that teaches students public speaking and debate skills while helping them build their leadership potential, will be running a debate academy again for middle schoolers (6th-8th graders) on Saturday, November 23rd from 10:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., at Suffolk University. Some SPS students attended their last academy in October. Attend and you'll find out what debate is all about through fun and interactive activities. The Academy is taught by the former #1 debater in the U.S. Pizza is included. Students will have fun and get to know kids from all over the Boston area. To enroll, sign up at <https://www.debatespaces.org>. The Academy is \$20/day, though scholarships are available. Have questions? Email: debatespacesboston@gmail.com

City & District Employment Opportunities

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

- [Planner](#), Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development (OSPCD), City of Somerville
- [Community Engagement Specialist/Social Media Manager](#), Communications and Community Engagement Dept., City of Somerville
- [DPW Director of Operations](#), Department of Public Works, City of Somerville
- [2020 Census Complete Count Coord.](#), Communications and Community Engagement Dept., City of Somerville

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

- [Special Education ECIP Autism Paraprofessional](#), Capuano Early Childhood Center, Somerville Public Schools
- [Special Education Lead Teacher](#), Community Schools Afterschool Program, West Somerville Neighborhood School, Somerville Public Schools
- [Middle School Athletic Trainer](#), Athletics Dept., Somerville Public Schools
- [Full-time Lead Teacher, Community Schools Afterschool Program](#), Winter Hill Community Innovation 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."