

CONNECTIONS

A Newsletter from the Somerville Public Schools – September 20, 2019

News & Notes

City Year / Biogen Care Deeply Days of Service at Healey and Kennedy



Volunteers from [Biogen](#), a biotechnology company based in Cambridge, converged at the Healey School last Friday in the first of two [City Year](#) / Biogen Care Deeply Days of Service in our district. The second event takes place Friday, September 20th, at the Kennedy School.

After a rousing welcome from Healey School students and staff, a short kickoff event, and a volunteer rally and warmup, volunteers spent all day improving indoor and outdoor spaces at the Healey. Enhancements included new, colorful benches and bright coats of paint on the back lot outdoor surface where students play four square and kickball. Inside, volunteers hand-painted several

inspirational quotes in the school's entry hall, on staircase landings, in the school cafeteria stage, and in the library. The school's gymnasium got a wonderful dose of special attention to highlight the Healey Hawks pride.

When asked to summarize the transformation, after the closing ceremony Healey School Principal Dr. Mary Ellen Carideo-Cobbs said, "The Biogen / City Year Day of Giving provided our children an opportunity to see and 'feel' the gift of giving one's time to another. The children clearly felt the positive energy a project of this caliber produced and verbalized how lucky and happy they were to have their school selected." First grade teacher Susanne Douglas explained, "The space just looks incredible. I feel like our school now reflects the bright joy that teachers want to instill in our students." Students, several of whom stayed after school Friday to peek at the results, also had rave reviews: "Whoa, this is awesome!"

Welcoming New Staff on *Our Schools, Our City*

Meet some of the new Somerville Public Schools staff, as well as a familiar face now in a new role in our district. Chad Mazza (Interim Asst. Superintendent of Schools), Rebecca Grainger (Superintendent Fellow), Obed Morales (Principal, East Somerville Community School), and John Braga (Asst. Principal, Argenziano) were guests on the first production of *Our Schools, Our City* earlier this month. Watch the show to learn a little bit about each guest, and find out how their professional journeys led them to Somerville. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9orIIDwggBg>

String Fest and Summer Honk Build Music Skills and Community

Songs such as “Eleanor Rigby,” “Oye Como Va,” and Stevie Wonder’s “Superstition” echoed in the Kennedy School hallways and the surrounding neighborhood for two weeks this summer as the Somerville String Fest and Summer Honk groups practiced daily at the school.

Somerville String Fest, led by Program Director Joanne Sadler from Somerville Public Schools, had over 95 music students from all skill levels age 7 to adult playing violin, viola, cello, and bass. There were 10 instructors and 8 high school teaching assistants. In addition to instrument practice time, students attended daily orchestra rehearsals, fiddle class, and classes in music theory, chamber music, improv, and chorus. When asked how the program benefits students, Ms. Sadler explains that it “provides them a space in the summer to make music with friends of all ages, receive instruction from high level teachers, and develop their musical independence and confidence through a variety of musical styles in a relaxed setting.”

Summer Honk, led by Executive Director Kevin Leppmann, had 45-50 performers from 5th grade to adult, including about 30 youth participants. There was a teenage mentor for each type of instrument in the woodwind, brass, and percussion sections. Small groups arranged by instrument practiced each morning. Afterward, on almost every day of camp, the students came together for a parade in the surrounding neighborhood. Star Market was a regular destination, as were Target and other shops and the concourse at Porter Square. Mentor and Honk parent Maren Chiu, a clarinet player, when asked what she liked best about Summer Honk, she said, “I enjoy the community of it and it’s such a great creative outlet.”

At the culminating performance on Friday, August 2, students from String Fest and Summer Honk demonstrated for the community, friends, parents, and family members all that they had learned together. As Joanne Sadler explains, “My favorite part is always the final concert, from the minute it kicks off with the Summer Honk band parading through the audience, when everyone is excited to perform and share everything they have learned with their families.” To learn more about the Somerville Public Schools student music learning opportunities, please visit the music homepage <http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/music>.



Somerville High School Building Project

With the [Somerville High School building project past the half-way point](http://go.somervillema.gov/highschool/), work on the new multi-story building is accelerating while renovations to the old school library, atrium and CTE wings continue. Watch the progress on this exciting project by visiting the project website: <http://go.somervillema.gov/highschool/>. You can get a daily dose of visual updates through the project’s construction camera feed.

What's Happening

International Walk & Roll to School Day – Wednesday, October 2, 2019

Wednesday, October 2nd is International Walk & Roll to School Day. This MassDOT Safe Routes to Schools flagship event encourages students to participate in a healthy and active lifestyle by safely walking or 'rolling' to school. School communities across the Commonwealth will be registering for this event. Connect with a friend or neighbor and be part of the movement.

Annual Corn Shucking Event – Thursday, October 3, 2019

In celebration of National Farm to School Month, Somerville Food & Nutrition Services will be hosting the district's annual Corn Shucking Day on Thursday, October 3, 7:30-8:00am. Students are invited to shuck local corn alongside school staff, community partners, and volunteers. Corn shucking will take place at all elementary schools and Capuano, and farm-fresh corn will be served with school lunch at every school in the district.

Healthy Snacks

Serving healthy snacks to children is important to providing good nutrition and supporting lifelong healthy eating habits that will lead to overall wellness. Snacks play an important role in children's diets. We encourage you to choose snacks from all the food groups to ensure a well-rounded diet. Here are some healthy snack ideas and tips from Somerville Food & Nutrition Services: http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/sites/default/files/Somerville_HealthySnacks_Fall2019.pdf.

Somerville Parks & Recreation Free Boys Basketball Clinics

Somerville Parks & Recreation is offering FREE boys basketball clinics to students in grades 4-9. Clinics are held Wednesday evenings at the Winter Hill Community Innovation School (115 Sycamore), and are conducted by Somerville High School Boys Basketball staff and Somerville Tradition Basketball staff. Clinics will be held on the following dates:

- Wednesday, 9/18: Grades 4-6 from 6:00-7:30pm; Grades 7-9 from 7:30-9:00pm
- Wednesday, 9/25: No Clinics
- Wednesday, 10/2: Grades 4-6 from 6:00-7:30pm; Grades 7-9 from 7:30-9:00pm
- Wednesday, 10/9: Grades 4-6 from 6:00-7:30pm; Grades 7-9 from 7:30-9:00pm
- Wednesday, 10/16: Grades 4-6 from 6:00-7:30pm; Grades 7-9 from 7:30-9:00pm
- Wednesday, 10/23: Grades 4-6 from 6:00-7:30pm; Grades 7-9 from 7:30-9:00pm
- Wednesday, 10/30: Grades 4-6 from 6:00-7:30pm; Grades 7-9 from 7:30-9:00pm

Learn more about the many Somerville Parks & Recreation programs at: www.somervillerec.com.

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.

Tuesday, September 24, 8:30-9:30am: Coffee Hour @ the Kennedy School (5 Cherry St.)

Tuesday, September 24, 10:00-11:30am: Early Childhood Advisory Council Meeting @ the SFLC Center (42 Prescott St.)

Wednesday, September 25, 5:00-6:30pm: WSNS School Council Meeting @ the West Somerville Neighborhood School, Room 205 (177 Powder House Blvd.)

Wednesday, September 25, 5:00-7:30pm: Winter Hill Community Innovation School Back-to-School Night (115 Sycamore St.)

Wednesday, September 25, 6:00-8:00pm: SHS School Improvement Council Meeting @ Somerville High School, Room 230 (81 Highland Ave.)

Thursday, September 26, 7:00-8:00am: SHS College Coffee Talk: Parents of First Gen Students @ Somerville High School College & Career Office, Room 220 (81 Highland Ave.)

Thursday, September 26, 3:00-4:00pm: SHS College Coffee Talk: Parents of First Gen Students @ Somerville High School College & Career Office, Room 220 (81 Highland Ave.)

Thursday, September 26, 5:00-7:30pm: Capuano Back-to-School Night @ the Capuano EC Center (150 Glen St.)

Thursday, September 26, 6:00-7:30pm: ESCS PTA Board Meeting @ East Somerville Community School (50 Cross St.)

Friday, September 27, 12:00-1:30pm: English Learners Parent Advisory Council mtg. @ the SFLC Center (42 Prescott St.)

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, September 23, 6:00-7:00pm: Finance and Facilities Subcommittee Meeting at the 3rd Floor Conference Room – City Hall (93 Highland Ave.)

Monday, September 23, 6:00-7:00pm: Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting at the City Council Chambers – City Hall (93 Highland Ave.)

Monday, September 23, 7:00-8:30pm: Regular School Committee Meeting at the City Council Chambers – City Hall (93 Highland Ave.)

Wednesday, September 25, 7:00-8:00pm: School Committee Meeting for Long Range Planning at the Central Office Main 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 Clothing Closet:** Open on Thursdays, 12:00-3:00pm @ SFLC Center, 42 Prescott St.
- **Early Childhood Advisory Council Mtg.:** Tuesday, September 24, 10:00-11:30am @ SFLC Center, 42 Prescott St.
- **English Learners Parent Advisory Council:** Friday, September 27, 12:00-1:30pm @ SFLC Center, 42 Prescott St.

Looking Ahead:

Tuesday, October 1: SHS Winter Sports Registration Opens @ Somerville High School (81 Highland Ave.)

Wednesday, October 2: Half-Day Wednesday for PK-8 students (PK dismissed at 11:30am; K-8 dismissed at noon)

Wednesday, October 2: Walk to School Day @ the Brown School (201 Willow Ave.)

Wednesday, October 2: Walk & Bike to School Day @ the Kennedy School (5 Cherry St.)

Thursday, October 3, 7:30-8:00am: Corn Shucking Day @ Capuano and all SPS elementary schools

Friday, October 4: Brown School Heritage Hoedown Potluck @ the Brown School (201 Willow Ave.)

Community News & Events

Citizen Schools National Teaching Fellowship. Citizen Schools is currently hiring for National Teaching Fellowship, a two-year service opportunity to work with Somerville middle school students, serve local communities and develop your leadership, communication and problem-solving skills. As a Teaching Fellow, you help Citizen Schools to provide students with access to hands-on learning, access to more caring adults (both during the day and after school), and opportunities to learn about themselves and others. **Are you ready to make a difference in your life and the lives of Somerville students?** Find out more and apply here: <https://www.citizenschools.org/national-teaching-fellowship>.

Somerville Fluff Festival. Join the celebration of the 102nd anniversary of Fluff, invented in Somerville's Union Square in 1917 by Archibald Query. The 14th annual What the Fluff Festival will feature musical performances, a cooking contest, Fluff-themed games, activities, antics and fun for every age, and Fluff treats of every sort. Festival takes place **Saturday, September 21, 3:00-7:00pm** at Somerville's Union Square. Rain date is Sunday, September 22. For more information, visit www.flufffestival.com.

Somerville Growing Center. Mark your calendars for a weekend of fun at the Somerville Community Growing Center on September 28-29, 22 Vinal Ave., Somerville. Learn more about the following and other upcoming events at the Growing Center by visiting www.thegrowingcenter.org.

- **A Gathering of Fairies: Saturday, September 28, 2:00-4:00 pm.** Build a fairy house, listen to a fairy story, decorate a magic fairy wand, face painting, a fairy-themed raffle and more. Donations encouraged to support the Growing Center - but not required.
- **Harvest Festival: Sunday, September 29, 2:30-5:00 pm.** Harvest activities and games, pumpkin decorating, and a celebration of nature's bounty. Free and open to all.

SPL's Girls Who Code Club. Calling all middle school girls! The fall session of the Somerville Public Library's Girls Who Code club gets underway October 1. Facilitated by volunteers from the tech community, girls join a sisterhood of supportive peers as they learn coding to create a project they care about. Meets every Tuesday from 6:30-8pm for 10 weeks at the Central Library (79 Highland Ave). For more information and to register, contact Karen Stevens at kstevens@minlib.net.

Bike Your City with Bluebikes. Shape Up Somerville, the Somerville Bicycle Committee, Groundwork Somerville, and Bluebikes invite students 16 years or older to practice biking your city safely by joining them for a Bluebikes group ride from Somerville High School to Clarendon Busway on Wednesday, September 25th. Bluebikes cannot be rented to riders under 16, and all riders must sign a waiver. If under 18, the waiver must also be signed by the rider's parent/guardian. Learn more and register for this free event at: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/bike-your-city-with-bluebikes-tickets-70927609389>.

Somerville Arts Council LCC Grants. The Local Cultural Council (LCC) grant cycle for 2020 is now open! Funding is available for individuals, schools, community groups, and non-profit organizations in the fields of dance, film/video, literature, theater, music, visual arts, interrelated media, and cultural heritage. Grants can be used for youth programs, arts events, exhibitions, public concerts, and more. Application deadline is October 15. To learn more about the LCC application process, review the guidelines at: <https://somervilleartscouncil.org/grants>. A final workshop will be offered on Monday, September 23, 6:00-7:30pm at Mudflat Pottery School (81 Broadway).

Boston Junior Derby. New session starts September 24, 2019. Open to all girls or non-binary kids ages 7-17. Roller skaters of all skill levels welcome. Boston Junior Derby trains beginner and advanced skaters to have the skills and safety necessary for competing at the Junior roller derby level. Practices are in Lynn, MA. For more information, contact bjdreg@gmail.com.

Writer's Den. Writers' Den is a free weekly evening 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. With Co-Directors Alan Ball, Cara Feinberg, and Allyson Sherlock, as well as guest writers and authors. All welcome, parent/guardian permission required. Wednesdays starting September 18 (except vacation weeks or if inclement weather closes schools), 6:00-8:00pm at the Arthur D. Healey School.

City & District Employment Opportunities

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

- [Administrative Assistant](#), Planning and Zoning Dept., City of Somerville
- [Deputy Treasurer](#), Treasurer/Collector Dept., City of Somerville
- [Life Guards/Swim Instructor](#), Parks and Recreation Dept., City of Somerville
- [Community Engagement Specialist](#), 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.

- [FT Lead Teacher, Community Schools Afterschool Program](#), Winter Hill Community Innovation School, SPS
- [Senior Clerk](#), Somerville High School, Somerville Public Schools
- [Social Worker](#), Community Schools Afterschool Program, Somerville Public Schools
- [Technology Specialist/Trainer](#), 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."