

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Monday, June 26, 2023 - Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m. – City Hall Chambers

Members present: Ms. Krepchin, Dr. Ackman, Ms. Barish, Ms. Dion, Mr. Green, Ms. Pitone, Dr. Phillips, Mayor Ballantyne, President Ewen-Campen

Members Absent:

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 with a moment of silence, followed by a salute to the flag of the United States of America. Chair Green asked Superintendent Curley to call the roll, results of which were as follows: **PRESENT – 9** – Dr. Phillips, Ms. Krepchin, President Ewen-Campen, Mayor Ballantyne, Chair Green, Ms. Barish, Ms. Pitone, Dr. Ackman and Ms. Dion. **ABSENT – 0**

Chair Green asked interpreters to introduce themselves:

Erika Garcia - Spanish

Ben Cruz - Portuguese

Gina Miranda - Haitian Creole

II. NEW BUSINESS (Item A Taken out of Order)

A. Ratification of Dr. Carmona’s Contract as Incoming Superintendent of SPS (Mr. Green)

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Ackman, seconded by Dr. Phillips, to authorize Chair Green to sign Dr. Carmona’s contract for the July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2026 term.

The motion was approved unanimously via voice call vote.

Dr. Carmona took the time to say some remarks. Expressed his gratitude to the school committee for entrusting him with the stewardship of the Somerville School District. Deeply humbled and incredibly determined to ensure that we unite as a community to prioritize the wellbeing of our students, families and staff. It is crucial to place an emphasis on equity and excellence, workforce diversity, holistic education, 21st century learning in our schools. Achieving these goals will require our utmost dedication, innovative thinking and unwavering collective commitment Thank you for this amazing opportunity.

III. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chair Green read the public comment regulations and asked those who signed up, to comment at this time. There were 9 people signed up to comment; each person was given 2 minutes to comment. The majority to comment did so in support of the renovation to the WHCIS and opposed to ending looping at the Healey School.

- Will B. – Spoke in support of rebuilding Winter Hill in its current location to best serve the school’s mission and value to the existing community.
- Aili C-Field – Emphasized the need for there to be clear communication directly with parents on issues and decisions related to the school.
- Elizabeth S-Clock – Spoke in support of keeping the Winter Hill at its existing site. Also spoke in support of maintaining looping at the Healey. Emphasized that looping is an extraordinary gift for teachers and for students, and urged that looping not be given up without a thoughtful and thorough examination of its benefits.
- Emily L. – Requested greater transparency about how and why the decision to end looping at the Healey was made and asked if the decision can be paused for a year? Also inquired how parents will be informed about the change? As a neighbor to the Winter Hill, also asked for rebuilding a safe community innovation school at its current site.
- Jamie O. – Echoed supporting rebuilding of Winter Hill school in its current location. Question – now that engineering assessment continuing on through the summer, will the results of the assessment be included in the

feasibility study or will the building need to be re-assessed, which would take more time?

- Meredith B. – Noted that she has been closely following meetings and media coverage about future of the Winter Hill school. Concerned about some of the options that the city seems to be pursuing and the alarming lack of transparency and the consideration of those options, and whether the educational and psychosocial needs of students are being taken into account. Request to School Committee is to be as proactive as possible and use all collective expertise to help define and communicate what the requirements for a future school facility should be from an appropriately nuanced educational experience.
- Emily H. – Asked for transparency, and to keep the Winter Hill building in the place where it is. Noted that it is their community school, and they know as a community what they need for their kids.
- Shawna P. – Asked why city does not require developers to build schools. Emphasized need to prioritize children and neighborhoods. Emphasized that the Winter Hill community does not want to rebuild anywhere other than the school's current location.
- Carol V. – Expressed disappointment that plan for SY24 does not keep school community together, but understands that finding space to accommodate all students together might not have been possible. Hopes that steps are taken to ensure that current WH students can safely get to their new locations. In long term, expressed strong support for taking whatever action is necessary to keep school site at 115 Sycamore Street as a community school.

IV. AWARDS AND CITATIONS

Nomi Davidson – SFLC Director Retirement

Ruth Santos, Regina Bertholdo and Maura Mendoza were in attendance to present Ms. Davidson with a Resolution on behalf of the School Committee. Other community members and City partners also attended the meeting in celebration of Ms. Davidson's long leadership role in the district and her retirement. Ms. Santos read the resolution followed by congratulatory comments by several of her staff, School Committee members, Mr. Mazza and Dr. Curley.

Nomi Davidson

WHEREAS, Ms. Nomi Davidson grew up in Chicago and began her career in Early Childhood in Somerville in 1975; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Davidson holds a BA in Sociology and Education from the University of Michigan, an M.Ed in Early Childhood Education from the Antioch University of Open Education, and a Master of Social Work from Boston University; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Davidson became the Assistant Director of the Even Start Family Literacy Program in the Somerville Public Schools in 1990; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Davidson recognized the need for multilingual and multicultural staff to support Early Childhood Programs and reflect the faces of Somerville's changing population in the early 1990's; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Davidson created the Somerville Partnerships for Children to provide access to childcare in 1996 supported by a \$1 million grant; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Davidson consolidated grant funding streams for the Partnerships for Children, the Somerville Family Network, and the Parent Child Home program to create the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative in 2009; and

WHEREAS, the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative has provided linguistically accessible and culturally competent programming and services for Somerville families since 2009; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Davidson has demonstrated exceptional commitment to ensuring equitable access to those programs and services; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Davidson was an adjunct professor at Tufts University teaching classes in "Collaborations for Children's School Success,"; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Davidson believes deeply in the strength of collaboration and the importance of relationship building as evidenced by her close connection to community partners; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Davidson has shown exceptional commitment to the development of cross-sector support for the well-being of children and families; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Davidson's ability to identify individual strengths and create connections has enhanced professional pathways for countless staff and sparked many initiatives throughout the community; and

WHEREAS, Ms. Davidson implemented outstanding models of distributive leadership and reflective practice throughout SFLC; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Somerville School Committee, publicly and proudly, expresses its deepest gratitude for her leadership and vision in guiding our city's schools and the safety of our students, and wishes her a long, happy, and healthy retirement with her family; and be it further; AND FURTHER

RESOLVED: That this Resolution be recorded in the minutes of tonight's meeting, and that a framed copy be presented to Ms. Nomi Davidson.

Somerville School Committee

Chair Andre Green, Vice Chair Ilana Krepchin, Emily Ackman, Sarah Phillips, Laura Pitone, Ellenor Barish, Sara Dion, Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, City Council President Ben Ewen-Campen, Interim Superintendent Jeff Curley

Dr. Phillips, who led the effort to draft a resolution for Dr. Curley, read the resolution to the community and committee members. Followed by remarks from all School Committee members.

Dr. Jeffrey J. Curley

WHEREAS, Dr. Jeff Curley joined the Somerville Public Schools during SY2017-18 as a Superintendent Fellow from the Harvard Graduate School of Education and served as Chief of Staff for four years before becoming Interim Superintendent during SY2022-23; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Curley led the expansion of district-wide afterschool access through strategic partnerships, SPS's response to COVID-19 mitigation, served on Somerville's Children's Cabinet and as the liaison to the School Committee's Rules Subcommittee before stepping in to ensure a smooth transition from one Superintendent to another; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Curley's strong strategic thinking, moral compass, humility, compassion, and determination to lead with joy enabled the district to make significant progress on key priorities while filling critical staff roles and securing a historic budget increase for the public schools as the interim district leader; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Curley's crisis management skills enabled Somerville Public Schools to withstand the emergency closure of the Winter Hill Community Innovation School and successfully re-locate students and staff to new buildings for the last two weeks of the school year, earning high praise from the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Curley's adaptive leadership skills are acknowledged and respected by elected officials, district leaders, the Somerville Educators Union, educators, families, and students alike; and

WHEREAS Dr. Curley may be the only Somerville Superintendent ever to be immortalized in song-- "No one truly understands Somerville's unique 'flavor' except the folks here—let's hire the interim guy"—and earned the nickname "Super Curley" from Mayor Ballantyne;

NOW THEREFORE; be it

RESOLVED: That the Somerville School Committee publicly and proudly, expresses its deepest gratitude for Dr. Curley's service to Somerville's educators, students, and families and his leadership guiding the Somerville Public Schools; AND FURTHER

RESOLVED: That this Resolution be recorded in the minutes of tonight's meeting, and that a framed copy be presented to Interim Superintendent Dr. Jeff "Super Curley" Curley.

Somerville School Committee

Chair Andre Green, Vice Chair Chair Ilana Krepchin, Sarah Phillips, Emily Ackman, Laura Pitone, Ellenor Barish, Sara Dion, Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, City Council President Ben Ewen-Campen, Interim Superintendent Jeff Curley

Ms. Krepchin then read a resolution she drafted for Mr. Green, followed by remarks from Committee members, including Mayor Ballantyne and President Ewen-Campen.

Andre Green

WHEREAS, Mr. Andre Green has served as Chair of the Somerville School Committee from January 2021 until June of 2023; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Green had previously served as Chair from January 2018 until January 2019; and

WHEREAS, during this term as chair, Mr. Green created and chaired the Special Policing Subcommittee; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Green led the School Committee through two Superintendent searches, chairing the Screening Committee for the second; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Green has tirelessly guided the Somerville School Committee to always maintain focus on what is in the best interest of the students of Somerville Public Schools; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Green has been a steadfast advocate for equity - with respect to our students as well as Somerville Public School staff; and

WHEREAS during Mr. Green's tenure as Chair, the Somerville School Committee negotiated several new contracts which established groundbreaking paid parental leave benefits for Somerville Public School employees;

NOW THEREFORE; be it

RESOLVED: That the Somerville School Committee publicly and proudly, expresses its deepest gratitude for Mr. Green's efforts and service to Somerville's educators, students, and families; AND FURTHER

RESOLVED: That this well-earned Resolution be recorded in the minutes of tonight's meeting, and that a framed copy be presented to Mr. Green.

Somerville School Committee

Chair Andre Green, Vice Chair Ilana Krepchin, Emily Ackman, Sarah Phillips, Laura Pitone, Ellenor Barish, Sara Dion, Mayor Katjana Ballantyne, City Council President Ben Ewen-Campen, Interim Superintendent Jeff Curley

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Report

- New Administrative Staff Introductions

There were 8 new administrators present to be introduced to the public and the committee, including incoming Superintendent Rubén Carmona. Chair Green introduced Dr. Carmona before Dr. Curley and Mr. Mazza took a moment to share a short blurb about each of the other new administrators:

Rubén Carmona	Superintendent of Schools	Central Office
Ildefonso Arellano	Director of Special Education	Special Education

Berenice Mace-Diaz	ESCS Principal	ESCS
Andre Pelletier	WSNS Principal	WSNS
Ruth Santos	SFLC Director	SFLC
Gladys Valle	MLE Assistant Director	MLE
Stephanie Bielagus	MLE Department Chair at SHS	MLE
Sabrina Caprigno	Payroll Manager	Payroll

After the formal introductions, the committee took a 10-minute recess at 8:40 p.m. to congratulate new administrators and resolution recipients.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- May 22, 2023
- June 12, 2023

Tabled.

VII. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Report

- WHCIS Facilities Update

Dr. Curley shared an update on where things are with the Winter Hill Community Innovation School and what the next steps are.

Ms. Pitone asked if there is a date of when the webpage with updates of the WHCIS will be launched.

Mayor – Hopefully by the end of this week?

Ms. Dion- Where will the district staff that was housed at the Edgerly go? Will they work remote?

Mayor- There isn't any space available at the moment. This is still developing and we are gathering information. The number one priority right now are the schools.

Ms. Pitone asked at what point will the committee be given an updated timeline.

Mayor- there is a general timeline to follow, some dates have shifted, specifically for the RFP's. As changes happen, the committee will be updated. They are working hard to expedite as much as possible.

Dr. Curley added...Meeting on a weekly basis on the K-8 master plan, looking granularly at trends of enrollment in different programs, at different schools. Talking with principals to see what their challenges are with space at the school level and look at this holistically at the district level. This is a very complicated situation simply to rebuild the school, but to do it within the context of moving enrollment, growth of certain programming, etc. We are looking at all of those things really deeply and will inform the feasibility study and the size of the project. That work has been moving along at a good pace and it makes sense that as soon as there's a right point to share with the committee, we should come back and give that update.

Ms. Barish – Noted that a resolution was passed at the last meeting that called for a resolution to this issue by July 15th. She wanted to thank the city and school administration for working diligently to find a solution.

Dr. Curley commented that it has been a collaborative effort by city staff and the school/district administration. He noted that Ms. Spencer, Mr. Raiche and Melissa Woods have all been present at the Edgerly to walk the building and help find a solution.

Dr. Curley then continued his report by updating the committee on where things are with looping at the Healey School. Dr. Curley first took the time to apologize to parents for how the change was communicated and the lack of transparency. He added that the decision should have involved parent voice. He announced that on Wednesday at 6:30p.m. there will be a community meeting for the Healey, where Principal Cobbs and Assistant Principal Lartey will share some more information on why the decision was made. Dr. Curley took the time to share with the committee that there was a staff

survey that informed the decision; roughly two thirds of staff at the Healey voted against the continuation of looping, only about 10% of the staff were in support of continuing looping.

He announced that following Dr. Cobbs' resignation, a committee quickly came together to help the process of hiring a new Principal. There is a good pool of candidates for the Healey Principal position and Dr. Carmona will be sharing the decision regarding the status of that search in the near future.

Chair Green added that there are a lot of decisions that aren't actively under the purview of the School Committee, and he noted is that the lack of transparency also speaks to a breakdown in the systems of the School Site Council. He suggested that one of the School Committee's priorities for next year should be that the School Site Councils are working at their best capacity so these types of processes and procedures are not short circuited in the future.

Ms. Barish was delighted to hear the process for a new Healey Principal hire is on the way. She appreciated Chair Green's comments concerning the School Committee's role in the decision making and admitted that she was not sure how a decision like this should be made.

Ms. Pitone expressed her frustration for the process followed to make this decision. She felt family voices were silenced and staff voices were prioritized.

Mayor Ballantyne echoed Ms. Pitone's comments. Her child attended and benefited from the looping at the Healey School. She suggested including the veteran teachers who have been doing looping for years in the conversation for historical knowledge and context.

Dr. Ackman stated that she sees this as a failure from management and looks forward to the conversation and solution.

B. Personnel Report

- June 2023

There were no new retirements to be shared.

VIII. REPORTS OF SUBCOMMITTEES

A. School Committee Meeting for Long Range Planning Subcommittee: May 24, 2023 (Mr. Green)
Tabled.

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Phillips, seconded by Dr. Ackman, to accept all the reports listed below

B. School Committee Meeting for Educational Programs and Instruction subcommittee: May 24, 2023 (Dr. Ackman)

May, 2023 - Education Programs Minutes

ATTENDANCE: Ackman, Pitone, Dion

PRESENTERS: Uri Hurel & Courtney Gosselin

ATTENDEES: Jenna DiNovis, Katie Starbuck, Matthew Burch, Paula O'Sullivan, Sidd Srivastava, Jessica Boston Davis

Dr. Ackman called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm

Mr. Mazza introduced Mr. Hurel & Ms. Gosselin

Mr. Hurel presented on the literacy curriculum.

"I am looking to dispel some myths about our curriculum.

- We are not using a balanced literacy model. We have not been using balanced literacy for at least 5 years. We are aligned to current research, using Foundations, but we always have room to grow.
- We do not use 'triple Q-ing' that people may have heard in the Sold A Story podcast.
- We are not using pandemic-era curricula that were developed for online learning during the pandemic.

There are no easy answers. This takes a lot of pieces together in order to be successful."

Mr. Hurel then shared a document that he created that is on the district's website.

https://somerville.k12.ma.us/sites/default/files/CIA_SPS%20Elements%20of%20Successful%20Reading%20Instruction%20.docx.pdf

Ms. Gosselin talks about Winter Hill.

Schedule matters and right people in right places.

Teachers have embraced and followed the curriculum and work with the coaches. Students get really good Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 instruction. Supports are formally in place through the MTSS process. Reading data is showing improvement.

We plan to extend successes in the early grade by extending the current literacy model to upper grades.

Mr. Hurel notified the committee that the Illustrative Math curriculum has been chosen as the K-5 math curriculum for Somerville Public Schools. PD and training on this new curriculum will begin in the upcoming school year.

Questions:

Ms. Pitone: *Are we doing this with fidelity district-wide? Is every educator following these guides?*

Mr. Hurel: We are working to make sure that principals are on-board to build consistency across the district through Assess & Reteach meetings.

What do you mean when you say "the curriculum?"

Mr. Hurel: We keep everything on a Google Drive so that it is all linked

How do we know if teachers are using the curriculum (how are they held accountable)?

Mr. Hurel:

- We would have meetings with teachers using their own data. Students who need the most support. Securing subs and using them with fidelity solely for Assess & Reteach meetings.
- Building Tier 1 strategies is crucial.
- Finding ways to maximize instruction during the class day, A&R meetings, and coaching.

What are the areas of improvement?

Mr. Hurel:

- Middle grades
- Language supports
- Diversifying text
- Small group instruction
- Communication – what should a high quality literacy curriculum look like at all levels

When there isn't a purchased curriculum how do you create credibility within the community?

Mr. Hurel:

- We need to be expanding our reach through social media

With no further questions, Dr. Ackman adjourned the meeting at 7:26 pm

C. School Committee Meeting for Rules management Subcommittee Meeting : June 12,2023 (Ms. Barish)

Rules Management Subcommittee

June 12, 2023

This meeting was held in person at City Council Chambers. Subcommittee members Ellenor Barish, Sara Dion, and Sarah Phillips were present as well as Susana Hernandez Morgan and Nancy Holmes. Attorney Paige Tobin attended virtually via Zoom. There was one person in the audience. Ms. Barish called the meeting to order at 5:33 pm. There were four items on the agenda.

1. Approve Notes from May meeting

Sara Dion moved to approve the notes from the May meeting. Sarah Phillips seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Barish took items 3 and 4 out of order.

3. File JIC - Student Discipline

At the last meeting of the Rules Subcommittee, Ms. Tobin was asked to draft a broad discipline policy that would refer the reader to student handbooks for more detailed information. She provided a draft of a Student Conduct policy based on the MASC reference policy and incorporating elements of Somerville's mission to make it more reflective of Somerville's culture. The policy focuses on supports and structures to engage students in learning. Ms. Tobin explained that an advantage to this approach is that the process of writing the handbooks involves input from stakeholders including students. Additionally, School Committee approves the handbooks. Rules will request feedback from district staff including Assistant Superintendent of Operations Chad Mazza, Director of Student Services Elizabeth Doncaster, and SHS Principal Alicia Kersten and will revisit this draft policy when Rules reconvenes in September.

4. Policing Subcommittee Recommendations

Ms. Tobin provided a memo addressing the Policing Subcommittee recommendations. In that memo she explained that state law prohibits School Committees from approving MOUs governing SROs. School Committees are permitted to review such an MOU and provide input to the Superintendent regarding the contents of the MOU, but it is strictly within the authority of the Superintendent to approve the MOU.

Ms. Tobin also addressed the recommendation that School Committee not fund police programming in schools, indicating that School Committee members can vote to include police programming in the district budget (or not) on an annual basis but that a School Committee cannot create a policy restricting this power for a future School Committee. Furthermore, the statute is clear that an SRO MOU is subject to appropriations. That funding could come from the district budget or from the city if the School Committee does not include such funding in the district's budget.

While the School Committee could write a policy about police activity in schools, Ms. Tobin advised against it, expressing concern that any contradiction of state law would be highly problematic and might put district staff at legal risk.

2. Enrollment

Nancy Holmes represented the Enrollment Office at the meeting. She provided some background about how enrollment happens in SPS. Database preparation begins in November. Enrollment opens in January for the following school year's PreK and K students. While the K lottery takes into consideration sibling enrollment and proximity school, the PreK lottery does not. In both cases, students with special programming needs are placed accordingly rather than being put in the lottery. Parents were notified of placements on March 20 this year - about a month earlier than in past years. Students in upper grades are placed from late May into early June with MLE and Special Education transfers being placed first, then intra-district transfers, and finally students new to the district.

When asked about challenges the Enrollment Office hears about from parents, Ms. Holmes noted the lack of sibling preference for PreK. She explained that because there is only one PreK at the PreK-8 schools, there often isn't space for all of the siblings in a given cohort. Additionally, the Brown School doesn't have a PreK classroom. Ms. Holmes also said that even though the online registration simplifies the process, Enrollment Office staff miss the opportunity to connect with families.

While we have an Enrollment Study from Flow Analytics, the lack of clarity on the futures of the Winter Hill Community Innovation School building and the Brown School building makes it difficult to make any changes to the enrollment process at this time. That said, the proximity school zones have not been updated since the Powderhouse School closed. Lots of development has happened in the meantime, and lots more is anticipated. Dr. Hernandez Morgan noted that it will be important to track actual enrollment carefully so that we have a clear sense of how the Flow Analytics projections are tracking.

With no further items on the agenda, the meeting was adjourned at 6:22 pm.

Documents used:

File_ JCA - Controlled Choice Student Assignment Plan

File_ JCA-E1 - Assignment of Students to Schools - Non-Residents

MASC Reference File_ JIC - Student Discipline

D. School Committee Meeting for Finance and Facilities Subcommittee Meeting: June 20, 2023 (Ms. Krepchin)

Finance and Facilities Subcommittee Meeting June 20th, 2023 Via Remote Participation **Members Present:**

Ilana Krepchin, Emily Ackman and Sarah Phillips

Also in Attendance: Director of Finance Fran Gorski

Audience Members: There was 1 audience member

Ilana Krepchin called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm

There were 3 items on the agenda -

Purchasing overview - included as part of the packet is a 77 page purchasing guideline. Working on a smaller summary to share with administrators in the fall. It is guided by Mass general laws. Anything between \$5000-\$10000 requires a purchasing agreement. Between \$10,000-\$50,000 needs 3 written quotes. Over \$100,000 has to go out for bid. When ordering books, for example, as required by the city, we need either a quote or a shopping cart. Could we do this more efficiently? Will talk to the city.

Year to Date Spending - fiscal year ends June 30th, but there are a few weeks with some transactions.

Projecting to end the year on budget. SC - related to Superintendent search. Facilities - driven by the covid tests purchased early in the year (we didn't have external funds for this anymore), Transportation - rising costs in general, particularly for homeless students. School health services - contracts that we had earlier in the year.

Library - purchased for next year. SPED - we prepaid tuition, over \$1 million. Next year it will probably go back to about \$250,000 that we are able to prepay. There is payroll and some stipends that still need to be paid.

May Bill Rolls - We've had a hard time hiring for a payroll position, we used an agency. Greater Boston Breakthrough - one of our biggest out of school time programming. We have two trailers at Dilboy. We might need them for some of the work and moves happening over the summer. Expanded restorative justice. Youth guidance is the becoming a man program at the Healey. School Health - physician services? What is that about? Mr. Gorski will research and get back to the subcommittee. Motion to approve the bill rolls by Dr. Phillips, seconded by Dr. Ackman. Passed unanimously.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Submitted by Ilana Krepchin, Chair, Finance and Facilities Subcommittee

E. School Committee Meeting for Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee: June 22, 2023 (Dr. Ackman)

Ed Programs: June 22, 2023

Attendance: Laura Pitone & Elizabeth Doncaster

Called to order at 1:04 pm

Dr. Ackman opened the meeting by welcoming Elizabeth (Liz) Doncaster, Director of Student Services to present on district-wide Social Emotional Learning (SEL) efforts in Somerville Public Schools.

Director Doncaster presented.

District-wide, students who need SEL support can access:

- Counselor Educator
- Adjustment Counselor
 - o Both in special education and general education

- Mediator
- Prevention & intervention specialist
- Supervisor of Attendance
- Dean of Students
- Social worker
 - o Either school-based or district-wide

Director Doncaster showed data on social work services by school and then explained how these data will inform where the district will place social workers for the 2023-24 School Year. She noted that social workers saw 484 students during this school year. Two social workers are bilingual in Spanish & English. Due to shifts in district policy that intend to keep kids in school, out of school suspensions are down, but in-school suspensions are up. She noted that SPS is going to keep collecting data each year to determine trends in mental health supports. Each school will be able to use their own data for planning purposes.

Director Doncaster shifted to showing numbers of students served by embedded counselors.

Member Pitone asked: *Who gets a social worker vs. embedded counseling?*

Director Doncaster: Embedded counseling is once a week standing counseling for students who need that support. Social workers at the school, can offer more types of, and opportunities for, supports to students, and can connect families with wraparound services. We have embedded counselors who speak Portuguese and we could not find social workers who speak Portuguese to hire, so that is a benefit as well.

Director Doncaster then showed data on Mediation, which happens in every school across the district, and noted that this year there were 454 cases for mediation, all which involve at least two students.

Director Doncaster moved on to presenting on the history of SEL in SPS and goals for the future.

- AI's Pals
- 2nd Step
- Principals chose their own PBIS about 8 years ago
 - o Restorative Justice
 - o Open Circle
 - o Responsive Classroom

District-wide, the SEL development model has the goal of integrating restorative justice practices into daily practice for all students (e.g. using circles). This serves as a Tier 1 intervention, which is building SEL skills.

Member Pitone: *What is the implementation timeline? Also, will all staff be trained?*

Director Doncaster: We are looking to have a 3-year rollout. Suffolk University is training SPS with a train-the-trainer model. SPS staff can get a restorative justice certificate that will allow them to train colleagues in restorative justice practices. This is part of building towards sustainability.

Member Pitone: *I heard that we are revisiting 2nd step?*

Director Doncaster: The content alignment team was created – we sent out a survey – 89 teachers responded. 65% were positive about 2nd step and 35% felt negatively – and gave honest reasons as to why they didn't use it. In searching for a new SEL curriculum, the content alignment team looked for an evidence-based CASEL aligned framework that could be used throughout the day. Solid parent communication component and restorative justice practices were also required. They landed on the updated 2nd step program because it fit all the pieces the content alignment team were seeking. The 2nd Step company is piloting 9-12 curriculum which should be available for the 23-24 academic year. Because the new 2nd step program is online, it's constantly being adapted based on teacher feedback. Somerville piloted in 22-23 and will start with early adaptor teachers for 23-24 (they will have to be restorative justice trained) school year.

Member Pitone: *What will be the sustainable model of training?*

Director Doncaster: The training is online. There is a k-5 and a 6-8 training. New teachers will have a 60-minute online training that is available to them any time of year.

Member Pitone: *How do we evaluate fidelity to the model?*

Director Doncaster: I am hoping the district will hire a SEL Coach and stipend a teacher at each school who serves as a resource for teachers who need 2nd step support within each building. Teachers have requested an SEL time-block. I suggest that as part of observations & evaluations, one of the observations should happen in the SEL block.

Member Pitone: *How are you including HR for onboarding and support?*

Director Doncaster: I have been working with Karen Woods (HR/evaluation) and Chris Glynn (PD). We can use the academic content area evaluations as a model for SEL.

Ackman: *So we're modeling on a curriculum coaching model?*

Doncaster: We have math coaches, we have ELA coaches, we need SEL coaches.

Meeting adjourned at 2:06 pm

IX. NEW BUSINESS

B. School Building Maintenance and Facilities Committee Report (Ms. Pitone)

Ms. Pitone briefly read the Building maintenance and facilities report

To: Somerville School Committee

From: Laura Pitone, Ward 5 SC Representative and Co-Chair of Joint School Committee and City Council Committee on School Building Maintenance

Regarding: Summary Report on first meetings of the Joint Committee (February 1st 2023, May 1st 2023)

The School Committee members: Laura Pitone, Co-Chair, Sara Dion, Vice-Chair and Emily Ackman. The City Council Members: Beatriz Gomez-Mouakad, Co-Chair, Lance Davis and Jesse Clingan. SPS: Chad Mazza, SPS Assistant Superintendent for Operations. Meetings included City representatives such as Jill Latham Director of DPW, Rich Raiche Director of Infrastructure and Asset Management (IAM), and Mark Hamel, Superintendent of School Buildings (DPW).

Status of Committee:

Although this committee has representatives of both the School Committee and the City Council and is called a "joint meeting", it is a City Council meeting chaired by Ward 5 City Councilor Beatriz Gómez-Mouakad. Therefore, all minutes of the meetings will be posted on the Somerville Legistar website.

https://somervillema.legistar.com/DepartmentDetail.aspx?ID=48510&GUID=CB507A56-F81B-4_205-B374-EA318100D9D8&Search=

HVAC Assessment and Upgrades

- Kennedy temporary chillers are up and running. HVAC Construction documentation is complete and final work planned to be done by Spring 2024.
- Progress continues on planned assessment and upgrades of the Healey and West Somerville Neighborhood school HVAC Systems, including construction document completion and out to bid in summer 2023
- Next two schools scheduled for retro commissioning (assessing status and efficiency) are Capuano and Argenziano.
- Plan is to address 1-2 school buildings per year over five years to bring all HVAC systems in order and move forward with a regular maintenance plan.

Timing and process for addressing Brown and Winter Hill Community Innovation School

- City working on "Gap Analysis" for WHCIS, Brown School Gap Analysis is complete. Gap Analysis includes assessing building conditions and cost analysis to bring building systems up to code and perform necessary repairs, information necessary to consider building renovation, retrofit or rebuild decisions.
- WHCIS assessment report was predicted to be available in June (as of May 1st meeting).
- Feb: Discussion on sequencing of activities - and push for some being done in parallel versus in series - and benefits and risks of MSBA application now or later. Different perspectives and the City, SPS and School Committee need to align on an approach and timetable.
- May: City shared presentation to clarify terminology and process for addressing school facilities. The presentation outlined components and phases of the school building plan, explaining the processes involved, e.g., building capacity study, enrollment study, gap analysis, feasibility study and community process, design and construction. This document, titled "School Building Planning" is in the May 8th SC packet and can also be found on the City Council meeting webpage. The disconnect between the City's high level timeline and the SC desired acceleration of that plan, including considering work that can be done in parallel was expressed, as well as the need to resolve these differing perspectives.
- Liz Galloway was named as the project manager for the school building feasibility study for the city in May meeting. CC and SC want to be sure that staffing is appropriate to move this forward.

East Mechanical System Noise

In response to constituent complaints, the DPW verified that the ESCS mechanical systems are within the normal parameters of the city's volume control ordinance.

Preventative Maintenance Plans for School Buildings

Presentation on the new database that is being developed and the city has begun to use to monitor all PM work on school buildings. This system will track a variety of information about school and city building assets, e.g., HVAC, plumbing devices, backup generators, fire pumps, etc. and will eventually include roof condition.

School Building WiFi challenges

The city pays for network infrastructure in the schools and the School Department purchases its Wi-Fi equipment. Network infrastructure has been updated, per a government grant. Mr. Mazza will clarify the WiFi challenges in schools.

School Building Repair Reports

Received first report dated January 5th. Plans for quarterly reports, which include major repairs and 311 reports. May update, the elevator at the WHCS is operational, but has a low fluid level occasionally, and this will be addressed with the elevator contractor

East Somerville Community School Facades

Quotes for this work are out, considering bollards for area near loading dock to protect facade

Request that City Administration respond to WHCIS parent and staff concerns: TBD

Status of the Cummings School Building

Request that documentation on the Cummings will be shared with this committee and the SC. Cost to repair the west wing roof is more than the city is willing to pay. The boiler has been replaced but there is a problem with the temperature control, the east wing is occupiable. The clothing exchange is in the building, as well as musical equipment storage. The long-term disposition of the building will be included in the school building master plan, however, there are no plans to use this building in future. The building is not ADA accessible.

High School Field House floor and bleachers

There was a soft spot on the floor created by exposure to water, but the source was not identified. The damaged section was cut out and temporarily replaced. A permanent repair, with the correct floor color, is pending. Extra

flooring material is on order to repair damage caused by the wheels of the bleachers. This problem has been reduced by installing limit switches on the bleachers to stop the wheels from burning into the floor.

Surface Materials for Parks and Playgrounds

Access to some play areas can be limited due to snow coverage and challenges with snow removal. City balancing need for ADA accessibility, maintainability, and safety preference for poured in place surfaces (over mulches or blacktop). The snow can be removed with the proper equipment (is it available.) DPW prioritizes snow removal efforts to address ADA ramps, bus stops and crosswalks. Consideration for heated sections of playgrounds raised, but would require a retrofit for current playgrounds. Any shoveling of spaces must be done with appropriate equipment (such as rubber tipped shovels). Students are allowed to play in the snow. District to create protocol for play space use when there is snow on the ground.

Dr. Ackman requested that water filters across the district be updated. Mr. Mazza will work with DPW on this to make sure those get change once the light switches to red.

C. Ratification of the SMEA Unit C 2021-2023 Integrated Collective Bargaining Agreement

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Ackman, seconded by Ms. Dion to authorize Chair Green to sign the Ratification of the SMEA Unit C 2021-2023 Integrated Collective Bargaining Agreement.

The motion was approved unanimously via voice call vote.

D. Acceptance of FY23 Grant Funds (Recommended action: approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Ackman, seconded by Dr. Phillips, to accept all federal entitlement and continuation grants and all state continuation grants awarded to the Somerville Public Schools listed below:

Private

- AP Computer Science Principles for SHS - \$5,000.00 from College Board
- United Way, Summer Step Up Program - \$24,000 for Community Schools.

The motion was approved unanimously via voice call vote.

E. Donations (Recommended action: approval)

The Superintendent recommends acceptance, with gratitude, of the following donations:

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Ackman, seconded by Dr. Phillips, to accept all donations below:

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Programs Donated to
Monetary	Julie Engel on behalf of the Morris S. & Florence H. Bender Foundation	Somerville, MA	\$2,500	SFLC
Monetary	Julie Engel on behalf of the Morris S. & Florence H. Bender Foundation	Somerville, MA	\$2,500	For Teacher Appreciation use at AFAS

The motion was approved unanimously via voice call vote.

F. Participation in National School Lunch and Breakfast Program

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Phillips, seconded by Ms. Dion, to Schools recommends that the School Committee vote to participate in the national School Lunch and Breakfast Program, and the Commodity Food Distribution Program, in conformity with requirements of the State Bureau of Nutrition Education and School Food Services for the 2023-2024 school year, as in previous years.

The motion was approved unanimously via voice call vote.

G. Student Accident Insurance - (Recommended Action: Receive and place on file)

MOTION: There was a motion by Barish, seconded by Dr. Phillips to receive and place on file The Superintendent advising that the contract for Student Accident Insurance for the 2023-2024 school year has been renewed with Moran Insurance Agency, 23 Spruce St., Suite B, Malden MA 02148, below are the rates, which are the same as last year:

Student Insurance Plan – Gold
Premium: School Time \$7.50 0020
Premium: 24-Hour Coverage \$49.00
Dental: Extended \$10.00

Plan B – ALL-SPORTS, ROCK WALL, SHOP AND LAB COVERAGE
Premium: Gold Plan \$6,419.00
Catastrophic Cash Benefit \$1,039.00

The motion was approved unanimously via voice call vote.

H. Authorization for Summer Months – (Recommended Action: Approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Dr. Ackman, seconded by Ms. Barish, motion to authorize the Superintendent to act on the School Committee's behalf to:

- a. Pay bills on school department accounts for which commitments have been made by bid or purchase order before the close of schools, said bills to be ratified by the committee at the first meeting in August.
- b. Expend from FY2024 Salaries Account funds for payment of salaries of personnel under all federal grants beginning in August.
- c. Expend from the FY24 Salaries Account funds for payment of salaries of personnel as detailed in the FY24 Budget.
- d. Use Salaries Account and School Operations Account funds to pay encumbrances and salaries for summer programs.
- e. Authorize and/or reauthorize school department revolving accounts. To accept all monies received by the School Committee in connection with the conduct of said revolving accounts according to the purposes of the program or programs from which receipts in each account were derived.
- f. Accept all state and federal grant monies awarded through the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the Department of Early Education and care and to authorize the establishment of separate grant accounts that may be expended by the School Committee without further appropriation for the purposes designated in each grant proposal.

The motion was approved unanimously via voice call vote.

I. Acceptance of FY2024 Grant Funds

MOTION: There was a motion by Ms. Barish, seconded by Dr. Philips, to accept all federal entitlement and continuation grants and all state continuation grants awarded to the Somerville Public Schools during FY24 and to authorize the establishment of separate grant accounts that may be expended by the School Committee without further appropriation for the purposes designated in each grant proposal.

The motion was approved unanimously via voice call vote.

X. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Ms. Pitone attended the inauguration of the Equity group. Congratulations to Ms. Gallitano and Dr. Boston Davis.

XI. CONDOLENCES

No Condolences

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting was adjourned 9:31 p.m.

Related documents:

Agenda

New Administrative Staff Introductions

WHCIS Facilities Update

Personnel Report

Submitted by: E. Garcia

ATTACH DOCUMENTS STARTING ON THE NEXT PAGE

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – CITY HALL
REGULAR MEETING – JUNE 26, 2023 – 7:00 P.M.**

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2023, this meeting of the School Committee will be conducted via hybrid participation. We will post an audio recording, audio-video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of these proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting on the City of Somerville website and local cable access government channels.

To **watch** this Regular School Committee meeting live from home please visit the following link:
[somervillema.gov/GovTVLive](https://www.somervillema.gov/GovTVLive)

To **listen** live to the simultaneous interpretation of this meeting in **Spanish, Portuguese or Haitian Creole**, or to participate in Public Comment, please join this Zoom Webinar and choose your desired language by clicking the **interpretation globe on the Zoom**:

https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZMsQsp01SSClSgXOKcunug

Meeting ID: 847 5813 4927

Password: SPSSC23

Somerville Public Schools - School Committee Goals 2023 - 2025

In order to address the root causes of systemic inequity in our schools, the Somerville School Committee and SPS commit to the following goals, knowing that these can only be achieved through ensuring meaningful partnerships with Somerville families, district staff, city government, and community partners. Our goals attempt to address deep-rooted systemic barriers that have prevented us from achieving our district vision of equity and excellence and ensure that all students, regardless of race or ethnicity, have the supports and resources they need to achieve educational success in our district now and in the future.

1. Whole Child Teaching and Learning... we will:

- prepare students to demonstrate strong literacy and mathematics foundation by grade 3, grade 6, and grade 10
- provide all students with integrated classroom lessons from a high quality social-emotional learning curriculum that helps students value and develop their ability to build relationships with other students, to be self aware and socially aware, to self regulate, and to make responsible decisions
- expand access to real-world learning experiences through students' participation in Early College, Advanced Placement courses, CTE, and/or other learning experiences that help students build critical 21st century skills, meeting with their college and career counselor in their junior and senior year, and students graduating with a defined post-secondary plan.

2. Equitable Access to Programming... we will conduct a district enrollment study to understand the prospective future population of the district and create and begin implementing a strategy for school building development, school assignment, and programming that aligns with the district's equity policy, and which is based on results of the enrollment study and the projected 10+ year plan for school facilities.

3. Workforce Diversity... we will increase the percentage of support staff of color, teachers and counselors of color, and administrators of color by 6% per group compared to SY22 rates through evaluating and strengthening all elements of our personnel system – recruitment, processes, training, retention, development, advancement, and staff data collection systems on which we base and measure our improvement efforts.

4. Equitable Resource Allocation... we will design, evaluate, and partially or fully implement student-based budgeting by 2025, or identify alternative mechanisms to more equitably allocate district resources.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

I. CALL TO ORDER

Call to order with a moment of silence and a salute to the flag of the United States of America.

II. AWARDS AND CITATIONS

A. Resolution Recognition Plaques

Nomi Davidson – SFLC Director Retirement

Jeff Curley – Outgoing Superintendent

Andre Green – Outgoing School Committee Chair

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- May 22, 2023
- June 12, 2023

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT – In person or via Zoom

To participate in Public Comment remotely please use the following Zoom link:
https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZMsQspO1SSClSjXOKcunug
 Meeting ID: 847 5813 4927
 Password: SPSSC23

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

- A. District Report**
 - New Administrative Staff Introductions
 - WHCIS Facilities Update
- B. Personnel Report**
 - June 2023

VI. Report of Subcommittees

- A. Long Range Planning Subcommittee:** May 24, 2023 (Mr. Green)
 MOTION: To accept the report of the Long Range Planning Subcommittee meeting of May 24, 2023.
- B. Educational Programs and Instruction subcommittee:** May 24, 2023 (Dr. Ackman)
 MOTION: To accept the report of the Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee of May 24, 2023.
- C. Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting:** June 12, 2023 (Ms. Barish)
 MOTION: To accept the report of the Rules Management Subcommittee of June 12, 2023.
- D. Finance and Facilities Subcommittee Meeting:** June 20, 2023 (Ms. Krepchin)
 MOTION: To accept the report of the Finance and Facilities Subcommittee of June 20, 2023.
- E. Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee:** June 22, 2023 (Dr. Ackman)
 MOTION: To accept the report of the Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee of June 22, 2023.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Ratification of Dr. Carmona’s Contract as Incoming Superintendent of SPS** (Mr. Green)
- B. School Building Maintenance and Facilities Committee Report** (Ms. Pitone)
- C. Ratification of the SMEA Unit C 2021-2023 Integrated Collective Bargaining Agreement**
- D. Acceptance of FY23 Grant Funds** (Recommended action: approval)
 MOTION: To accept all federal entitlement and continuation grants and all state continuation grants awarded to the Somerville Public Schools listed below:

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The Superintendent of Schools recommends that the School Committee vote to participate in the national School Lunch and Breakfast Program, and the Commodity Food Distribution Program, in conformity with requirements of the State Bureau of Nutrition Education and School Food Services for the 2023-2024 school year, as in previous years.

F. Student Accident Insurance - (Recommended Action: Receive and place on file)

The Superintendent advising that the contract for Student Accident Insurance for the 2023-2024 school year has been renewed with Moran Insurance Agency, 23 Spruce St., Suite B, Malden MA 02148, below are the rates, which are the same as last year:

- Student Insurance Plan – Gold
- Premium: School Time \$7.50 0020
- Premium: 24-Hour Coverage \$49.00
- Dental: Extended \$10.00

The items listed are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair to be discussed at the meeting. Not all items may in fact be discussed and other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law

Plan B – ALL-SPORTS, ROCK WALL, SHOP AND LAB COVERAGE
 Premium: Gold Plan \$6,419.00
 Catastrophic Cash Benefit \$1,039.00

G. Authorization for Summer Months – (Recommended Action: Approval)

MOTION: Motion to Authorize the Superintendent to act on the School Committee's behalf to:

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H. Acceptance of FY2024 Grant Funds

MOTION: To accept all federal entitlement and continuation grants and all state continuation grants awarded to the Somerville Public Schools during FY24 and to authorize the establishment of separate grant accounts that may be expended by the School Committee without further appropriation for the purposes designated in each grant proposal.

VIII. ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

IX. CONDOLENCES

X. ADJOURNMENT

For Simultaneous Interpretation in Spanish, Portuguese and Haitian Creole See below:

Español - Para Interpretación

Para **ver** la Reunión Regular del Comité Escolar el 27 de Febrero a las 7:00, en vivo desde casa, visite el siguiente enlace y elija **GovTV**: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/communications-and-community-engagement/somerville-city-tv>

Para **escuchar en vivo la interpretación simultánea de la Reunión Regular en español, portugués o criollo haitiano**, únase a este Zoom y elija el idioma que desee haciendo clic al globo de interpretación:

https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZMsQspO1SSClSjXOKcunug

Identificación de la reunión: 847 5813 4927

Contraseña: SPSSC23

Português - Para Interpretação

Para **assistir** à Reunião Regular do Comitê Escolar 27 de fevereiro às 7:00, ao vivo de casa, visite o seguinte link e selecione

GovTV: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/communications-and-community-engagement/somerville-city-tv>

Para **ouvir ao vivo a tradução simultânea da Assembleia Ordinária em espanhol, português ou crioulo haitiano**, entre neste Zoom e escolha o idioma desejado clicando no balão de interpretação:

https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZMsQspO1SSClSjXOKcunug

ID da reunião: 847 5813 4927

Senha: SPSC23

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Kreyòl avisyen - Pou entèpretasyon

Pou **gade** reyinyon regilye Komite Lekòl la 27 fevriye a 7:00, an dirèk nan kay la, vizite lyen sa a epi chwazi **GovTV**:
<https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/communications-and-community-engagement/somerville-city-ty>

Pou **w tande entèpretasyon similtane Reyinyon Regilye a an panyòl, pòtigè oswa kreyòl ayisyen an**, rantr nan Zoom sa a epi chwazi lang ou vle a lè w klike sou balon entèpretasyon an:

https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_ZMsQspO1SSClSgXOKcunug

Reyinyon ID: 847 5813 4927

Modpas: SPSSC23

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New Administrative Staff Introductions

One of the most important parts of this job is recruiting and hiring amazing leaders and educators. 80% of our budget is people. We have some incredibly talented leaders and admin with us tonight.

Ildefonso Arellano - Director of Special Education

I am thrilled to welcome and share that we will be joined next week by Ildefonso Arellano, as our new Director of Special Education.

Ildefonso has served for the past 11 years as Assistant Director of Special Education in the Framingham Public Schools.

In Framingham, Mr. Arellano has supported the educational and social-emotional needs of 2,200 school-aged special education students, including administrative oversight of all the district's special education programs.

Ildefonso was formerly a Speech & Language Pathologist, is fluent in Spanish, holds a B.S. in Communications Disorders from Boston University, an M.S. in Speech-Language Pathology from Emerson College, and a C.A.G.S. in Special Education Administration. Please join me in welcoming Ildefonso.

Berenice Mace-Diaz – Principal of the East Somerville Community Schools

Berenice comes to Somerville Public Schools after serving as an Assistant Principal in Chelsea Public Schools for the last five years.

She began her teaching career in Malden as a math teacher and volleyball and tennis coach. After teaching for 12 years, Berenice transitioned into a leadership role in Chelsea where she worked to develop a restorative system for students, overhauled the school schedule to become more inclusive and bring recess to her school for the first time, implemented tier 1 behavior strategies and SEL strategies, and worked closely with families and students to build a relationship with the community.

Berenice is an immigrant from Cai-jow, Peru, having immigrated to the U.S. in 1997. She moved to the Boston area to attend Tufts University and decided to make her permanent home here in Massachusetts.

She currently lives in Quincy with her wife and their two children, Joshua (8) and Benjamin (5).

André Pelletier – Principal of the West Somerville Neighborhood School

André comes to SPS from the Revere Public Schools where he is currently Principal of an elementary school and oversees 750 students and 90 staff members.

Prior to his role in Revere, André served for five years as an Assistant Principal in Lexington. André also brings 14 years of teaching experience in grades K-2 both here in MA and in Denver, Colorado.

In his roles, André has worked to foster a school culture where students, staff, and families feel comfortable with and connected to each other.

André and his wife Andrea, live in East Somerville with their two boys, Colin (9) and Levi (7), both of whom currently attend ESCS. André notes that he is "excited to work here in the city where we live, and in the system that our kids are learning and growing in!"

Ruth Santos – Director of the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative (SFLC) While Ruth is new to this position, she is certainly not new to SPS. From 2015 to 2021, Ruth worked for the City's SomerPromise program where her work centered around cross-sector collaborative work and where she was closely connected to the SPS community.

Following her role in SomerPromise Ruth “followed her heart back to the schools” and became the Data, Resources, and Communications Coordinator for SFLC. In that role, Ruth continued to work closely with school, city, and community partners in support of students and families in Somerville, supporting information and resource sharing around basic needs, home visiting, early childhood programs and initiatives, and the school liaison program. Ruth joins us as Director of SFLC last week as Nomi will finally be able to transition out of her Director role and enjoy her well-deserved retirement.

Originally from Northamptonshire in the UK, Ruth started as an ELL teacher in Spain and Turkey, becoming an elementary school teacher in Miami, FL, and then moving on to creating environmental programming with teens. She has four children, two of whom are still in college, and “two lovely old dogs.” Please join me in thanking Ruth for taking on this critical work.

Gladys Valle – Assistant Director of Multilingual Learner Education

Dr. Gladys Valle comes from Everett Public Schools, where she served as the English Learner Department Head for Everett High School. As a first-generation American with Puerto Rican heritage, Dr. Valle brings a personal passion and commitment to equitable educational opportunities for students. She began her journey in education in 2014 with City Year Boston, where she worked in a third-grade classroom at James F. Condon in South Boston. Since then, she has held positions as an Associate Teacher at Brooke Charter School East Boston, English Learner Teacher at the Nathaniel Bowditch School and Salem High School, and Multilingual Learner Instructional Coach for Salem Public Schools.

Dr. Valle holds an EdD from Northeastern University with a concentration in Curriculum and Teacher Leadership, an MA in Teaching English as a Second Language from Simmons University, and a BA in Psychology and Gender Studies from Stetson University. Her educational background and professional development have equipped her with the knowledge and skills to effectively lead and support English language learners. Outside of her work, Dr. Valle enjoys cooking, hosting family and friends, and spending time with her dog, Obie. She is fully bilingual in English and Spanish, and she continues to develop her proficiency in Portuguese.

Stephanie Bielagus, Multilingual Learner Education Department Chair at Somerville High School

Stephanie Bielagus, M.Ed., has been in education for over 15 years. She served as an English Learner (EL) teacher for 8 years working predominantly with high school newcomers and students with interrupted formal education (SIFE) and brings a passion for restorative justice, curriculum design and leveraging students’ strengths and voice in the classroom.

For the last year she has been coaching teachers across the country and providing professional development through Better Lesson and Teach for America. She began her journey teaching English in a rural village of 350 people in Costa Rica. Since then, she held positions as a Project Coordinator for Programs in Professional Education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, an Intensive English Program Administrator at the University of San Francisco, and an EL teacher at Braintree Middle School and at ENLACE High School in Lawrence, Massachusetts.

Stephanie holds a Masters in Teaching English as Second Language, Grades 5-12 from Boston University, a BA in Sociology from the College of the Holy Cross, has presented in several MATSOL conferences on literacy and conducted research in Guatemala visiting rural Mayan schools of former US based students. Outside of work, she enjoys staying active, salsa dancing, hosting dinners with family and friends and traveling. She is fully proficient in English and Spanish.

Sabrina Caprigno – Payroll Manager

The Finance Office would like to welcome Sabrina Caprigno in her new role as Payroll Manager. Sabrina came to the Payroll Office after sixteen years of work in the SCALE Program as Head Clerk. In October of 2018 Sabrina transferred to the Principal Account Clerk in the Payroll Office. After four years, Sabrina demonstrated that she possessed the skills, dedication and personality it takes to promote her to the position of Payroll Manager. Sabrina is doing a wonderful job during very difficult times and we thank her for her diligence and dedication.



Somerville Public Schools
Education • Inspiration • Excellence

PERSONNEL REPORT
2023-2024 School Year
June 2023

RESIGNATION FOR PURPOSE OF RETIREMENT:				
SCHOOL	POSITION	INCUMBENT	EFFECTIVE DATE	YEARS OF SERVICE
WHCIS	Grade 2 Teacher	Maureen Cronin	07/31/22	26 years
ESCS	Grade 5 UNIDOS	Fernando Cantillo	10/11/22	9 years
Central Office/SFLC	Director of SFLC	Nomi Davidson	02/01/23	31 years
SHS/CTE	Business Teacher - CTE	Debra Allen	06/30/23	25 years
Food Services	FT Utility Aide	William Brown	01/11/23	20 years
FC/NW/SHS	School Nurse	William Bingay	06/30/23	25 years
WSNS	Senior Clerk	Dignora Diaz	03/01/23	26 years
ESCS	Interim Principal	Samaria C. Hashem	06/30/23	2 years
WSNS	Grade 1 Teacher	Kathleen Hern	06/30/23	34 Years
BR	Grade 3 Teacher	Patricia Creedon	06/30/23	25 years
SHS/CTE	Social Studies Teacher	Everett Roscoe	09/27/23	27 years
Central Office/HR	HR Administrative Assistant	Patricia Difraia	06/30/23	23 years

RESIGNATION NOTICES:				
SCHOOL	POSITION	INCUMBENT	EFFECTIVE DATE	
CAP/Comm Schools	Assistant Program Coordinator	Alex Mendoza	06/05/23	
ESCS/SHS	Spanish Teacher	Diana Santiago-Acevedo	06/30/23	
SHS	Home/Hospital Tutor	Susan Maday	01/30/23	

ASSIGNMENT ENDED:				
SCHOOL	POSITION	INCUMBENT	EFFECTIVE DATE	
CAP	K1 AIM Teacher	Mallory Crane	08/09/23	
District Wide	SPED Resource Room Teacher	Katarina Keown	06/30/23	
District Wide	Director of Educational Infrastructure and	Sean Callanan	09/15/23	
EEC	Adjustment Counselor	Danielle Reiger	06/30/23	
ESCS	MLE Paraprofessional	Ibeth Alfaro Aguilera	06/30/23	
HLY	Kindergarten Paraprofessional	Alexander Walters	06/30/23	
HLY	SPED Resource Room Teacher	Amelia Flynn	06/30/23	
KEN	SEEK Paraprofessional	Matthew Driscoll	06/30/23	
KEN	Grade 7/8 Math Teacher	Veronica Santana	06/30/23	
SHS	TV Media Teacher	Daniel Cayarga	06/30/23	

SHS	Career & Technical Education	Vicki Cochran	06/30/23
SHS	Physical Education & Health Teacher	Janet Flynn	06/30/23
WHCIS	SPED Paraprofessional - 208 days	Rain Deveau	05/23/23

LEAVES OF ABSENCES:			
SCHOOL	POSITION	INCUMBENT	EFFECTIVE DATES
AFAS	Grade 2 SEI Integrated Teacher	Angela Rodriguez	05/30/23-06/16/23
Central	Interim Assistant Superintendent of Academic Services	Jessica Boston Davis	05/09/23-08/03/23
Central/Finance	Principal Account Clerk 2	Mary Kelley	05/25/23-06/07/23
District Wide	SPED Academic Evaluator	Jennifer Zacharias	08/28/23-10/25/23
ESCS	Grade 4 Teacher	Susan Fothergill	04/06/23-06/16/23 - Revised
HLY	Paraprofessional	Priya Plein	01/09/23-03/03/23 - Revised
SHS	Path Clinical Coordinator	Christine Campbell	10/04/23-12/05/23
SHS	ELA Teacher	Theresa Dietrich	08/28/23-06/28/24
SHS/CTE	Graphic Art Teacher	Jennifer Demariano	06/07/23-08/18/23
WSNS	Math & Science Teacher	Lorin Federico	08/28/23-11/28/23
WSNS/CAP	SPED Resource Room Teacher	Brittany Stein	06/13/23-10/19/23

INTRA-DISTRICT PERSONNEL TRANSACTIONS					
SCHOOL	POSITION	INCUMBENT	REASON	VICE	EFFECTIVE DATE
Central	Federal Grants and MCAS Administrator	Uri Harel	New Assignment	New	07/01/23
District Wide	Resource Room Teacher	Lucy Lyons	Reassignment	Conversion	08/28/23
EEC	Interim Academic Evaluator	Kelley Dickson	Temporary Reassignment	Jennifer Zacharias	08/28/23
ESCS	Reading Teacher	Meghan Kirwin Clohosey	Reassignment/Location Change	Elizabeth Larson	08/28/23
ESCS	Assistant Principal	Julia Allen	Interim to Permanent	N/A	07/01/23
KEN	Life Skills Paraprofessional	Patrick Cadigan	New Assignment	New	08/28/23
WHCIS	SPED AIM Teacher	Lindsay Evans	Molly Crane	No/Yes	08/28/23
WSNS	Grade 7/8 Teacher	Rami Bridge	New Assignment	Marissa Roque	08/28/23

NEW HIRES					
SCHOOL	POSITION	INCUMBENT	VICE	DUAL/SEI	EFFECTIVE DATE
AFAS	SPED Teacher - Language Based	Auriana Musselman	New	No/Yes	08/28/23
KEN	.50 Grade 7/8 Social Studies Teacher	Anaya Benzan	Dayshawn Simmons	No/No	08/28/23
CAP	SPED AIM Paraprofessional	Sthefanie BRingel dos Santos	K. Heal/K. Wagner	No/No	08/28/23
SHS	School Based Social Worker	Victoria Bauer	N/A	No/No	08/28/23
SHS	SPED Math Teacher	Aisling Roche	Dawn Dunleavy	No/Yes	08/28/23
SHS	.50 Provisional English Teacher	Andrew Wang	Theresa Dietrich	No/No	08/28/23