

SAFETY PROGRAM

Accidents are undesirable, unplanned occurrences that can result in tragic consequences--bodily harm, loss of school time, property damage, legal action, and even fatality. The Somerville School Committee will guard against such occurrences by taking every possible precaution to protect the safety of all students, employees, visitors and others present on school property or at school-sponsored events.

The Somerville School Committee will comply with safety requirements established by governmental authorities and will insist that its staff adhere to recommended safety practices as these pertain, for example, to the school plant, special areas of instruction, student transportation, school sports and occupational safety.

The practice of safety will also be considered a facet of the instructional program of the schools. Instruction in accident prevention as well as fire prevention, emergency procedures, traffic, bicycle, and pedestrian safety will be included in the instructional program.

The Superintendent will have overall responsibility for the safety program of the school system. It will be the responsibility of the Superintendent to see that appropriate staff members are kept informed of current state and local requirements relating to fire prevention, civil defense, sanitation, public health, and occupational safety.

Efforts directed toward the prevention of accidents will succeed only to the degree that all staff members recognize that preventing accidents is a daily operational responsibility.

Revised: January 1996

Revised: August 2009

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:55C and Acts of 1985c 614 Sec 1
Board of Education 603 CMR 36:00

FIRST AID

The school attempts to provide a safe environment. If an accident or sudden illness occurs, school personnel will administer first aid and, if warranted, call the school physician.

First aid is defined as the immediate and temporary care given in case of an accident or sudden illness, which enables the child to be taken safely home or to a physician. It does not include diagnosis or treatment. Any care beyond first aid will not be given.

At each school, procedures will be developed for the proper handling of an injury to, or sudden illness of, a child or staff member. These will be made known to the staff and will incorporate the following requirements:

1. The school nurse or another trained person will be responsible for administering first aid.
2. When the nature of an illness or an injury appears in any way serious, every effort will be made to contact the parent and/or family physician immediately.
3. No young child who is ill or injured will be sent home alone, nor will any older child unless the illness or injury is minor. A young child who is ill or injured will not be taken home unless it is known that someone is there to receive him/her.
4. In extreme emergencies, the school nurse, school physician or principal may make arrangements for immediate hospitalization of injured or ill students, contacting parent or guardian in advance if at all possible.
5. The teacher or other staff member to whom a child is responsible at the time an accident occurs will make out a report on an official form providing details about the accident. This will be required for every accident for which first aid is given.
6. All serious accidents to students and/or staff members:
 - a) requiring an accident report, will be reported to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee as soon as possible.
 - b) requiring immediate, significant medical attention, community medical response, ambulance transportation or hospital treatment, will be reported to the Superintendent of Schools or his/her designee, by telephone as soon as possible
 - c) will be reported the School Committee by the Superintendent of Schools when appropriate.

Revised: January 1996

Revised: August 2009

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:55A; 71:56

EMERGENCY PLANS

Advance planning for emergencies and disasters is essential to provide for the safety of students and staff; it also strengthens the morale of all concerned to know that plans exist and that students and staff have been trained in carrying out the plans.

The Superintendent will develop and maintain plans that meet the requirements of state law for preparedness in case of fire, civil emergencies, and natural disasters.

The Superintendent shall develop, in consultation with school nurses, school physicians, athletic coaches, trainers, and local Emergency Medical Services agencies, an Emergency Medical Response Plan for each school in the district. Each Plan shall include:

1. A method establishing a rapid communications system linking all parts of the school campus, including outdoor facilities, to local Emergency Medical Services along with protocols to clarify when EMS and other emergency contacts will be called.
2. A determination of EMS response times to any location on the campus.
3. A list of relevant contacts with telephone numbers and a protocol indicating when each person shall be called, including names of experts to help with post-event support.
4. A method to efficiently direct EMS personnel to any location on campus, including the location of available rescue equipment.
5. Safety precautions to prevent injuries in classrooms and on the school campus.
6. A method of providing access to training in CPR and first aid for teachers, athletic coaches, trainers, and other school staff which may include CPR training for High School students; provided that School Committees may opt out of instruction in CPR pursuant to Section 1 of Chapter 71.
7. In the event the school possesses Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs), the location of all available AEDs, whether the location is fixed or portable, and a list of personnel trained in its use.

Plans shall be submitted at least every 3 years by September 1. Plans must be updated in the case of new construction or other physical changes to the school campus.

Building Principals will meet all requirements for conducting fire drills and Emergency Response drills to give students practice in moving with orderly dispatch to designated areas under emergency conditions, and the staff practice in carrying out their assigned responsibilities for building evacuation.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 69:8A Section 363 of Chapter 159 of the Acts of 2000

CROSS REF.: EBCD, Emergency Closings: JL, Student Welfare
JLC, Student Health Services and Requirements

Adoption date: January 1996

Reviewed: December 2008

Revised: August 2012

EMERGENCY CLOSINGS

The Superintendent may close the schools or dismiss them early in the event of hazardous weather or other emergencies that threaten the health or safety of students and personnel. While it may be prudent, under certain circumstances, to excuse all students from attending school, to delay the opening hour or to dismiss students early, the Superintendent has the responsibility to see that as much of the administrative, supervisory and operational activity is continued as may be possible. Therefore, if conditions affect only a single school, only that school will be closed.

In making the decision to close schools, the Superintendent will consider many factors, including the following principal ones relating to the fundamental concern for the safety and health of the children:

1. Weather conditions, both existing and predicted.
2. Driving, traffic, and parking conditions affecting public and private transportation facilities.
3. Actual occurrence or imminent possibility of any emergency condition that would make the operation of schools difficult or dangerous.
4. Inability of teaching personnel to report for duty, which might result in inadequate supervision of students.
5. Appropriate radio and television stations shall be contacted in sufficient time to permit adequate publication of no school announcements.

The Superintendent will weigh these factors and take action to close the schools only after consultation with public works and public safety authorities and with school officials from neighboring towns. Students, parents and staff will be informed early in each school year of the procedures that will be used to notify them in case of emergency closings. When schools are closed for emergency reasons, staff members will comply with Somerville School Committee policy in reporting for work.

Revised: January 1996

Reviewed: December 2008

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 71:4; 71:4A

EMERGENCY 1-YEAR LEAVE OF ABSENCE AND SCHOOL PLACEMENT HOLD POLICY

Given the unprecedented circumstances of educating children during a global pandemic, the Somerville School Committee authorizes the superintendent or her designee(s) at the Enrollment Office to allow for students who have un-enrolled after August 4, 2020 – the date that the district announced a remote start for the 2020/2021 academic year – to have a seat held for child(ren) in their current school, if currently enrolled in grades K-7, through July 1, 2021 if the student’s guardian requests as such. Student’s currently registered in Pre-K can have their seats held for the duration of the 2020/2021 academic year if the student’s guardian requests as such. For students in transition grades who make use of this policy, the district will still contact them at the same time as they do registered students regarding their lottery preferences for the 2021/2022 academic year. This option will apply to all students in special programs. Upon re-entry, updated immunization, physical examination, and proof of residency documentation are required.

Adopted by School Committee: August 17, 2020

Somerville Public Schools COVID-19 Testing Policy

The availability of in-person instruction and the district's in-person health and safety implementation guidelines will be determined and continually assessed using up-to-date data and guidelines provided by the Somerville Board of Health and Health and Human Services Department, Centers for Disease Control (CDC), Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and the Massachusetts Department of Health. When families select in-person instruction, they agree to and understand the health and safety expectations as outlined by the district including but not limited to wearing a mask, participating in COVID-19 screen testing, and abiding by social distance guidelines. COVID-19 screen testing will be non-invasive to the extent possible.

The Somerville Board of Health passed an order on November 2, 2020 requiring all K-12 educational institutions in Somerville, including Somerville Public Schools, submit to the Board of Health a COVID-19 transmission prevention plan that requires ongoing testing of all teachers, employees, and any other individuals providing services in the school building(s) and provides a detailed testing protocol to identify and swiftly isolate asymptomatic, pre-symptomatic, and symptomatic students who are COVID-19 positive. The Board of Health order allows for exemptions to COVID-19 testing in K-12 institutions only for those individuals who have a health contraindication documented by a physician.

This policy will be used to inform the SPS COVID-19 transmission prevention plan required by the Board of Health order, which will be regularly reviewed to ensure it is responsive to the status of COVID transmission in Somerville Public Schools and the region.

COVID-19 Testing

The Somerville School Committee sets as policy that all faculty, staff, other employees, and any other individuals providing services in the Somerville Public School buildings will be tested as a baseline before in-person learning begins and through a regular screening protocol thereafter as established by the COVID-19 transmission prevention plan.

Students will be tested as a baseline before they are permitted to return to school in person and through a regular screening protocol thereafter as established by the COVID-19 transmission prevention plan.

A child or staff member shall be exempted from the requirement for mandatory COVID-19 testing if a nurse practitioner, physician, physician assistant determine that it is not possible due

to medical condition(s), disability, sensory concerns, tactile sensitivity, or other health or safety factors for the student or staff member to participate in COVID-19 testing.

Adopted: November 16, 2020

Source:

Legal Ref: Board of Health Order, November 2, 2020

EVACUATION POLICY

The Somerville School Department will enforce the following Evacuation Plan when it is determined by the Administrator of the Building, the Police Department, Fire Department or any other agency in authority that an emergency condition exists in the building or the surrounding neighborhood. During the first week of school, the plan will be sent to parents with a cover letter from the Superintendent. All new registrants through the year should also be given a copy upon admission to the Somerville school system.

This Evacuation Plan shall be included in the Somerville Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. If the plan needs to be enforced for any reason, the Superintendent's office must be notified immediately. The staff in turn will notify the Police Department, Fire Department and city switchboard operator, to enable them to inform parents if they call, where their children are. It is understood that parental permission is not required before evacuation when it has been deemed appropriate to evacuate. Individual emergency evacuation plans for the disabled will be designed on site as needed.

Evacuation Sites:

<i>School</i>	<i>Primary Site</i>	<i>Secondary Site</i>
Argenziano		
Grades K-3	Cummings	Winter Hill
Grades 4-8	SHS Auditorium	Kennedy
Brown	Cummings	Kennedy Gym
Capuano	East Somerville	Winter Hill Gym & Café
ESCS	Capuano Gym	WHCS
Healey		
Grades K-3	Winter Hill Library	Cummings
Grades 4-8	Winter Hill Gym	Argenziano
Kennedy		
Grades K-4	WSNS Gym & Café	Capuano Gym & Café
Grades 5-8	Winter Hill Gym and Café	SHS Fieldhouse
NW/FC	SHS	Argenziano
West Somerville	Tufts/Jackson Gym	Kennedy Gym & Café
Winter Hill		
Grades K-3/Life Skills	Healey Café	SHS Auditorium
Grades 4-8	Healey Gym	SHS Auditorium
SHS		
Grades 9-10	Winter Hill	Kennedy
Grades 11-12	Cummings	Healey

Adoption date: June 7, 1999

Revised: June 2006, August 2009, December 2014

BOMB THREAT POLICY

This policy is intended to allow the Somerville Public School System to respond to issues relative to suspicion of bombs on campus in a very serious and concerned fashion while remaining in control of the situation as much as possible, avoiding panic, minimizing the disturbance and disruption of service, and maintaining a safe and healthy educational environment.

LEVEL 1- BOMB THREAT

In the event that a bomb threat is received the following procedure is to be followed:

- The person receiving the call is to immediately use the bomb threat worksheet to gather as much information as possible. The work sheet will be given to the principal who will immediately forward a copy to the attention of the District Administrator for Student Services at central office.
- The person receiving the call is to immediately dial 911 and inform the Police Department who will in turn notify the Fire Department. Upon notifying the Police said person should provide them with his/her name, telephone number or extension, and location.
- The person receiving the call will immediately call the City Hall Switchboard Operator and notify the operator so he/she can initiate the action plan as it relates to the Bomb Threat Protocol.
- The person who received the call will next notify the building principal or his/her designee that a bomb threat has been received.
- The building principal and/or his/her designee will immediately report the threat to the Superintendent and to the District Administrator for Student Services.
- Based upon information received, the building principal or his/her designee either solely, and or in conjunction with the office of the Superintendent, will make a decision to evacuate the entire school building, to conduct a partial evacuation, or not to evacuate the building. Students will take their backpacks and immediate belongings with them.
- Based upon information received, and when deemed appropriate, previously designated teams may be assigned to certain sections of the school building and conduct a search (sweep) of the building, looking for suspicious and/or unusual items. If it is determined that a search needs to be conducted, the corridors may be cleared and the staff and students may be required to remain in their current location until notified and/or the search has been completed and the building declared all clear. Teachers and other staff members will be asked to check their specific area for any suspicious and/or unusual items as well. The teams will be assisted with the search by the Somerville Police Department whenever possible.
- In the event that the building is evacuated, teachers will need to be in possession of their student rosters and the daily attendance for their specific class. These items may become very useful to account for the whereabouts of each student who appears on the school register.
- A check off list will be used when searching the building. The checklist becomes part of the information provided to the principal for use in determining if the building is all clear.
- The principal or his/her designee will make an announcement utilizing the Public Address System to communicate with the students and staff prior to any evacuation, as well as immediately following the evacuation, in the event that they are allowed to re-enter the building.

- In the event of a complete evacuation, the Fire Alarm may be used to assist with the evacuation. In the event the Fire Alarm is used to assist with the evacuation, the principal and/or his/her designee must notify the Fire Alarm Office (extension 8300) of the reason the alarm was activated.
- In the event that a search of any type is conducted, the team will report when areas are clear to the principal. If any type of evacuation has taken place and no device has been found, the principal will make a decision as to whether it is safe for the students and staff to return to any areas previously evacuated.
- In the event that any type of evacuation is ordered, a letter will be sent home with the students on the day of the incident or, the next school day if not possible, explaining the day's event to parents and guardians.

LEVEL II- BOMB FOUND

- In the event a suspicious or unusual item is found, the Police on site are to be notified immediately. The Somerville Police will then notify the appropriate agency. The individual who discovered the suspicious item should not touch or examine it, but just report it.
- The Superintendent of Schools or his designee will notify the Mayor's office.
- Cataldo Ambulance will be notified by the Fire Department
- In the event that an evacuation is deemed necessary, all students and staff will be instructed to remain in the building until an appropriate sweep has been completed outside of the building and evacuation routes have been declared clear.
- Evacuate areas as deemed necessary. If evacuation sites are to be used, follow the plan as designed using the primary and secondary sites described for each building in the evacuation policy.
- If evacuation sites are used, the City Hall Switchboard must be notified and the School Department will establish dedicated phone lines so that the parents/guardians who call can be informed of the location of the students.
- Teachers will need to be in possession of student rosters and have parents/guardians sign their children out if the parent/guardian comes to the evacuation site to get his/her child.
- A command post will be established if deemed necessary. The appropriate site of the command post will be determined by existing conditions. Individuals located at the command post might include the Superintendent of Schools, the school principal, representatives from the Police Department, Fire Department, Mayor's office, and any other personnel as deemed necessary due to conditions.
- If needed, a location will be designated for the media. The Superintendent of Schools or his designee will address the media and provide formal information about the issue.

LEVEL III – BOMB/EXPLOSION/FIRE

- In the event of an explosion, students should immediately crawl beneath their desks, close their eyes, and cover their heads with their arms, coats or books. Evacuation occurs only after explosions and flying debris have stopped. The building must be secured to minimize the potential of further loss.
- Follow evacuation procedure as described in Level II.
- Notify Police and Fire Departments by calling 911.
- If the fire alarm is not sounding, pull the alarm.
- The Fire Department notifies the Ambulance Company.

- The Superintendent of Schools or his designee notifies the Mayor's office.
- A command post will be established as described in Level II.
- Assemble the school crisis team and plan what to do.
- The Superintendent of Schools or his designee notifies the Board of Health.
- Coordinate with the Fire Department and local utility companies to shut off gas, electricity, and other utilities as deemed appropriate.

MISCELLANEOUS

- The School Department will determine if and when notices should be sent, and to whom they should be sent.
- A location will be established by the School Department to respond to telephone calls placed by parent/guardians inquiring about existing conditions and to answer questions relative to the who, what, where, and when.
- Appropriate training will be requested, on an as needed basis, from the State Police as well as other agencies as it relates to bomb threats on campus and how to respond properly including, but not limited to, education on what and how to look for and how to identify, suspicious and unusual items. A video will be provided to every building (procedural). An annual staff training session will be conducted for new personnel to the Somerville Public Schools. An annual drill for all staff, regarding this policy on evacuation, will take place with police, fire and public safety representatives.

Approved and Adopted/Date: February 17, 2000

Revised: August 2009

PHOTO IDENTIFICATION BADGES

Photo identification badges serve many purposes, but the most important is to protect the personal safety of Somerville Public Schools students and staff. Badges identify the people who should, and should not, be on the premises. Along with the Somerville Public Schools security standards, identification badges discourage unwanted visitors from entering the facilities, increase overall awareness and help build a sense of community.

1. **Somerville Public Schools Employees:** As part of our safety and security plan, each staff member will be issued a photo identification (“ID”) badge, which the staff member is required to wear at all times while at work. The ID badge will include the staff member’s name, job title and worksite(s). These badges are critical to knowing who works for the Somerville Public Schools and in what capacity.
2. **Student Teachers:** Each student teacher will be issued a photo ID badge, similar to the badges issued to regular school employees, which the student teacher must wear at all times during the performance of official duties.
3. **Substitutes:** Each substitute will be issued a site-specific badge with the name, logo, picture of the color-coded school or department, and the word "Substitute" printed in large letters in the middle of the badge. The badges will be available at all schools. Principals are responsible for ensuring that badges are issued to each substitute when s/he arrives and are collected at the completion of the substitute’s work assignment.
4. **Visitors and Volunteers:** In the past, many locations have instituted their own site-specific badges for visitors and volunteers. In order to create consistency in implementing the Somerville Public Schools Identification Badge Policy, all locations will now be required to use visitor badges issued by the Somerville Public Schools. Badges, similar to those issued to substitutes but with the word “Visitor” or “Volunteer” printed in large letters in the middle of the badge, will be available at each school and other appropriate sites. Each visitor and volunteer will be required to sign in and out and to wear an appropriate badge while visiting or volunteering. Principals are responsible for ensuring that badges are issued to each visitor or volunteer when s/he arrives and are collected before the person leaves the building. Principals may allow volunteers to keep their badges for the school year, if the volunteers are in the building on a daily/regular basis.

Approved: December 18, 2006

Reviewed: December 2008

USE OF SECURITY CAMERAS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY

The School Committee recognizes its responsibility to promote school safety and foster a safe and effective learning environment for students and staff, as well as for the general public who have occasion to use school facilities. To promote safe and secure school facilities, the School Committee supports the use of security cameras in its schools, or on school grounds, as part of an overall security plan. Security cameras will be utilized only in public areas within the schools and on school property where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy. Video-only security cameras may be installed in locations such as major exterior entrances and exits, large gathering spaces including corridors, stairwells, cafeteria, lobbies and libraries, and school parking lots. With prior approval from the School Superintendent/Designee, cameras may at times be temporarily placed in classrooms, staff dining areas, offices, or other areas. No video cameras shall be installed in locker rooms or restrooms. All cameras, including “Pan, Tilt, Zoom” (PTZ) cameras, will be used only for security and safety purposes. The privacy of individuals will be respected at all times. Audio recording shall not be utilized by the School District.

To further the School Committee’s objective, the School District’s Emergency Response Team shall review the District’s school safety and security plan and develop, implement and review District and school level safety practices. The School District Emergency Response Team shall also make recommendations to the Superintendent regarding the implementation and use of security cameras and other security measures as authorized by the School Committee.

Access to video feed and recordings shall be limited to school administration (Superintendent/Designee and School Principals/Designees), Legal Counsel, the Somerville Police Chief/Designee, and, with the permission of the Somerville Police Chief/Designee, other law enforcement agencies. Under no circumstances will the District’s video feed or recording be duplicated or transmitted without the approval of the Superintendent/Designee or the Somerville Police Chief/Designee, unless in accordance with a Court order and/or subpoena or otherwise required by law. Video recordings of athletic events, concerts, and plays and other school events do not hold the same confidentiality because they are public events and therefore can be shown.

A video recording used for security purposes in school buildings and/or on school property shall be the sole property of the Somerville Public Schools. The Superintendent/Designee shall be the custodian of the video feeds and recordings. All video feeds and recordings will be secured to avoid tampering and to ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. The District shall retain video images for a minimum of 14 calendar days and up to 30 calendar days, unless the circumstances warrant retaining videos for a longer period (for example, if it is anticipated that a video may be needed as evidence in a legal proceeding).

The Superintendent/Designee shall take all necessary steps to ensure that the video security system is operating properly.

Appropriate signage will be posted at entrances to the school campus and/or at major entrances into school buildings notifying students, staff, and the general public of the District’s use of security cameras.

Students and staff will receive additional written notification, as appropriate, regarding the use of security cameras in the school and/or school grounds. Such notification may include, but is not limited to, publication in student / parent handbooks and employee handbooks.

Members of the School Administration having normal access to school security camera video recordings will be required to have signed documentation on file with the office of the School Superintendent/designee indicating they will abide by this policy.

All Somerville Police Department protocols will be followed when the Somerville Police Department has access to Somerville Public Schools video feeds or recordings.

Approved: January 5, 2009

Approved as Revised: June 24, 2013

VANDALISM

The Somerville School Committee recognizes that acts of vandalism committed against public and private property are costly and require positive action through educational programs. Consequently, the Somerville School Committee will support various programs aimed at reducing the amount of vandalism.

Every citizen of the city, staff members, students, and members of the Police Department are urged by the Somerville School Committee to cooperate in reporting any incidents of vandalism to property under control of the school department, and the name(s) of the person or persons believed to be responsible. Each employee will report to the principal of the school every incident of vandalism known to him/her and, if known, the names of those responsible.

The Superintendent is authorized to sign a criminal complaint and to press the charges against perpetrators of vandalism against school property, and is further authorized to delegate, as he/she sees fit, authority to sign such complaints and to press charges.

Parents and students will be made aware of the legal implications involved. Reimbursement will be sought for all or part of any damages.

Revised: January 1996

Reviewed: December 2008

AUTHORIZED USE OF SCHOOL-OWNED MATERIALS

The Somerville School Committee wishes to be of assistance, whenever possible, to other City departments and community organizations. Therefore, permission to use school equipment may be granted by the Superintendent upon request by responsible parties or organizations.

School equipment may be used by staff members when the use is related to their school employment and by students when the equipment is to be used in connection with their studies or extracurricular activities.

Proper controls will be established by the Superintendent to assure the user's responsibility for, and return of, all school equipment. The Somerville School Department reserves the right to charge for damages or losses.

Adoption date: January 1996

Reviewed: December 2008

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The major purpose of the school system's transportation services is to aid students in getting to and from school in an efficient, safe, and economical manner.

The school system will contract for transportation services. Contracts will be awarded on a competitive bid basis by the Somerville School Committee. Bus contractors and taxi contractors, who will be held responsible for the safe operation of school buses, will comply with all applicable state laws and regulations, including but not limited to:

1. Specifications for school bus design and equipment
2. Inspection of buses
3. Qualifications and examinations of bus drivers (i.e. Criminal Offenses Records Inquiry (CORI) Search and drug testing.)
4. Driving regulations
5. Small vehicle requirements, if applicable
6. Insurance coverage
7. Adherence to local regulations and directives as specified in bid contracts

The Superintendent, working with the bus contractor and other appropriate administrators, will be responsible for establishing bus schedules, routes, stops, and all other matters relative to the transportation program.

Revised: January 1996

Reviewed: December 2008

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 40:5; 71:7A, B and C; 71:37D; 71:48A; 71:68; 71:71A;
71B:4; 71B:5; 71B:8; 74:8A; 76:1; 76:12Bi; 76:14

SCHOOL BUS SAFETY PROGRAM

The safety and welfare of student riders will be the first consideration in all matters pertaining to transportation. Safety precautions will include the following:

1. Children will be instructed as to the proper procedure for boarding and exiting from a school bus and in proper and safe conduct while aboard.
2. Emergency evacuation drills will be conducted at least twice a year to acquaint student riders with procedures in emergency situations.
3. All vehicles used to transport children will be inspected periodically for conformance with state and federal safety requirements.
4. Classroom instruction on school bus safety will be provided.

Adoption date: January 1996

Reviewed: December 2008

LEGAL REFS.: M.G.L. 90:7b as amended by Ch. 246 Acts of 1986
M.G.L. 90:1 et seq.; 713:2; 713:7L
Highway Safety Program Standard No. 17

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

The Somerville School Committee and its staff share with students and parents/guardians the responsibility for student safety during transportation to and from school. The authority for enforcing Somerville School Committee requirements of student conduct on buses will rest with the principal.

To ensure the safety of all students who ride in buses, it may occasionally be necessary to revoke the privilege of transportation from a student who abuses this privilege. Parents/Guardians of children whose behavior and misconduct on school buses endangers the health, safety, and welfare of other riders will be notified that their children face the loss of transportation privileges in accordance with regulations approved by the Somerville School Committee.

Adoption date: January 1996

Reviewed: December 2008

STUDENT CONDUCT ON SCHOOL BUSES

Procedures for Drivers and Parents/Guardians

1. In case of any misconduct on a bus, the incident may be reported on the proper form to the school principal. He/she may report the incident in writing to the parent concerned, with a copy to the Superintendent.
2. In case of a repetition by the same student, the principal may suspend the student's transportation privileges with written notice to the parent/guardian to report at once with the child to the Superintendent's office.
3. After a second offense and a conference with the Superintendent, if a third such incident occurs, bus privileges may be denied the student and the responsibility for transportation will then rest with the parent/guardian.

Loading and Unloading at Bus Stop

1. Riders must be on time. Bus drivers will not wait.
2. Riders will enter or leave the bus at regular stops only.
3. Orderly behavior and respect for private property will be required.
4. Instructions and directions of the driver must be followed by the riders when entering or leaving the bus.

Required Conduct Aboard the Bus

1. Riders must remain in seats or in place when the bus is in motion.
2. Whistling and shouting are not permitted.
3. Profanity and obscene language are forbidden.
4. Smoking is prohibited.
5. The following disturbances are prohibited:
 - Pushing or wrestling
 - Annoying other passengers or disturbing their possessions
 - Talking to the driver
 - Throwing objects within the bus or out of windows
 - Climbing over seats
 - Opening or closing windows
 - Leaning out of windows
 - Littering the bus
6. Parents/guardians will be held responsible for any defacing or damaging of the bus.

Parents/guardians and students will be informed of these regulations at the beginning of each school year, and parents/guardians will be asked to return signed forms indicating that the regulations have been received and read.

Adopted: August 2009

STUDENT TRANSPORTATION IN PRIVATE VEHICLES

School buses will be used for the transportation of students participating in co-curricular or extracurricular activities. However, when buses are not available, private vehicles may be permitted to transport students to or from school activities that fall within the academic day or extend the school day provided all of the following conditions are met:

1. The activity has the approval of the Superintendent of Schools.
2. The owner of the vehicle being used in transporting students must file evidence with the Superintendent of personal liability insurance coverage on the vehicle in the amounts of \$100,000 - \$300,000 or more.
3. The parents of students to be transported in this manner will be fully informed as to this means of transportation and will sign a statement to this effect.

SOURCE: MASC

Adopted: August 2009

POLICY REGARDING MOTOR VEHICLE IDLING ON SCHOOL GROUNDS

No motor vehicle operator shall cause or allow any motor vehicle operated by him or her on school grounds to idle unnecessarily, except for any of the following reasons: traffic conditions; queuing at a school for the purpose of picking up or discharging students; turbo-charged diesel engine cool down or warm up; maintenance of appropriate temperature for school buses when accepting or discharging passengers not to exceed three minutes in any fifteen minute period or one minute in any fifteen minute period for other motor vehicles; for circumstances involving safety or emergencies and for servicing or repairing motor vehicles; and as these exceptions are more completely described in the below referenced regulations. The term “school grounds” shall mean in, on or within 100 feet of the real property of the school whether or not it is in session, and shall include any athletic field or facility and any playground used for school purposes or functions which is owned by the municipality or school district, regardless of proximity to a school building, as well as any parking lot appurtenant to such school athletic field, facility or playground. Reasonable efforts shall be made by the district to identify by signage all known and actual air intake systems, which may be within 100 feet of an idling motor vehicle. A motor vehicle operator shall not idle a motor within 100 feet of such air intake system, unless the Somerville School District has determined that alternative locations block traffic, impair student safety or are not cost effective.

The Somerville School District shall erect and maintain in a conspicuous location on school grounds “NO IDLING” signage as described below. All such signage shall contain appropriate sized font so as to be visible from a distance of 50 feet.

NO IDLING

**PENALTIES OF \$100 FOR FIRST OFFENSE AND \$500
FOR SECOND AND SUBSEQUENT OFFENSES
M.G.L. C. 90, § 16B AND 540 CMR 27.00**

It shall be the responsibility of the school administration to ensure that each school bus driver employed by the Somerville School District and not by a school bus contractor shall, upon employment and at least once per year thereafter, sign a document acknowledging the receipt of copies of M.G.L. c. 90, § 16B and 540 CMR 27.00. The prohibitions contained in M.G.L. c. 90, § 16B shall be enforced by state or local law enforcement agencies.

Legal References: M.G.L. c. 71:37H, c. 90:16B and 540 CMR 27.00

Adopted by the School Committee: March 1, 2010

Revised: April 2011

FREE AND REDUCED PRICE FOOD SERVICES

The school system will take part in the National School Lunch Program and other food programs that may become available to assure that all children in the schools receive proper nourishment.

In accordance with guidelines for participation in these programs, and in accordance with the wishes of the Somerville School Committee, no child who a teacher believes is improperly nourished will be denied a free lunch or other food simply because proper application has not been received from his parents or guardians.

As required by state and federal regulations, the Somerville School Committee will approve a policy statement pertaining to eligibility for free milk, free meals, and reduced price meals.

Adoption date: January 1996

Reviewed: December 2008

LEGAL REFS.: National School Lunch Act, as amended (42 USC 1751-1760)
 Child Nutrition Act of 1966, P.L. 89-642, 80 Stat. 885, as amended
 M.G.L. 15:1G; 15:1L; 69:1C; 71:72

WELLNESS POLICY FOR PK -12

POLICY:

Somerville Public Schools envisions that all students and staff are healthy, safe, supported, engaged, and challenged. SPS recognizes that physical, social, and emotional health are linked to academic achievement and college, career, and community readiness. Students learn better in healthy schools with healthy employees.

This policy is intended to (1) promote healthy lifestyles by establishing guidelines and placing an emphasis on District-wide programs and efforts designed to support overall student wellness, and (2) help address the national challenge of childhood obesity at a local level

Definition of Wellness:

The definition of wellness long used by the National Wellness Institute is consistent with these tenets: *Wellness is an active process through which people become aware of, and make choices toward, a more successful existence.*

Guiding Principles:

SPS shall establish and maintain an infrastructure for management, oversight, implementation, communication and monitoring of the Wellness Policy and its established goals and objectives.

1. Students in SPS shall have access to healthy foods and drinkable water throughout the school day including access to the USDA's Child Nutrition Program.
2. All students in grades PK-12 shall receive standards-based health, nutrition, and physical education that provides students with learning experiences to develop the skills to live a healthy, well-rounded lifestyle.
3. All students in grades PK-12 shall have opportunities to be physically active.
4. SPS shall create and maintain healthy and safe physical environments that promote learning.
5. All students shall have access to strategies and supports to develop knowledge and skills for social-emotional health.
6. All students shall have access to health services to support students in chronic conditions management, first aid, and promote wellness through school based-nursing staff.
7. SPS is committed to establishing strong partnerships with students, employees, families, community members, and community organizations to ensure engagement and involvement between school and other settings to maximize the impact of wellness programming.

Lunch and Recess:

1. Schools will allow students to have sufficient time to eat lunch within the lunch period.
2. Principals are encouraged to provide recess before lunch for PK-8 students when possible.
3. Recess is an important activity in the school day for elementary school students. Studies have shown recess provides academic, social and physical benefits. Students should be given sufficient recess time to provide opportunities for social development in a safe environment and a chance to expend physical energy, thereby resulting in improved alertness in the classroom through a break in routine.
4. Recess should not be used to motivate or punish student unless there is a safety reason to do so.

District Wellness Procedures for ensuring that specific goals and objectives designed to meet all Guiding Principles outlined in this Wellness Policy shall be developed by the District Wellness Committee and reviewed/revised by said committee at least every three (3) years, and presented to the Superintendent for approval. The approved procedures shall serve as the basis for evaluating schools' and district departments' compliance with this Wellness Policy, to assess progress toward the district's wellness goals, and to inform any recommended Wellness Policy changes. The Wellness Committee will report back to the School Committee on an annual basis.

LEGAL REFS: Section 204 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (the Act), Public Law 111-296, added Section 9A to the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (NSLA) (42 U.S.C. 1758b), *Local School Wellness Policy Implementation*. The provisions set forth in Section 204 expand upon the previous local wellness policy requirement from the Child Nutrition and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Reauthorization Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-265).

Adoption Date: March 6, 2006

Revised: November 27, 2007

Date Approved by School Committee: December 17, 2007

Revised: August 2009

Revised: May 2013

Revised: December 2018

PROCEDURES

I. Wellness Policy Implementation, Monitoring, Accountability and Community Engagement

Goal/Objective: At least once every three years, the district will evaluate compliance, strength of policy, and progress toward goals.

- a. Under the direction of the Superintendent's designee a District Wellness Committee will be established and convened annually for the purpose of evaluating policy adherence, and regularly as required by Section 204 of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 to discuss possible improvement efforts in the area of student and staff wellness.
- b. Schools are encouraged to convene a wellness team to support wellness initiatives at their school.
- c. Every effort will be made to ensure that representation on the District Wellness Committee includes the Somerville School Committee, Parent Teachers Association (PTA), School Councils, School Health division of the Health Department, Physical Education Department, School Food and Nutrition Services Department, Somerville Community Schools Program, Superintendent's Office, Somerville Teachers' Union, community health agencies, student(s), parents/guardians, and school principals or their designees. Representation may occur through subcommittee work supporting district wellness. The District will utilize various methods of outreach throughout the year to encourage participation on this committee.
- d. Prior to the end of the school year, this committee will develop recommendations to update/change this policy based on discussions and committee input during committee meetings conducted throughout the year.
- e. The Superintendent's designee will develop information for discussion about the Wellness Policy at an Administrative Team Meeting and for School Committee Review during the next school year regarding possible policy changes and a final version of the policy will be shared publicly.

II. Nutrition

Goal/Objective: The district aims to teach, model, encourage, and support healthy eating to help all students develop healthy lifestyle practices.

1. School Meals

- a. The Somerville Food and Nutrition Services Director (FNSD) shall ensure that meals and snacks offered by the district's food service program meet all legal requirements for participation in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. All SPS are committed to offering school meals that are accessible to all students, are appealing and attractive to children, and are served in clean settings.
- b. The FNSD will offer fresh fruit as a component of the meal choices every day at school breakfast and fresh fruit and vegetables as a component of the meal choices every day at school lunch.
- c. The FNSD will continue to work on improving the nutritional quality and student acceptance of school meals by developing new recipes, giving students as many choices as possible, focusing on food presentation, and giving students opportunities to sample new foods.
- d. The FNSD will work to support regional agriculture and the consumption of fruits and vegetables through the inclusion of locally grown produce in school meals.
- e. Schools will allow sufficient, age-appropriate time for students to eat meals within the designated period.
- f. Schools will ensure water is made available and accessible to all students during meals and during the school day without charge.

2. Staff Qualifications & Professional Development

- a. The FNSD will offer health education training annually to all school food service staff.

3. Competitive Foods & Beverages

- a. Items sold by the FNSD through the A La Carte program at Somerville High School will meet the guidelines established by the “Act Relative to School Nutrition” signed into law on July 30, 2012 which established standards for competitive foods and beverages sold or provided in public schools during the school day.

4. Celebrations, Rewards and Snacks

- a. Teachers and parents/guardians will be given a list of recommended classroom snack foods and beverages, developed and disseminated by the Somerville Food and Nutrition Services Department in September. This list will meet the standards put forth by the “Act Relative to School Nutrition” signed into law on July 30, 2012.
<http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/district-departments/food-nutrition-services/healthy-snack-guidelines>
- b. Parents/guardians are encouraged to support the District’s nutrition education efforts by considering nutritional quality when selecting any snacks that they may donate for occasional class parties. Parents/guardians are encouraged to support these standards in the home environment.
- c. All food items brought into the schools are required to contain nutritional content information. Non-prepackaged food items are also required to contain food preparation information including where the food was prepared, a list of ingredients used in preparation of the food item, known allergens that may be included among the ingredients, and the following statement if applicable: *“Produced in a kitchen where nuts, tree nuts, or other allergy-producing products may have been present.”*
- d. School staff will not use food or candy as a reward for children’s accomplishments involving attendance, behavior, or academic performance.

5. Fundraising

- a. Students, staff and volunteers are strongly encouraged to consider fun, healthy fundraising options. Fundraisers conducted during regular school hours should encourage and promote good health habits.
<http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/storage/documents/pdfs/tipsheets-may-2018/fundraisers-family-health-8-6-17.pdf>
file:///C:/Users/ckelly/Downloads/Healthy_Fundraising.pdf
- b. Schools are encouraged to hold non-food fundraisers.

- c. School fundraisers where food is sold will only be offered after school meals are over.
- d. School fundraisers where food is sold are encouraged to select foods from the list of our recommended snack foods and beverages or the Guide for Smart Snacks In Schools.
http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/sites/default/files/Healthy%20Snack%20Ideas_0.pdf
https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/tn/508_USDASmartSnacks_508_82218.pdf

6. Nutrition Promotion

- a. All school staff will promote a school environment supportive of healthy eating.

7. Nutrition Education

- a. Nutrition education will be offered to all pre-K-8 students when possible.

8. Essential Healthy Eating & Physical Activity Topics in Health Education

- a. The District will outline comprehensive health topics in each K-8 grade in the Somerville Public Schools District Curriculum Guide. In Grades 9-12, topics will be outlined in Health and Physical Education Courses.

9. After-School Programs

- a. The Somerville Food and Nutrition Services Department, pending grant or in-kind funding, will provide nutritious snacks for after-school programs on school sites, using the after-school snack guidelines established under the National School Lunch Program.
- b. Any snack served by community-based after school programs that receive school department funding will meet the guidelines outlined in this policy.
- c. Parents/guardians will be strongly encouraged to provide nutritious snacks for their children in an after-school program.
- d. Health and wellness professional development will be provided to afterschool staff annually.
- e. Candy and other foods that do not meet District nutrition guidelines will not be used as an incentive or reward during in-school or out-of-school-time programming.

III. Physical Activity

Goal/Objective: To provide students with opportunities for quality physical education and daily physical activity before, during and after school in order to learn the understanding and benefits of the short and long-term benefits of a physically active and healthy lifestyle.

1. Physical Education

- a. Physical Education will be a required subject in all grades.
- b. All Somerville Physical Education teachers will be certified as is consistent with federal and state laws.
- c. Fitness testing will be incorporated into Physical Education services at all schools.

2. Recess

- a. Recess is an important activity in the school day for elementary school students. Studies have shown recess provides academic, social and physical benefits. Students should be given sufficient recess time to provide age-appropriate opportunities for social development in a safe environment and a chance to expend physical energy, thereby resulting in improved alertness in the classroom through a break in routine.
- b. Recess should not be used to motivate or punish students unless there is a safety reason to do so.
- c. Principals are encouraged to provide recess before lunch for Prek-8 students when possible.
- d. Outdoor recess should take place unless the temperature, including the wind chill, is below 15 or if the heat index (temperature plus humidity) is above 97 or if conditions are deemed unsuitable or unsafe due to rain, snow, sleet or ice.
<http://www.c-uphd.org/documents/wellness/weatherwatch.pdf>

3. Classroom Physical Activity Breaks & Active Academics

- a. Classroom teachers will be encouraged and supported in their efforts to incorporate movement as part of the classroom activities and provide short physical activity breaks between lessons and classes. <http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/district-departments/health-and-physical-education/movement-mindfulness>

4. Before & After School Activities

- a. Physical activity, outdoors whenever possible (see guidelines under III.2.d), will be incorporated as a consistent practice throughout the District in the afterschool program.

5. Active Transport

- a. Schools will be encouraged to participate in the Safe Routes to Schools program and promote walking, biking and “actively commuting” to and from school.
<https://www.massdot.state.ma.us/saferoutestoschool/RegisterYourEvent.aspx>

IV. Other Activities that Promote Student Wellness

Goal/Objective: The district will coordinate and encourage initiatives and school-based activities that are designed to promote student well-being, optimal development, strong educational outcomes and staff health and wellness.

1. Community Partnerships

- a. Schools will participate in programs that support food security such as the Backpack Program and be encouraged to expand programming as needed.
<http://www.somervillebackpackprogram.org/>

2. Screen Time

- a. The district will provide information about the potentially harmful effects of screen time based on current research and best practices.

3. Staff Wellness and Health Promotion

- a. The District will promote staff member participation in health promotion programs and will support programs for staff members that are accessible and free or low-cost.

4. Professional Learning

- a. When feasible, the district will offer annual professional learning opportunities and resources for staff to increase knowledge and skills about promoting healthy behaviors in the classroom and the school.

5. School Health Data Reporting

- a. Height and weight data will be collected annually on all children in Grades 1, 4, 7 and 10, as required by Massachusetts, during physical education classes when mandated by grants and/or the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Results will be made available to families upon request. This information is confidential information consistent with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and to the maximum extent possible under the law.
- b. School & City officials will meet to review YRBS data

6. Sustainability

- a. The District will work with other city departments to strengthen efforts to support recycling and composting in schools

7. Social Emotional Learning

- a. All pre-K-8 teachers will implement the Second Step curriculum
- b. Schools will receive ongoing professional development around Social Emotional Learning

Adoption Date: March 6, 2006

Revised: November 27, 2007

Date Approved by School Committee: December 17, 2007

Revised: August 2009

Revised: May 2013

Revised: January 2019