



## SOMERVILLE FAMILY LEARNING COLLABORATIVE

### SFLC Mission and Introduction

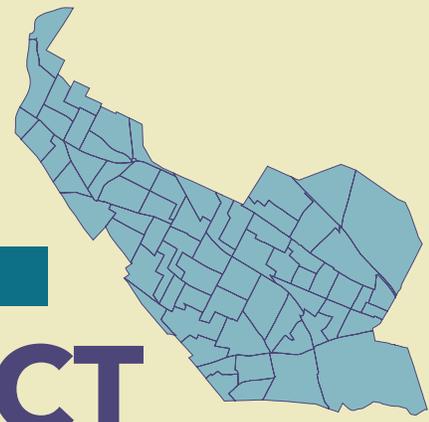
The Somerville Family Learning Collaborative (SFLC), established in 2011, is the department of family and community engagement of the Somerville Public Schools. The SFLC's mission is "to enhance the capacity of families and schools to support children's learning and well-being by collaborating with community partners and promoting welcoming, responsive schools and programs."

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the SFLC became a critical and indispensable source of family support and stabilization as families' lives were up-ended and threatened by the virus.

SFLC's deep-rooted connections and relationships became crucial as the multilingual team was able to quickly reach and support hundreds of families of all cultural and socio-economic backgrounds and help them find their way through the ever changing state and federal guidance about staying safe during the pandemic.

This could not have been done without a deep partnership with the City of Somerville and collaboration with a large network of community-based agencies. This compilation is a report of the incredible impact SFLC has had in helping Somerville residents stay safe, healthy and connected from July 2020 through June 2021.

[www.somerville.k12.ma.us/families](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/families)



2020-2021

# IMPACT REPORT

The SFLC served approximately 4,080 different Somerville families per month with children from birth through high school with access to educational, wraparound, and family support services.

The most frequent requests for support SFLC staff received from students and families included:

- 1 Food assistance
- 2 Child care and out of school time care
- 3 Housing
- 4 Financial support
- 5 Language support



# FAMILY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT:

## Collaboration with the Immigrant Services Unit:

Through intensive collaboration with the Immigrant Services Unit (ISU), which was created in response to COVID-19, SFLC engaged in cross-sector collaboration and case management for hundreds of families.

## Intensive Calls to Families:

Of the families served during this period, approximately 1,807 high-needs, predominantly immigrant families received 3-5 calls per week ranging from 30 minutes to over two hours.

## Multiple Methods used to Communicate:

The SFLC team used multiple methods to communicate with students and families, including: phone calls, text messages, WhatsApp, Talking Points App, email, FaceTime, website announcements, social media, e-newsletters, local cable television, and print flyers, brochures and postcards.

## Emergency Benefits Counseling:

During the COVID-19 pandemic, SFLC staff took on expanded roles by providing full basic needs support, emergency benefits counseling and application completion.

Basic needs support included food, clothing, diapers, gift cards, access to computers and internet, mental health support, housing stability, COVID-19 testing and vaccination appointments.

## Adaptability and Hybrid Programming:

The SFLC worked to build programming that is adaptable and responsive to our multiple populations through a mix of virtual and in-person options.



# FAMILY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT DATA:

Over the course of the year, we adopted a hybrid model of serving children and families. The SFLC offered both virtual and in-person programming when possible. **The SFLC served approximately 4,080 different Somerville families per month with children from birth through high school with access to educational, wraparound, and family support services.**

## Program offerings included:



### SomerBaby

New baby virtual home visits were provided to 133 families.



### ParentChild+

Early literacy virtual home visits were provided to 52 immigrant families with visits provided twice a week during the school year.



### Playgroups

Offered 12 interactive playgroups on a weekly basis across 3 sessions, serving 135 families throughout the year, and 88 pre-recorded Multilingual storytimes/playgroups.



### Parent/Caregiver Support Groups

9 support groups were offered on a weekly basis across 4 sessions, serving 132 families throughout the year.



### Dedicated COVID-19 Response Somerville Diaper Project

Distributed more than 278,000 diapers, with 237 individual home deliveries made. Each week, between 70-150 families came to school sites to pick up free diapers.



### Volunteers Recruited

The SFLC maintains a database of nearly 1,200 registered volunteers; the number of new volunteers grew by nearly 150 in the last school year.



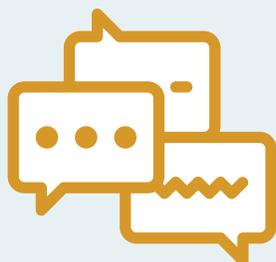
### Parent English Classes

The SFLC provided English classes to 60 parents, for 2 semesters, over 5 classes, and one informal conversation group.



### Homeless Student Services

Coordinated wraparound services for 103 students throughout the school year.



## Multilingual Services:

The Multilingual Services team provided a total of 2,838 hours of interpretation. Languages of interpretation were predominantly Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole with additional interpretation provided in Arabic, Bengali, Nepali, Mandarin, and others. The team also translated approximately 1,683 pages.

Coordinated multilingual services for a total of 9 Multilingual Town Halls and school based multilingual info meetings. Biweekly School Committee Meetings and monthly Special Education Parent Advisory Council.

## SFLC Program offerings continued:



### Students Enrolled

For the 2020-2021 School Year, the enrollment team processed:

- 1,199 New Pre-K through 12th Grade Active Registrations (of those, 304 registrations were “not attending” students)
- 180 K-12 in-person Language Assessments
- 35 Language Assessment Phone Screenings
- Maintained communication with parents of approximately 100 students approved for the 1 Year Withdrawal Waiver. Communications were focused on the reentry process, which was available up to July 1, 2021



### School-Based Family Liaisons

Direct services provided to hundreds of families in Somerville Public Schools’ 10 schools.

Services included the Somerville Backpack Program, P-EBT, food and gift card distribution, COVID-19 testing and vaccination outreach, virtual parent teacher conferences, internet and laptop setup, summer learning outreach and enrollment, outreach for and distribution of a wide array of basic needs.

## COMMUNITY COLLABORATIONS and Lessons Learned

### Community Partners the SFLC collaborated with most closely:

- Cambridge Health Alliance, Community Action Agency of Somerville, Cradles to Crayons, Food for Free, Office of Housing Stability, SomerPromise, Somerville Community Growing Center, Somerville Food Security Coalition, Somerville Office of Immigrant Affairs, The Beautiful Stuff Project, and The Welcome Project

### Practices to maintain that developed during the COVID-19 Pandemic:

- Increased collaboration between school, city and community organizations
- Self-advocacy
- Talking Points App
- Virtual Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Virtual staff meetings and professional development opportunities

### What we learned over the last year:

- Everyone is not treated equally, especially in a pandemic
- Virtual meetings with parents could become the new normal
- We need to take mental health seriously
- Community is essential
- Technology is essential
- Cross-sector work is vital for supporting the community



**Thank you!** The SFLC would like to extend our deepest gratitude and thanks to all of our partners in this work! We could not have done any of this without you! We look forward to continuing our work together in the coming year!