

Student Handbook

2026-2027

Somerville High School



www.somerville.k12.ma.us

617-629-5250

81 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA 02143

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Welcome from the Principal of Somerville High School

To Our Students and their Families/Caregivers:



We are very excited to be working with you during the 2025-2026 school year. I take great pride in serving as principal at Somerville High School, where I work alongside a dedicated team of staff that is committed to providing a safe, nurturing, and intellectually stimulating environment for all of our students. Our goal is for students to be able to explore their passions, become effective communicators, make strong connections, and engage with the world around them through authentic, meaningful learning experiences.

Please take some time to review this handbook, which details our school's policies, procedures, resources, and opportunities. It can be a valuable guide to ensuring a successful and enriching experience for our students.

I encourage all students to actively engage in their learning, both in and outside of the classroom. I highly recommend that you take advantage of the many opportunities available at our comprehensive high school, including the wide range of academic and CTE programming, athletics, clubs, and internships. Participate in our community building events, such as staff vs. student games, dances, and the Multicultural Fair. Take the time to get to know your classmates, your teachers, your counselors, and other staff. We regularly ask alumni to reflect on their experience at Somerville High School; the common themes of their responses are their strong relationships with staff, and their experiences with our extra-curricular and community building events.

I also encourage parents, guardians, and all caregivers to actively participate in your student's educational journey. Your support and involvement play a key role in shaping their success. Communication is key to a successful school experience. We encourage open lines of communication between students, parents, families, staff, and administration. Somerville High School offers a robust system of support for students, so please reach out with any questions or concerns. Together, we can create a strong partnership to ensure the best possible learning experience for every student.

Thank you for entrusting us with your student's education. We look forward to a successful year filled with academic excellence, personal growth, and wonderful experiences.

Sincerely,

Alicia Kersten

Principal,
Somerville High School

SOMERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

PROFILE OF A GRADUATE - HIGHLANDER HABITS

The Highlander Habits is a list of skills that Somerville High School is committed to having all students master over their time at SHS for post-secondary readiness and success. This graduate profile was created using the input of faculty, student, and parent focus groups as part of the Envisioning the Future of SHS project funded by the Barr Foundation. Teachers, counselors, and administrators will use the Highlander Habits in a variety of ways. These skills will be embedded into classroom assignments, where students will receive feedback on how they are mastering the skills. Students will be recognized by their teachers and the SHS Community for exemplifying the skills through the “Highlander of the Quarter” awards program. We will also be connecting these skills to our out-of-school learning opportunities and internships.

Growth Mindset

- Persevere through difficult tasks and obstacles
- Take ownership of own learning by reflecting on learning, being aware of one's strengths and weaknesses, and taking the initiative to improve
- Be willing to take risks
- Demonstrate passion and curiosity for learning

Physical and Emotional Wellness

- Make healthy physical and emotional choices
- Build and maintain healthy personal relationships
- Identifies who/when/how/where to seek help
- Build self-confidence and pursue their passions
- Are independent and self-sufficient
- Maintains a healthy balance of work, play, rest

Communication

- Deliver information and ideas effectively in multiple formats
- Write with precision, clarity and coherence appropriate to task and audience
- Listen effectively to decipher meaning, values, attitudes, and intentions
- Advocate for their future and communicate personal values

Collaboration

- Share responsibility for collaborative work
- Value individual contributions made by each team member
- Work effectively in diverse teams
- Build consensus while making decisions



Critical and Creative Thinking

- Analyze and evaluate information critically and competently
- Gather, filter, and synthesize from a variety of sources
- Develop ideas and solutions based upon data and strong content knowledge
- Adapt knowledge and skills to new environments

Culturally Competent Citizenship

- Has awareness of their own and others' cultural heritage
- Engage effectively in a diverse world - locally, nationally, and globally
- Demonstrate compassion, empathy and a commitment to social justice
- Value and use the arts as a fundamental form of human expression
- Communicate effectively in multiple languages

Responsibility

- Behave with integrity; are responsible for their behavior, actions, and choices
- Are reliable, punctual, and professional with proper etiquette
- Demonstrate digital literacy and citizenship and a responsible use of social media
- Interact appropriately and positively with adults and peers

Post - Secondary Readiness

- Demonstrate academic and professional excellence (including content mastery and academic, technological, and vocational skills in reading, writing, and math) required for the post-secondary program of their choice
- Set specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, and time-sensitive goals
- Acquire strong organizational skills to support academic and personal growth
- Possess financial literacy and basic money management skills

2025-2026 SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Emily Ackman	<i>Chair, Ward One</i>
Leiran Biton	<i>Vice Chair, Ward Seven</i>
Elizabeth (Liz) Eldridge	<i>Ward Two</i>
Michele Lippens	<i>Ward Three</i>
Andre L. Green	<i>Ward Four</i>
Laura Pitone	<i>Ward Five</i>
Emma Stellman	<i>Ward Six</i>
Jake Wilson	<i>Mayor</i>
Lance Davis	<i>President, Somerville City Council</i>
Dr. Rubén Carmona	<i>Superintendent of Schools</i>

SCHOOL DEPARTMENT ADMINISTRATION

Dr. Rubén Carmona, Superintendent of Schools
TBD, Chief of Staff
Dr. Jessica Boston Davis, Assistant Superintendent of Academics
Karen Woods, Chief Personnel Officer
Dr. Robert Berretta, Chief Financial Officer
Ildefonso Arellano, Director of Special Education
Margaret DiPasquale, Director of Student Services
John Breslin, Director of Technology
Mariana MacDonald, Director of Human Resources
Lauren Mancini, Food and Nutrition Services Director
Darryl Nash, Director of Communications and Grants
Simone Braga, Enrollment Office Director
Elizabeth Quaratiello, School Health Services Director
Jennifer Ochoa, Director of Basic Needs and Housing Support Services
Paulina Mitropoulos, Director, Multilingual Learner Education
Samantha Eligene, Director of Data, Assessment, and Accountability
Joe Tringale, Director of Operations



SOMERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION**617- 629-5250**

Principal	Alicia Kersten	617-625-6600 x611014
Associate Principal	Jodi Remington	617-625-6600 x612410
Director of CTE	James Hachey	617-625-6600 x610401

Main Office

Head Clerk	Irma Calderon	617-625-6600 x611018
Administrative Assistant	Marie Connolly	617-625-6600 x611010
Administrative Assistant	TBD	617-625-6600 x611019

Beacon Community - Blue**Room C211 (Student Last Names A-F, Class of 2026-2028)****(Student Last Names A-Di, Class of 2029)****Direct Line 617-629-5260**

Assistant Principal	Leslie Lartey	617-625-6600 x612113
Dean of Students	TBD	617-625-6600 x612130
School Counselor	Justin LaBerge (A-Che, 9th A-Bri)	617-625-6600 x612112
School Counselor	Melanie Banks (Chh-F, 9th Bro-Di)	617-625-6600 x612111
Administrative Assistant	Paula Mello	617-625-6600 x612110

Elm Community - White**Room C104 (Newcomers in the MLE Program)****Direct Line 617-629-5270**

Assistant Principal	Beth O'Connor	617-625-6600 x611043
Dean of Students	TBD	617-625-6600 x611044
Multilingual School Counselor	Anne Eden	617-625-6600 x611017
Multilingual Adjustment Counselor	Iliana Flores	617-625-6600 x611015
Administrative Assistant	Natali Cardona Restrepo	617-625-6600 x611040

Highland Community - Red**Room C411 (Student Last Names G-N, Class of 2026-2028)****(Student Last Names Do-Ma, Class of 2029)****Direct Line 617-629-5280**

Assistant Principal	Paul Cooley	617-625-6600 x614113
Dean of Students	Gilbert White	617-625-6600 x614140
School Counselor	Jeremy Rischall (G-Le, 9th Do-He)	617-625-6600 x614112
School Counselor	Kelly Albrecht (Lh-N, 9th Hi-Ma)	617-625-6600 x614111
Administrative Assistant	Niki Sullivan	617-625-6600 x614110

Broadway Community - Purple**Room C310 (Student Last Names O-Z, Class of 2026-2028)****(Student Last Names Mc-Z, Class of 2029)****Direct Line 617-629-5290**

Assistant Principal	Cynthia Massillon	617-625-6600 x613103
Dean of Students	Mark Quiñones	617-625-6600 x613130
School Counselor	Natalia Ruiz Toro (O-Sai, 9th Mc-Ro)	617-625-6600 x613101
School Counselor	Cathy Maguire (Sal-Z, 9th Ru-Z)	617-625-6600 x613102
Administrative Assistant	TBD	617-625-6600 x613100

Department Heads/Supervisors

Art/Visual Arts	May Chau	617-629-5250 x613351
Athletics/Intramurals	Stanley Vieira	617-629-5250 x611020
Center for Career and Technical Education	James Hachey	617-629-5250 x610401
College and Career Readiness Director	Melanie Kessler	617-629-5250 x613024
Community & Work Based Learning	Meaghan McDevitt	617-629-5250 x611030
English	Meagan Spinelli	617-629-5250 x612091
Health & Physical Education	Blair Williams	617-625-6600 x611030
Information Technology	John Breslin	617-629-5250 x611077
Library Media Services	Tania Connor	617-629-5250 x612091
Mathematics	Trish Murphy-Sheehy	617-629-5250 x614350
Multilingual Learner Education	Patricia Brady	617-629-5250 x613081
Performing Arts/Music & Theatre	Beverly Mosby	617-629-5250 x612312
Registrar and Data Supervisor	Julie Phylis	617-629-5250 x613082
School Counseling	Lindsey Dobbins	617-629-5250 x613022
Science	Marianna Hosking	617-629-5250 x614092
Social Studies	David DiPietro	617-629-5250 x614091
Special Education	Konstantina Kalogridis	617-629-5250 x615122
World Languages	Dr. Lisa Machnik	617-625-6600 x6052

SFLC - Family and Community Engagement - Room D153

School Based Family & Community Liaison	Scarlett Brea Soto	617-625-6600 x611041
School Based Family & Community Liaison	Eline Santana	617-625-6600 x611531
School Based Family & Community Liaison	Nehemie St. Louis	617-625-6600 x611531

SHS Nurses - Room 106

School Nurse	Carli Eldridge	617-625-6600 x611063
School Nurse	Terri Emens	617-625-6600 x611062
School Nurse	Maria Tully	617-625-6600 x611061

See page 78 for a full list of School Counseling staff and services.

SHS SCHEDULE

Block	Time	M	T	W	TR	F
1	7:55-9:02	Class 1	Class 1	Homeroom 7:55-8:30 Class 1 8:30-9:30	Class 1	Class 2
2	9:06-10:01	Class 2	Class 3	Class 2 9:34-10:29	Class 2	Class 3
3	10:05-11:00	Class 3	Class 4	Circle 10:33-10:58	Class 4	Class 4
4	11:04-12:34	Class 5	Class 5	Lunch/Class 3 10:58-12:28	Class 5	Class 5
5	12:38-1:33	Class 6	Class 6	Class 4 12:32-1:33	Class 6	Class 6
6	1:37-2:32	Class 7	Class 7	Early Release	Class 7	Class 7

Bell Schedule

7:45 a.m. First Bell
 7:50 a.m. Warning Bell
 7:55 a.m. Tardy Bell

Lunch times on M, T, Th, & F

Lunch 1: 11:04-11:34

Lunch 2: 11:34-12:04

Lunch 3: 12:04-12:34

Lunch times on Wed

Lunch 1: 10:58-11:28

Lunch 2: 11:28-11:58

Lunch 3: 11:58-12:28

2:32-2:47 p.m. Extra Help with Teachers

2:32-3:15 p.m. Detention with Deans; Teacher Office Hours*

*Teachers have 30 minute office hours at least one day per week; check with individual teachers for their schedule.

Students will be allowed into the building starting at 7:00 a.m. Students must enter only through the main doors and must show their ID to a staff member before entering. Students entering before 7:45 must remain in the cafeteria or have a pass to be in another area of the building supervised by a staff member.

Students having no make-up or detention assignment must leave the building promptly at 2:32 unless they are involved in an after school program or activity. Loitering in the corridors or on the campus is not permitted.

Daily Attendance/Absences

If a student is going to be absent for the day, their parent/guardian should notify the school by calling or emailing the student's Community office before 8:15 a.m. on the day of the absence. (Phone numbers of Community offices are listed under SHS Administration on page 6.) A student with more than five unexcused absences in a quarter may fail the course per our attendance policy.

Tardy to School

Students are tardy if they are not in by 7:55 a.m. A student who is tardy must report to the main office, present their ID, and obtain a late slip before proceeding to class. If the student has documentation indicating a legitimate reason for the tardiness, the student should notify their Community in order to have the tardy excused. Students who are more than 30 minutes late for school will be considered absent for that class period in accordance with the SHS attendance policy, unless the tardy is excused. Excessive unexcused tardiness may result in failing a class.

Early Dismissal/Leaving During the School Day

Students should miss part of the school day only for important reasons. The list of excused absences is noted in the section titled **Student Absences and Excuses**. All appointments should be scheduled after school whenever possible. Anytime a student will be leaving school during the school day, a parent/guardian must call or email their student's Community office to confirm the time and the reason. This does not apply to Extended Campus during a student's scheduled lunch block.

NO SCHOOL

During inclement weather conditions, "no school" announcements will be broadcast by local media outlets starting as early as the day before a predicted severe weather event. Announcements will also be posted on our website at www.somerville.k12.ma.us, aired on local cable, shared to social media feeds when possible, and shared directly to staff and families using the district's direct messaging platforms, such as Blackboard.

The Superintendent of Schools uses their best judgment as to whether school should be held during inclement weather. However, parents/guardians are also urged to exercise discretion with regard to sending their children to school during inclement weather. Please do not call police, fire, or the school department for "no school" information.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Program Requirements

Somerville High School is a comprehensive high school offering a wide array of courses and educational programs to meet the needs of its diverse students.

In light of recommendations by the Massachusetts High School Program of Studies (MassCore) and requirements of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), students who are preparing to enter four-year colleges are urged to include in their high school program:

- 4 years of English
- 4 years of Mathematics
- 4 years of Science (including three laboratory classes)
- 4 years of Social Studies
- 3 years of a World Language (including two years of the same language)
- 1 year of Fine Arts/or Performing Arts (Music, Visual Arts, Theatre, or Media Art)

Following this program, along with all other Somerville High School graduation requirements, ensures that students will meet or exceed MassCore recommendations and eligibility requirements established by the NCAA.

Students are advised to take time and thought in completing the course selection card since it is very difficult to make satisfactory changes once the school year has begun. Course selection should reflect career goals, interests and abilities. Students are urged to consult with their parents, counselors, teachers, department heads, and curriculum coordinators before making final decisions.

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)

See the Department of Education website for the most updated information regarding MCAS requirements for the purpose of graduation. [Massachusetts Graduation Requirements and Related Guidance](#)

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) will be administered in Grade 10 in both English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics, while the administration of the Science MCAS will begin in Grade 9. According to the Education Reform Act, students are now required to meet specific Competency Determination (CD) standards for English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, and Science in order to receive a diploma, in addition to meeting all local graduation requirements.

Contact your student's school counselor if you have questions about these requirements.

Promotion Requirements

CREDITS NEEDED TO BE PROMOTED

to sophomore class	25 credits
to junior class	50 credits
to senior class	70 credits

Full-Year courses (2 semesters): 5 credits/class

Half-Year courses (1 semester): 2.5 credits/class

ALL STUDENTS in grades 9-12 must carry a full-time program equaling 990 hours of instruction each year.

Graduation Requirements

- Successful completion of **105** credits, with at least **20** credits earned in senior year
- Enrollment in high school for four years beyond eighth grade

English 1, 2, 3 and 4 or appropriate MLE courses

NOTE: Students may not take more than two major English courses in one year with the exception of senior year. A student who has failed a major English course must either pass the failed English course in the subsequent summer school session or enroll in an Edgenuity course during the summer or repeat the failed English course in the succeeding academic year. Placement in English courses should be sequential. An exception to the sequential rule can be made for seniors.

Mathematics, 20 credits

NOTE: Including a sequence of Algebra 1/Geometry/Algebra 2 or the equivalent (with the approval of the Department Head)

Science, 15 credits

Social Studies, 15 credits, including U.S. History

NOTE: Starting with the class of 2026, students are required to pass World History, US History, and then can choose from electives their junior year. Students in the class of 2025 and 2024 are required to take U.S. History 1, U.S. History 2, and World History; students must pass at least one year of U.S. History to graduate.

World Language, 10 credits

NOTE: Students are required to pass two years of the same World Language. Students must pass the Career and Technical Education Program for at least 2 years, beginning with 10th grade, to be eligible for the modification of the World Language requirement. Consideration of the World Language requirement for Special Education students will be included as part of the I. E. P. Team decision. Designated English Learners' proficiency in their native language will satisfy the graduation requirement.

Physical Education, 5 credits AND Health, 5 credits

NOTE: All students are required to take a minimum of one Physical Education or Health Education course each year. All students are required to pass Health Education 1, Health Education 2 or a health elective, and two semester courses in Physical Education.

Suggested Physical Education/Health Education Course Sequence:

Grade 9 – Health Education 1

Grade 10 – Physical Education

Grade 11 – Health Education 2 or a health elective

Fine or Performing Arts, 5 credits

NOTE: Students must pass 5 credits of Fine Arts and/or Performing Arts (Music, Visual Arts, Theatre, or Media Art).

MCAS prep courses may be counted in meeting requirements.

Course/Graduation Requirements for Career and Technical Education Students:

A student must be enrolled in the Career and Technical Education Program for four years, beginning with “Exploratory”, to be eligible for the modification of the Math requirement. Students must pass the Career and Technical Education Program for at least 2 years, beginning with 10th grade, to be eligible for the modification of the World Language requirement. Students electing a vocational program for career-entry positions must also accumulate minimum credit requirements according to the following:

Successful completion of **105** credits, with at least **20** credits earned in senior year

English 1, 2, 3 and 4 or appropriate MLE courses

NOTE: Students may not take more than two major English courses in one year with the exception of senior year. A student who has failed a major English course must either pass the failed English course in the subsequent summer school session or enroll in an Edgenuity course during the summer or repeat the failed English course in the succeeding academic year. Placement in English courses should be sequential. An exception to the sequential rule can be made for seniors.

Mathematics, 20 credits

NOTE: Freshmen, sophomores and juniors will take math courses offered in the math department, at minimum up to and including Algebra 2. If a student completes Algebra 2 with a passing grade and meets or exceeds expectations (minimum scaled score of 486) on the Math MCAS, they will be eligible to satisfy the fourth year of math requirement from the embedded academic portion in their career area. Students must pass their CTE class in their senior year to be eligible for this exemption.

Science, 15 credits

Social Studies, 15 credits, including U.S. History

NOTE: Starting with the class of 2026, students are required to pass World History, US History, and then can choose from electives their junior year. Students in the class of 2025 are required to take U.S. History 1, U.S. History 2, and World History; students must pass at least one year of U.S. History to graduate.

World Language, 10 credits

NOTE: Students are required to pass two years of the same World Language. Students must pass the Career and Technical Education Program for at least 2 years, beginning with 10th grade, to be eligible for the modification of the World Language requirement.

Physical Education, 5 credits AND Health, 5 credits

NOTE: All students are required to take a minimum of one Physical Education or Health Education course each year. All students are required to take and pass Health Education 1 and Health Education 2 or a health elective along with two semester courses in physical education.

NOTE: Health 1 is embedded in the Exploratory program AND fulfills the Health 1 requirement. education.

Fine or Performing Arts, 5 credits

NOTE: Students must pass 5 credits of Fine Arts and/or Performing Arts (Music, Visual Arts, Theatre, or Media Art).

MCAS prep courses may be counted in meeting requirements.

CTE students who are classified as Special Education or as English learners or former English learners during their high school years may request a 2.5 or 5 credit graduation requirement waiver during 11th and 12th grade that can be applied to courses not required by state or federal regulations. Students who wish to request this waiver should contact their school counselor.

Grading System

Every student will be graded in each subject each quarter.

The following grades will be used for scholarship:

A+ 100-98	A 97-93	A- 92-90
B+ 89-87	B 86-83	B- 82-80
C+ 79-77	C 76-73	C- 72-70
D+ 69-67	D 66-63	D- 62-60

F 59-45 (59-25 for final quarter of course; 2nd and 4th Qtr for semester, 4th Qtr for full year)

P/F	Pass/Fail
I	Incomplete
NC	No Grade (<i>No Credit</i>)
W	Withdrawn
M	Excused for medical reasons

Each quarter teachers will comment on the student's progress.

An average of quarterly grades will be used to determine passing or failing for a semester course. For a full year course, an average of all four quarters' grades will be used to determine passing or failing for a course. Final course grades are determined by these quarterly averages and must meet the minimum threshold of the above alphabetical grades to which they are assigned (D-).

Students enrolled in certain courses will be graded "Pass" or "Fail."

Incomplete Grades

An "I" (Incomplete) will be used to indicate that a student's work is not complete because of excessive absences entering the course late, or another valid reason approved by the student's Assistant Principal. A student's current grade will be posted on the report card, and the "I" will be in the comments. A student who is given an "I" will be required to make up the work within the first five weeks of the subsequent quarter (when the next quarter's progress reports are due). If the work is not made up, the grade that is posted on the report will not be changed. If the work is made up, the grade will be changed.

No Credit (NC) = No Grade

When a student is enrolled in a course but will not be receiving a grade, NC will appear on the report card and transcript.

- An "NC" grade is given when a student enters a **semester course** after Q1 or Q3 progress reports, and there isn't a transfer grade from the same academic area.
- An "NC" grade is given when a student enters a **semester course** after the beginning of Q2 (fall semester) or Q4 (spring semester), and there isn't a transfer grade from the same academic area. "NC" grade given in Q2 or Q4 for a **semester course** will result in "NC" grade for final grade and *No credit* in that course.
- An "NC" grade is given when a student enters a **full year course** after progress reports for Q1, Q2 or Q3, and there isn't a transfer grade from the same academic area. A student must enter a full year course prior to Q3 progress reports in order to earn a final grade and full credit.
- An "NC" grade given in Q4 for a **full year course** will result in "NC" grade for final grade and *No credit* in that course.

- An “NC” final grade will not count in the end of year GPA.
- An “NC” can only be awarded one quarter per year per course.
- An “NC” does not count as credit for the purposes of Athletics eligibility.

Extenuating Circumstances

Due to extenuating circumstances, a student might not qualify for a grade in some or all of their courses. In these cases, a graduation plan will be written by the counselor and approved by the Principal. The Graduation Plan should contain the course/s to be graded “NC” and how the final grade should be calculated and awarded.

“W” = Withdrawn

The mark “W” (Withdrawn) will be used to indicate that a student has dropped a course after the add/drop period, as per student’s grade at the time of withdrawal.

“M” = Medical (Excused for medical reasons)

All “Medicals” for any course requires a physician statement/medical documentation and a Graduation Plan to be written by the counselor and approved by the Principal. After a student has received an M on a report card, the student must meet with the principal and athletic director to determine athletic eligibility.

No Credit Policy

This grading policy applies to newly enrolled students with no transfer credits from another school system or country or with course grades, which cannot be accepted for credit at Somerville High School. In the latter case, determination of acceptance or non-acceptance of courses for credit will be made by the School Counseling Department.

Full Year Courses

- A newly enrolled student will not receive a grade for the quarter or quarters when they are not present at SHS. In place of grade for this quarter/these quarters, an NC grade will appear on the student’s report card.
- A newly enrolled student will receive a letter grade only for the quarter(s) that the student is present at SHS.
- A newly enrolled student must be enrolled at SHS for at least two consecutive quarters to receive a final grade and credit in a full year course.
- A newly enrolled student will not receive a grade for a quarter in which they are enrolled after the issuance of progress reports.
- In order to receive a final grade in a full year course, the newly enrolled student must be present before the issuance of progress reports in the 3rd Quarter.
- A newly enrolled student entering after the issuance of 3rd Quarter progress reports will receive an NC grade for 3rd quarter.
- Partial credit can be awarded if the student receives a passing grade in Q4 (60 or higher).

Semester Courses

- A newly enrolled student will not receive a grade for a quarter when they are not present at SHS. In place of a grade for this quarter, an NC grade will appear on the student’s report card.
- A newly enrolled student will receive a letter grade only for the quarter(s) that the student is present at SHS.
- A newly enrolled student will not receive a grade for a quarter in which they enroll after the issuance of progress reports for that quarter.
- In Order to receive a final grade in a semester course, the newly enrolled **student must be present before the start of Quarter 2 for a fall semester course and before the start of Quarter 4 for a spring semester course.** A newly enrolled student entering after the beginning of 2nd Quarter in a fall semester course or after the beginning of 4th Quarter in a spring semester course will receive NC grade for the semester course.

Assignment of Student to Grade Level

Newly enrolled students from another school system or country will be assigned to a grade according to Counseling Department determination after a review of an official transcript and credits earned. The need to meet all graduation requirements prior to graduation will be considered in this process. Grade level placement will not be determined by credits alone. Foreign transcripts are evaluated using the district's [Foreign Transcript Evaluation Guide](#).

If a new student transfers to SHS with 70 or more credits earned at a prior school but they cannot graduate in one year because they cannot meet their SHS graduation requirements, then the student will be enrolled in the 11th grade.

Course Level Descriptors

Advanced Placement (AP): These courses are modeled upon comparable college courses and are aligned with national Advanced Placement curriculum guidelines and objectives set forth by the College Board. Students enrolled in AP courses are expected to take the corresponding Advanced Placement examination in May. Colleges and universities may award college-credit for earning qualifying scores on AP exams.

Requirements for enrollment: To be enrolled in an AP course, a student must have a teacher recommendation and demonstrate the ability to keep up with a demanding workload. See each course description for content specific requirements or pre-requisites.

Honors (H): These courses are taught at an accelerated pace and students will have an increased independent workload that includes, but is not limited to, research-based projects and papers. In addition to the College Preparatory curriculum, students in honors-level courses may explore some topics in greater depth, study additional curricular topics, and read accompanying complex texts.

Requirements for enrollment: To be enrolled in an Honors course, a student must have a teacher recommendation and should maintain an overall average of B or above in content-related College Preparatory classes.

College Preparatory (CP): These courses prepare students for college and careers. Please see the course descriptors for each course in each department.

Requirements for enrollment: Enrollment in CP courses is based on teacher recommendation.

Sheltered English Immersion Program (SEIP):

The Sheltered English Immersion Program (SEIP) is a program for students who have emerging English proficiency and receive content instruction aligned to grade-level standards by teachers trained in their content areas. Instruction is primarily in English and teachers use sheltered instruction techniques, which may include grouping students by language proficiency level and native language, using adapted materials and texts, using an increased number of visuals, and using native language support, in order to make lessons understandable.

Honor Roll

A student who receives no grade lower than B- will qualify for "Honors". An "Honors" student who receives A's in 25 semester credits will qualify for "High Honors."

GPA Policy

1. Somerville High School calculates Grade Point Average (GPA) based on a weighted scale using the Grade Values in the chart below. Students wishing to calculate an unweighted GPA should use the CP values only.
2. GPA is available in student X2 accounts upon completion of four consecutive quarters at Somerville High.

3. All courses, with the exception of courses designated Pass/Fail in the Program of Studies, will be used to compute GPA.
4. All courses NOT designated in the Program of Studies as "Advanced Placement" or "Honors" or "CP" will be considered "CP" courses for the purpose of computing GPA.
5. Students who transfer into Somerville High School during their high school career will have their GPA computed after the completion of two semesters (one full school year) within Somerville High School. Courses completed prior to their entrance into Somerville High School will NOT be used in the computation.
6. Courses taken outside of SHS (i.e. online Edgenuity Course) and Credit Recovery Courses will not be used in the computation.
7. Courses taken as part of a pre-approved Dual Enrollment partnership with SHS will be factored into a student's GPA. All other college/university courses not in the dual enrollment program are not factored into a student's GPA.

GRADE VALUES

<u>Grade</u>	<u>AP</u>	<u>Honors</u>	<u>CP</u>
A+	5.333	4.833	4.333
A	5.000	4.500	4.000
A-	4.667	4.167	3.667
B+	4.333	3.833	3.333
B	4.000	3.500	3.000
B-	3.667	3.167	2.667
C+	3.333	2.833	2.333
C	3.000	2.500	2.000
C-	2.667	2.167	1.667
D+	2.333	1.833	1.333
D	2.000	1.500	1.000
D-	1.667	1.167	0.667
F	0.000	0.000	0.000

Below is an illustration of a student's GPA calculated for three full years at Somerville High School.

Year Course	Final	Credits	Value	Points
2017 English 1 Honors	B-	5.000	3.167	15.835
2017 US History 1 Honors	B-	5.000	3.167	15.835
2017 Algebra 2 Honors	A-	5.000	4.167	20.835
2017 Biology 1 Honors	A	5.000	4.500	22.500
2017 French 1 Honors	A-	5.000	4.167	20.835
2017 Health Education 1	B-	2.500	2.667	6.668
2017 Personal Finance	A	2.500	4.000	10.000
2017 Lifetime Physical Education	C	2.500	2.000	5.000
2017 Studio Art	A-	2.500	3.667	9.168
YTD - Credits 35.0	Cumulative - Credits 35.0			
YTD - GPA Credits 35.0	Cumulative - GPA Credits 35.0			
YTD - GPA Points 126.675	Cumulative - GPA Points 126.675			
YTD - GPA 3.6193	Cumulative - GPA 3.6193			

Year Course	Final	Credits	Value	Points
2018 English 2	B	5.000	3.000	15.000
2018 US History 2	A	5.000	4.000	20.000
2018 Geometry Honors	A	5.000	4.500	22.500
2018 Chemistry 1 Honors	B+	5.000	3.833	19.165

2018 French 2 Honors	A-	5.000	4.167	20.835
2018 Health Education 2/Health Elective	A	2.500	4.000	10.000
2018 Fitness Education	A	2.500	4.000	10.000
2018 Facing History & Ourselves	A-	5.000	3.667	18.335
YTD - Credits 35.0	Cumulative - Credits 70.00			
YTD - GPA Credits 35.0	Cumulative - GPA Credits 70.0			
YTD - GPA Points 135.835	Cumulative - GPA Points 262.510			
YTD - GPA 3.8810	Cumulative - GPA 3.7501			
Year Course	Final	Credits	Value Points	
2019 English 3	C+	5.000	2.333	11.665
2019 World History Themes	B+	5.000	3.333	16.665
2019 Precalculus Honors	A	5.000	4.500	22.500
2019 AP Biology	A-	10.000	4.667	46.670
2019 French 3 Honors	B	5.000	3.500	17.500
2019 AP Psychology	A-	5.000	4.667	23.335
YTD - Credits 35.0	Cumulative - Credits 105.0			
YTD - GPA Credits 35.0	Cumulative - GPA Credits 105.0			
YTD - GPA Points 138.335	Cumulative - GPA Points 400.845			
YTD - GPA - 3.9524	Cumulative - GPA 3.8176			

Honors at Graduation

A student who has achieved "Honors" or "High Honors" at least eight times in four years (including at least once in the first three quarters of senior year) will be graduated "With Honor." The student who ranks first in the class is named the "Valedictorian." The second ranking student is named the "Salutarian." The Valedictorian and Salutarian are calculated after the first semester of the senior year. Other than Valedictorian and Salutarian, SHS no longer calculates or reports class rank.

Student Attendance Policy – High School

No student who has more than five (5) unexcused class absences during a quarter may be given a passing grade unless on an individualized attendance plan, which is developed through the Community Teams with key stakeholders. For seniors, this rule applies to students with more than four (4) unexcused class absences during the fourth quarter.

Any student who misses more than 20 minutes of a one block class time, more than 40 minutes of a two block class, or more than 80 minutes of a four block class without a pass will earn an unexcused absence for that class period. This includes late arrival AND leaving class for extended periods of time during the class period. Five unexcused tardies of less than 20 minutes to a class will equal one unexcused absence.

If a student misses a class due to an appointment, it is the responsibility of the student to provide documentation (ie, a pass from a counselor, school nurse, etc.) to the teacher of the class or to the community staff.

Students are discouraged from taking any extra days from school for vacations, or any other reason. If an extended absence is necessary during the school year, the student and their parents/guardians must be in contact with the Community to develop an approved plan in coordination with the student's teacher(s) at least 5 school days prior to departure. Somerville High School will follow the district's extended absence policy. The Commonwealth of Massachusetts mandates that every student fulfill 990 hours of structured learning time each year. Students with excused absences are expected to make up their work and are not exempt from work that was

assigned (unless there are special circumstances communicated by their Community). Students should be given the same amount of time as their classmates to complete make-up work without penalty. Beyond this timeframe, late-work guidelines will apply.

For students with **unexcused absences**, follow the [department's homework/late work guidelines](#).

Attendance Policy Addendum – Grades K-12

“State and federal law require schools to make reasonable accommodations to the religious needs of students and employees in observance of holy days. Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 151B, section 4(1)(A) addresses this issue with respect to employees. With respect to students, Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 151C, Section 2B reads in relevant part as follows:

Any student in an educational or vocational training institution...who is unable, because of his religious beliefs, to attend classes or to participate in any examination, study or work requirement on a particular day shall be excused from any such examination or study or work requirement, and shall be provided with any opportunity to make up such examination, study or work requirement which he may have missed because of such absence on any particular day; provided, however, that such makeup examination or work shall not create an unreasonable burden upon such school. No fees of any kind shall be charged by the institution for making available to the said student such opportunity. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to any student because of their availing themselves of the provisions of this section.

Schools may meet their obligation to accommodate students by excusing individual absences for religious observance, or by adjusting the school calendar to provide a school year of at least 180 days, while taking into account possible days of low attendance due to religious holidays.”

“Absences due to observance of major religious holidays will not be included as absences for the purpose of attendance awards or recognition. Accordingly, parents/guardians will provide a written explanation for the absence and tardiness of a child. This will be required in advance for types of absences where advance notice is possible.”

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 151B, section 4(1)(A)

Adopted: November 18, 2002, Reviewed: September 2009

Student Absences and Excuses

The following reasons will be considered excused and require verification: medical appointments; court issues; suspensions; up to two college visits per year, [permission form here](#); quarantine; bereavement; approved school field trips, including athletics events; a verified meeting with any school employee or outside provider/clinician.

The following reasons will also be considered excused: Religious/cultural holidays; participation in a protest, provided that someone within school administration is aware of the protest; weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child including, but not limited to, delays on the MBTA.

Any short-term illnesses (fewer than 3 consecutive days within a given quarter) can be reported to the Community by phone or email. Longer-term illnesses (4 or more consecutive days) require documentation from a medical professional. More than three short term illnesses per quarter will also require a note from a medical professional in order to be excused (for example, a student is called in sick one day a week for three weeks - on the fourth time documentation is required).

In instances of chronic or irregular absence reportedly due to illness, the school administration may request a physician's statement certifying such absences to be justified.

An unexcused absence is anything not noted above.

In addition to the Community Team, Special Education staff, 504 teams, and BRIDGE program staff may work with students, parents/guardians, and community teams on a case by case basis to address issues with attendance that

may arise during a quarter and/or the school year and if needed, request approval for an individualized attendance plan from the Community Team.

A student may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the Principal or Assistant Principal. Please contact the Community/Assistant Principal's office regarding the SHS Extended Absence Process.

Excessive Absences and Review Process

There are cases where a student's total absences in a course is excessive. In such cases, students who are passing the course may earn a "P" instead of a final grade. A "P" awards credit for the course but is not calculated into GPA.

- Semester Courses: Students who have more than 17 total absences and a passing average at the end of Q2 or Q4 may earn a "P" as the quarter grade which results in a final grade of "P."
- Full Year Courses: Students who have more than 34 total absences and a passing average at the end of Q4 may earn a "P" as the quarter grade which results in a final grade of "P."

Throughout the year, an internal group will review the attendance records for students who met this criteria. The Review Board will consider if earning a "P" as a final grade is appropriate for the specific circumstances. This decision will be made in consultation with a student's Special Education, 504, Community, or BRIDGE team.

Student Absence Notification Program

Each Principal will notify a student's parent/guardian within 3 days of the student's absence in the event the parent/guardian has not informed the school of the absence.

Each Principal or designee shall meet with any student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has missed five (5) or more unexcused school days (a school day shall be equal to two (2) or more class periods in the same day) in a school year. The meeting shall be to develop action steps to improve student attendance and shall be developed jointly by the Principal or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The parties may seek input from other relevant school staff and/or officials from relevant public safety, health and human service, housing, and nonprofit agencies.

Dropout Prevention

No student who has not graduated from high school shall be considered permanently removed from school unless the Principal has sent notice to a student, and that student's parent/guardian, who has been absent from school for ten (10) consecutive days of unexcused absence. The notice shall be sent within five (5) days of the tenth consecutive day of absence and shall offer at least 2 dates and times within the next ten (10) days for an exit interview with the Superintendent or designee, the student, and the student's parent/guardian. The notice shall be in both English and the primary language of the home, if applicable. The notice shall include contact information for scheduling the exit interview and shall indicate the parties shall reach an agreement on the date/time of the interview within the ten (10) day timeframe. The timeframe may be extended at the request of the parent/guardian and no extension shall exceed 14 days.

The Superintendent or designee may proceed with any interview without a parent/guardian present, provided the Superintendent has documented a good faith effort to include the parent/guardian.

The Superintendent or designee shall convene a team of school staff to participate in the exit interview and shall provide information to the student and, if applicable, the student's parent/guardian on the detrimental effects of early withdrawal from school and the alternative education programs and services available to the student.

Revised: January 18, 1996; Amended: December 2009, Amended: October 6, 2014

Report Cards/Progress Reports

Report cards are issued four times a year, at the end of each quarter. Progress reports are issued halfway through each quarter to give an indication of the student's progress and in some cases to make recommendations on how the student could improve their academic performance and/or behavior.

Make-up Policy/Tutoring

Students are expected to make up missed work promptly after an absence. Work missed due to truancy, cutting class, or out-of-school suspension may be made up according to each [department's homework/late work guidelines](#). Teachers are available one day each week either before school from 7:15-7:45 or after school from 2:45 to 3:15 according to their schedule. See individual teachers for extra help; see your School Counselor, Department Chair or K12 Supervisor for information concerning tutoring in specific subject areas.

Books and Equipment

All books and equipment issued to students are the property of the Somerville Public Schools. It is the student's responsibility to care for and to return them in good condition. The student will be required to pay a reasonable replacement charge for lost or damaged books and equipment. In cases of extreme financial hardship, students should speak with their Assistant Principal.

Summer School

Students who do not pass a course may make up that course at Somerville High School's summer session. A student may receive credit for two courses taken during the summer school session, provided that the student failed the courses previously, and did not withdraw from the courses before their completion. If a student has failed more than one major subject, the student must attempt to make up a required course, with English taking precedence. The Principal reserves the right to adjust the policy to meet the needs of the individual students.

Schedule Changes

Students receive a course schedule that, as near as possible, reflects their needs, abilities and interests. Further program adjustments will be made based on the following criteria:

- An error or conflict exists.
- Schedule does not include all school or graduation requirements.
- The student is not eligible for the course.
- Completion of summer school improves a grade
- Educational Plan (766) requires a change.

Students requesting a schedule change must follow the SHS Add/Drop process listed in the Program of Studies. Any student requesting a schedule change should make an appointment with their counselor.

Health and Physical Education Policy

Physical Education/Health Education is required for all students during all four years at Somerville High School. All students need to have a physical education/health education course each year as required by MGL Chapter 71, Section 3. Beginning with the class of 2014, each student must take and pass a minimum of one health education and /or physical education semester course each year. Additionally, all students at Somerville High School will be required to take and pass two semester courses in health education and two semester courses in physical education for graduation. A student who has failed a semester course in health education or physical education must repeat and pass the failed course via summer school, credit recovery or in a succeeding academic year.

BUS PASSES

At the beginning of the year all students will receive an "M7" bus pass which allows them to travel on the bus and train at no cost to the student. Bus passes are distributed through the Community offices. Only one "M7" card will be issued per student. If a student loses their "M7" pass, they must go to the main office to put their name on a wait list for a replacement. Replacement cards will be an "S" pass, which allows students to travel for 1/2 price (the student rate) on the bus and train, but students must go to a kiosk and put their own money on the pass. "S"

passes are only available at schools, and students can pick up an “S” pass at the main office. In cases of extreme financial hardship, students should speak with their Assistant Principal.

Please click [here](#) for more information about student passes. *THIS PLAN MAY CHANGE BASED ON THE POLICIES OF AND AGREEMENTS BETWEEN THE CITY, THE SCHOOL DISTRICT, AND THE MBTA.*

PARKING

Students are discouraged from driving to school as there is limited parking on the adjacent streets. Students who do drive are asked to follow city parking regulations and to show courtesy to our neighbors. Students are not to park in parking lots which require a special permit or on the front concourse. **Vehicles may be ticketed or towed if they are parked in lots requiring permits or on the front concourse.**

ELEVATORS

The elevators are available only to students who are not able to take the stairs. Students taking the elevator must have an elevator pass, which can be requested through the Nurse’s office. Documentation may be required. Elevator passes are not shareable, are issued for a specific length of time and should be returned when they expire. Students using the elevator should not engage in any horseplay, jumping, other dangerous/prohibited behavior, or vandalism. Violating this policy may result in consequences including restorative activities, detention, suspension, and/or monetary fines.

LOCKERS

Students are not to use their own personal locks on school lockers. Students are advised not to share their locker combination with others. Students should be aware that lockers are school property and may be searched by school officials if there is a “reasonable suspicion” of illegal activity or activity that violates the student code of conduct, such as the possession of drugs, according to the guidelines established by the U.S. Supreme Court in T.L.O. v. New Jersey.

POSTING NOTICES

The only notices, flyers, and posters etc. that can be hung in the building are notices that advertise events and opportunities for SHS students. Only SHS clubs, classes, or partner organizations may post information. All notices, flyers, and posters etc. must be approved by the club advisor and/or an SHS administrator. Only blue electrical tape or command strips should be used to hang materials, and notices can only be taped to tiled surfaces. Nothing should be attached to glass or painted surfaces, and nothing can be hung on doors.

FIELD TRIPS (File: IJOA)

The School Committee recognizes that firsthand learning experiences provided by field trips are an effective and worthwhile means of learning. It is the desire of the School Committee to encourage field trips as part of the total school program and curriculum.

Specific guidelines and appropriate administrative procedures shall be developed to screen, approve, and evaluate trips and to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken for the safety of the participants. Said guidelines and procedures should be developed by the Administration and reviewed and approved by the School Committee.

These guidelines and appropriate administrative procedures shall ensure that all field trips have the approval of the Principal and that all overnight and out of state field trips have the prior approval of the School Committee.

Field trips can bring the school and the community closer together, which can result in experiences that enrich the curriculum for students and also bring about better public relations. The School Committee encourages field trips as an integral part of the instructional programs in the schools.

The Superintendent will establish procedures and protocols to assure that:

1. All students have parental/guardian permission for trips.
2. All trips are properly supervised.

3. All safety precautions are observed.
4. All trips contribute substantially to the educational program.

The Superintendent is responsible for the production, distribution and updating of a field trip handbook which contains the procedures and protocols for all field trips.

All out-of-state or overnight trips and excursions must have advance approval of the School Committee with **forms being submitted at least six weeks in advance of the trip**. Fundraising activities for such trips will be subject to approval by the appropriate Administrator.

LATE NIGHT & OVERNIGHT SCHOOL SPONSORED STUDENT TRAVEL

1. Overview of the Law on Late Night & Overnight School Sponsored Student Travel

Chapter 346 of the Acts of 2002, An Act Relative to Safety of School Sponsored Travel, was enacted on October 9, 2002. The purpose of the policy below, adopted by the Board of Education, is to assist school committees in adopting their own policies concerning planned late night or overnight student travel as required by section 37N of chapter 71 of the General Laws. Chapter 346 of the Acts of 2002 mandates that each school committee shall establish its initial policy under section 37N of chapter 71 of the General Laws not later than January 7, 2005.

Section 37N. Each school committee shall establish a policy concerning student travel sponsored by a school that is planned to occur between the hours of midnight and 6:00 a.m., or that will include an overnight stay away from a student's home. The policy shall address, but not be limited to, such issues as safety of transportation and accommodations, cost, including expectations for fundraising by students, time away from school, appropriateness of the trip for the grade level and the trip approval process. In adopting its policy, the school committee shall consider the policy drafted by the board of education under section 1B of chapter 69.

2. How to Implement the Law on Late Night & Overnight School Sponsored Student Travel

Many districts already have policies in place regarding field trips and other off-site activities that can form the basis for the policy mandated under section 37N. These existing policies should be reviewed, and amended, if needed, after consideration of the policy below. The points enumerated in the Board's policy are not mandatory; school committees should take into account local needs and preferences in adopting their own policies on trips planned to include late night and overnight travel.

School committee members are strongly encouraged to consult with legal counsel as they revise their existing policies and develop new ones.

3. Policy (adopted by the Somerville School Committee, December 4, 2003)

A. Trip Approval Process

1. School committees should require advance approval for trips planned to include late night or overnight travel.
2. The approval process should be completed prior to engaging students in fundraising activities or other preparations for the trip.
3. Overnight trips should offer significant educational benefits to students that clearly justify the time and expense of the trip. Such trips should be appropriate for the grade level.
4. Teachers and other school staff should be prohibited from soliciting privately run trips through the school system. The trip approval process should apply only to school-sanctioned trips; school committees should not approve trips that are privately organized and run without school sanctioning.

5. Policies and procedures for trip approval should take into account all logistical details involving transportation, accommodations, fundraising required of students, and the educational value of the trip in relation to its costs.

B. Transportation

1. The use of private vehicles for trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel is prohibited. Such trips should generally use commercial motor coaches or school owned vehicles driven by school employees.
2. Trips planned to include late night or overnight student travel should involve pre-trip checks of companies, drivers, and vehicles.
3. The contract with the carrier should prohibit the use of a subcontractor unless sufficient notice is given to the district to allow verification of the subcontractor's qualifications.

C. Trip Scheduling

1. Whenever possible, overnight trips should be scheduled on weekends or during school vacations to minimize lost classroom time. Non-academic field trips are considered "optional school programs" and do not count toward meeting structured learning time requirements under 603 CMR 27.00. However, academic field trips may be considered structured learning time (see the Department's Student Learning Time Regulations Guide). School districts may consider travel for field trips as included in students' schedules, but the Department recommends that schools consider scheduling additional structured learning time when significant travel time is anticipated (i.e., time outside the hours of the regular school day).
2. If substantially all members of a class are participating in a trip, the school should provide appropriate substitute activities for any students not participating.

D. Fundraising

1. The amount of time to be devoted to fundraising should be reasonable and commensurate with students' obligations for homework, after-school activities, and jobs.
2. Group fundraising activities are preferred. Students should not be assigned individual fundraising targets.
3. If students are charged individual fees for participation, the district should make every effort to provide scholarships where needed.

Approved: December 4, 2003; Reviewed: May 2009; Amended: August 25, 2014

MULTILINGUAL LEARNER EDUCATION

- In accordance with state and federal guidelines, Somerville Public Schools designates English Learner (EL) students who need services to learn English upon enrollment, and provides these services to any student who is eligible. Programming for designated ELs at Somerville High School is based on sound educational theory, resourced effectively, and succeeds in producing results to help students overcome language barriers within a reasonable timeframe (Castañeda v. Pickard).
- Designated ELs at Somerville High School are educated through sheltered English immersion (SEI) programming, which includes access to subject matter content and systematic and explicit English language acquisition (ESL/ELD). (G.L. c. 71A).
- Designated ELs at Somerville High School are assessed annually to determine their level of proficiency and monitor progress in keeping with federal and state guidelines. Students who meet the state criteria are reclassified as Former English Learners (FELs), and their progress is monitored for four additional school years in accordance with state and federal guidelines.

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION (CTE) DRESS CODE

For reasons of health and safety, CTE students will be required to adhere to the following regulations:

- Safety glasses are to be worn in all work areas.
- Proper footwear is to be worn in all shops. (No open toe shoes/sandals/slippers/crocs). Sneakers are allowed for Exploratory.

- Suitable clothing is to be worn as required by each shop. Please see the Exploratory Requirement Sheet in the Exploratory Program Book for all requirements for each program.

STUDENT RECORDS

A student's record includes all information about the student kept by the school.

The Temporary record includes standardized test results, class rank, etc. and will be destroyed no later than five years after the student has left the school.

The Permanent file includes a transcript of course titles and grades and is kept on file for 60 years. Personal notes kept by teachers and School Counselors are not shared or kept on file.

- Students fourteen years old or older have the right to see their records in the presence of their parent/guardian and the right to control who else sees their records. Except for authorized personnel, a log is kept every time information from the temporary file is accessed or disseminated.
- Students eighteen years old or older can request, in writing, that their parent/guardian no longer have access to their records.
- There should be notations made of all persons, other than authorized school personnel, who have cause to examine student records.
- Students have the right to append a statement of rebuttal to any negative remarks that might be contained in their records.
- With the informed, written consent of the parent or eligible student only specific information as requested by potential employers or institutions of higher learning is released. The only records kept after the fifth year of high school termination are those of attendance and scholarship.
- Seniors are advised to take care not to lose their school medical record, which they receive with their final report card. The medical record they receive is the only copy which exists, and it may be needed if colleges or employers require medical information.

RESIDENCY REQUIREMENT AND ASSIGNMENT OF STUDENTS TO SCHOOLS – NON RESIDENTS

Residency Requirement

School Committee policy requires that students who attend Somerville High School must be residents of Somerville. Students who move out of Somerville during their senior year may request a waiver of the residency requirement through their Asst. Principal. A student can only receive one waiver. Students must report any change of address to their Asst. Principal within five days of moving.

Assignment of Students to Schools – Non Residents

Any child enrolled with the Somerville Public Schools who is no longer an actual resident of the district must attend school in the district in which they actually reside. However, the principal, with the approval of the Director of Student Services, may allow the child to remain in the presently assigned school to complete the quarter.

Any student who moves out of Somerville during the senior year who desires to complete grade 12 at Somerville High School may request a waiver (Special permit) of the residency requirement through their Asst. Principal. Asst. Principals will consider the conduct, effort, punctuality, attendance and academic progress toward graduation for approval. Final decisions are made by the Director of Student Services.

Each request requires the approval of the Asst. Principal, the Principal, and the Director of Student Services and is valid only for the school year in which it is approved.

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICIES:

Plagiarism

The word “plagiarism” comes from a Latin word “plagiarius” which means “kidnapper.” It is defined as “the wrongful act of taking the product of another’s mind and presenting it as one’s own.” Plagiarism can be both intentional and unintentional. Examples of intentional plagiarism would be (a) copying another student’s essay or research paper and (b) downloading articles or portions of articles from a website and presenting either of these as your work. Plagiarism can also be unintentional. For example, when a student writes a research paper s/he must document not only direct quotations and paraphrases, but also summaries of information and ideas found in these sources (*Gibaldi 66-75*). In their classes students will receive instruction in the MLA format for source citation, and in the proper documentation of print and non-print sources of information.

Guidelines for consequences of various kinds of plagiarism:

Unintentional plagiarism:

For the first offense only, the student will be offered the opportunity to properly cite references for the portion of the paper or other work product in question. Teachers will review summarizing and paraphrasing rules and will give students practice with applying these skills in the context of course readings.

A student who subsequently summarizes or paraphrases information or ideas drawn from a reference and presents it as their own in a paper or other work product will receive no credit for the plagiarized portions of the paper or other work product.

Intentional plagiarism:

A student who copies another student’s work without that student’s knowledge will receive a “zero” for the paper and the parent/guardian will be notified. Teachers will remind students not to share their completed work with other students, prior to submission.

In the case of a student who copies another student’s work with that student’s knowledge, both students may receive a “zero” after meeting with the respective Assistant Principal and parents/guardians of both students will be notified.

A student who downloads an article, a paper or other work product from a non print source (i.e. internet) will receive a zero for that work and the parent/guardian will be notified. Teachers will review/reinforce with students the proper use of and particularly the limitations of sources of information available on the internet.

A student who copies an article, a paper or other work product from a print/ non-print source and who presents it as their own work will receive a zero for that work and the parent/guardian will be notified

In a broad sense, plagiarism is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work by representing the work of another as one’s own without the necessary and appropriate acknowledgment.

Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Incorporating the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts thereof, without appropriate acknowledgement and representing the product as one’s own work
- Copying of notes, magazines, encyclopedias, Websites, social media etc. or downloading from the internet without proper acknowledgement

The teacher and/or school administrator will deal with allegations of cheating or plagiarism. Students who have cheated or plagiarized may receive a zero for the entire assignment and may not qualify for make up of the assignment. The teacher or school administrator will also inform the parent/guardian and a proper and accurate record of the offense will be maintained. The school reserves the right to assign additional penalties based on the severity of the offense. These penalties may result in a failing grade for the quarter in which the incident occurs.

{Adoption date} Revised: November 27, 2007

Date Approved by School Committee: December 17, 2007

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to complete their work with honesty and integrity. Cheating and plagiarism are not permitted within the Somerville Public Schools. Cheating is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work by using dishonest means or allowing someone else to represent their work as their own.

MILITARY RECRUITMENT POLICY

On January 8, 2002, President Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The Act, which embodies his education reform plan sent to Congress on January 23, 2001, is the most sweeping reform of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) since ESEA was enacted in 1965. It redefines the federal role in K-12 education and will help close the achievement gap between disadvantaged and minority students and their peers. It is based on four basic principles: stronger accountability for results, increased flexibility and local control, expanded options for parents, and an emphasis on teaching methods that have been proven to work.

ACCESS TO STUDENT RECRUITING INFORMATION - Notwithstanding section 444(a)(5)(B) of the General Education Provisions Act and except as provided in paragraph (2), each shall provide, on a request made by military recruiters or an institution of higher education, access to secondary school students names, address, and telephone listings.

CONSENT - A secondary school student or the parent of the student may request that the student's name, address, and telephone listing described in paragraph (1) not be released without prior written parental consent, and the local educational agency or private school shall notify parents of the option to make a request and shall comply with any request.

SAME ACCESS TO STUDENTS - Each local educational agency receiving assistance under this Act shall provide military recruiters the same access to secondary school students as is provided generally to post secondary educational institutions or to prospective employers of those students.

Somerville High School Procedure

Parents/guardians are notified that their child's name can be removed from the student rosters that are given to Military Recruiters. Only junior and senior names are on these rosters.

The notice to have student names removed is emailed to parents/guardians at the beginning of each school year as part of the "Mandatory Acknowledgements of SHS Policies" form. This form can also be found on the Aspen home page. This form needs to be completed each school year.

Student rosters are only given to Military Recruiters after a formal written request has been received.

Rights of Eighteen Year Olds

Students who are eighteen years old have the legal rights of adults; they can sign report cards, progress reports, field trip permission slips, and absence notes. If school officials wish to verify the truth of an absence note, they may require the signature of another adult. Because the school feels it is obligated to keep parents/guardians informed of their child's progress toward graduation, school administration will not hesitate to contact parents/guardians directly if their child is at risk. Students who are eighteen years old and are U.S. citizens also have the right to vote. Voter registration is available on line, and at the Election Department in City Hall. Students who wish to register at SHS should see one of the Social Studies teachers.

Participation in Graduation Exercises:

The High School graduation exercises shall be under the direction of the High School Principal and the Superintendent. High School students who satisfactorily complete the prescribed course of study and fulfill other state and federal requirements as certified by the Principal and Superintendent shall be awarded a diploma of graduation by the Somerville School Committee. High School students who satisfactorily complete the prescribed course of study as certified by the Principal and Superintendent without fulfilling other state and federal requirements shall be awarded a certificate of attainment by the Somerville School Committee. Certificates of achievement and/or completion may also be awarded by the Somerville School Committee. Only students who have fulfilled all the requirements to receive a diploma or certificate of attainment/achievement/completion will be allowed to participate in graduation exercises. Participation in graduation ceremonies is a privilege which may be revoked for students who are not in good standing. Students who dress or behave in an inappropriate manner may be excluded from graduation exercises.

1. DISCIPLINARY REGULATIONS

Somerville Public Schools are committed to practices that promote safe and welcoming learning environments in which students can thrive, and disruptions are minimized. Restorative practices and social-emotional curricula are implemented to help build strong communities, and provide students with the skills and frameworks to appropriately solve problems and resolve conflicts.

The Code of Conduct is based on a system of progressive discipline with a goal of limiting the use of long-term suspension as a consequence for student misconduct until other consequences have been considered, as appropriate. The administrator will exercise discretion in determining disciplinary consequences. When students violate the code of conduct, supportive and restorative measures will be implemented first, when safe and appropriate. When these are not appropriate, and/or have not proven effective, discipline will be progressive (moving from lesser to more severe consequences), consistent, and logical. When possible and appropriate, teachers will handle discipline at the classroom level. Classroom interventions may involve positive reinforcement/incentives for expected behaviors, loss of privileges, behavior intervention plans, and parent/guardian collaboration. Alternative consequences may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive behavioral interventions and supports.

The Code of Conduct of the Somerville Public Schools is administered within the framework of the United States Constitution and state laws and regulations with regard to due process for students. The Code of Conduct is intended to be administered for disciplinary infractions that occur on school grounds or at school-sponsored events (on and off school grounds) OR for disciplinary infractions that occur off school grounds but substantially disrupt the educational environment or create a hostile environment at school.

When behaviors are ongoing or more serious, and a student is not responding to classroom interventions, the Dean of Students and/or Administrators will become involved, and more significant consequences may be considered.

The Somerville Public Schools adheres to the Student Discipline Laws and Regulations as set forth in Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 71, Sections 37H, 37 H1/2 and 37 H ¾, and 603 CMR 53.00 et seq.

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

A. ID Policy: All SHS students are required to have a school ID. Incoming grade 9 students and new students will be issued an ID badge. If a student loses their ID, they may request a new one through a google form. Student IDs are also available in the ASPEN database and may be downloaded onto the student's phone. Students are required to show their physical ID or to show the ID on their phone to enter the building at all times, and IDs must be scanned to receive breakfast and/or lunch. Students must show their ID to any staff member when asked.

B. Class Rules: Students are to follow class rules as established by their individual teachers.

C. Noise Level: Students are to speak in conversational voices in all areas of the school.

D. Before School: Students will be allowed into the building starting at 7:00am. Students must enter only through the main doors and must show their ID to a staff member before entering. Students entering before 7:45 must remain in the cafeteria or have a pass to be in another area of the building supervised by a staff member.

E. Entry into the building:

1. All students must enter through designated entrances only, and must show their school ID upon entering the building.
2. Students may not enter through other doors, and may not give other students or members of the public entrance to the building.

3. Students may not prop open any doors to the building.
4. Violation of this guideline may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension.

F. Daily Absences:

1. Students are required to make every effort to attend school every day and should familiarize themselves with the effect excessive absence has on grades. (See Attendance Policy and Make-up policy)
2. Excessive absences may result in the student being withdrawn from the school following the district's withdrawal procedure.
3. Students, on the day of absence, may not participate in sports, after-school activities, functions, or events. In order to participate in after school events, students must be present for at least three classes (half a day). Any exceptions to this rule will only be made in extreme circumstances and must be approved by the Principal or an Assistant Principal.

G. Class Absences: The following reasons will be considered excused and will be verified by parent/guardian or appropriate person that is working with the student and parent/guardian:

- cultural/religious holidays, medical appointments and/or chronic medical or mental health concerns accompanied by documentation from a medical professional including doctors, nurses, dental, clinicians, social workers, etc., court issues, suspensions, up to two college visits per year, quarantine for the amount of time recommended by the school nurse or other medical professional, bereavement, weather so inclement as to endanger the health of the child including but not limited to delays on the MBTA, approved school field trips including athletics events, a verified meeting with any school employee or outside provider/clinician. ***An unexcused absence is anything not noted above.***
- The Special Education, 504 teams, and BRIDGE program will work with students, parents/guardians, and community teams on a case by case basis to address issues with attendance that may arise during a quarter and/or the school year and if needed request approval for excused absences from the Principal or Assistant Principal.
- A student may also be excused for other exceptional reasons with approval of the Principal or Assistant Principal. Please contact the Community/Assistant Principal's office regarding the SHS Extended Absence Process.

Students who have **more than five (5) unexcused class absences** during a quarter will be given a maximum grade of 59 and a comment of failure due to excessive unexcused class absences. (If an earned grade is lower than a 59, the student will be given that grade.)

For seniors, this will happen when a student has more than four (4) unexcused class absences in the fourth quarter.

It should be noted that any student arriving late to a class without a pass will earn a zero on the assignment that was completed during that time (e.g. a do now, warm up, or quiz).

Students with **excused absences** are expected to make up their work and are not exempt from work that was assigned (unless there are special circumstances communicated by their Community). Students should be given the same amount of time as their classmates to complete make-up work without penalty. Beyond this timeframe, late-work guidelines will apply.

H. Truancy: Students are to be sure they are recorded as present. If they are late, they must sign in at the main office. Students are truant if they have an unexplained absence from school. Students who are truant may not participate in after-school activities, functions, or events on the day(s) they are truant and may be subject to disciplinary action.

I. Tardiness:

- Students are tardy for school if they are not in class when the late bell rings.

- Any student arriving late to a class without a pass will earn a zero on the assignment that was completed during that time (e.g. a do now, warm up, or quiz).
- Students who have excessive tardies may receive consequences such as lunch or after school detention. Students who fail to report to tardy detention may be subject to additional consequences.
- **Unexcused tardies may count as an absence from class. See attendance policy on page 16**

J. Cutting Class: Students who have an unexplained absence from class will have a conduct referral submitted by the teacher. The Assistant Principal, Dean or Principal will post the disposition in Aspen. Teachers, Deans and Assistant Principals will assign consequences and provide supports as outlined in the Somerville High School Tier One Guide.

K. Bathrooms: Only one person at a time is allowed in a single bathroom or in a single stall. Multiple students found to be in a single bathroom or a single stall may be subject to search and/or further consequences for other disciplinary violations.

L. Beginning of Class:

1. Students are to take their seats so that instruction may begin immediately following the bell.
2. Students entering class late or returning late from lunch may be required by the teacher to report after school. Repeat offenders will be referred to the Assistant Principal or Dean.

M. Lunch:

EXTENDED CAMPUS LUNCH POLICY - (File: [JHCA](#))

Somerville High School (SHS) students will be granted a privilege to leave school grounds during lunch. The goal of this policy is to support the increasing independence of high school students as they prepare to graduate. This is an earned privilege which can be revoked at any time if the guidelines and expectations, as determined by the Superintendent or their designee, are not followed. This policy provides the opportunity for SHS students to leave campus on foot during their scheduled lunch period. Detailed expectations and eligibility can be found in the student handbook.

Extended Campus during lunch is a privilege. School rules apply off campus during the extended campus lunch period. Students who violate school rules will face consequences according to the Somerville High School student code of conduct. Students not in good standing may lose this privilege.

Adopted by Somerville School Committee March 21, 2022

Revisions approved by Somerville School Committee on November 20, 2023

Expectations During Lunch and Eligibility for Extended Campus:

All students in good standing may participate in the extended campus. This is a privilege that may be revoked based on infractions of the SHS student handbook, the lunch policy stated below or based on parent/guardian request.

- Students are to file directly to the cafeteria during lunch.
- Students must return to class on time following their lunch period.
- Students who leave campus during lunch may not travel in private vehicles.
- Students who leave the building may only re-enter through the designated entrance and must show an ID to return to the building.
- Students may eat and drink only in the cafeteria and designated areas, and only during their scheduled lunch period.
- Students may not return to their lockers during lunch.
- Students may not remain unsupervised in classrooms during lunch, nor may they go to counseling offices without a pass.
- Students are responsible for disposing appropriately of all their trash.

N. Leaving Classes:

- Students are not to leave rooms except with a corridor pass from a teacher.
- Students should wear their school or ID or be able to show their school ID when asked.
- Students are to remain in classrooms until dismissed by the teacher.

O. After School: At dismissal, all students must leave the school premises immediately unless they are involved in a school sponsored activity. If a student refuses to leave campus at dismissal, disciplinary consequences may be assigned.

P. Appearance/Attire:

(File: JICA - STUDENT DRESS CODE)

The responsibility for the personal attire, hairstyle, jewelry, and personal items (e.g. backpacks and book bags) of the students will rest with individual students and their parents or guardians, unless a specific school dress code has been voted on and adopted by the school community, in which case student attire will be in accordance with the dress code adopted. Students are permitted to dress in compliance with this dress code in a manner consistent with their gender identity.

Schools are responsible for ensuring that student attire, hairstyle, jewelry, and personal items do not interfere with the health or safety of any student and do not contribute to a hostile or intimidating environment for any student. Student, faculty, or parent groups may recommend appropriate dress for school or special occasions, however, students will not be prevented from attending school or a school function, or otherwise be discriminated against, so long as their attire and appearance meet the requirements set forth above.

Core Values

As a teaching and learning community that values diversity, we believe:

- Students should be able to dress for school and style their hair for school in a manner that expresses their individuality without fear of unnecessary discipline or body shaming.
- All students have the right to be treated with dignity and respect. The enforcement of our dress code policy will not create disparities, reinforce or increase the marginalization of any group, nor will it be more strictly enforced against students because of racial identity (*race to include traits historically associated with race, including, but not limited to, hair texture, hair type, hair length, and protective hairstyles), ethnicity, gender identity, gender expression, gender nonconformity, sexual orientation, cultural or religious identity, household income, body size/type, or body maturity.
- Students and staff are responsible for managing their personal distractions.
- Opportunities for growth and learning shall be the driving force behind efforts to address non-compliance with this policy.
- Every effort should be made to support students and minimize loss of time on learning, including having clothing items available for loan as needed.

Universal Dress Code

Students may not come to school shirtless, pantless, shoeless, or visibly displaying their underwear. Students must wear the following and not face unnecessary barriers to school attendance if they are in compliance, so long as their attire does not interfere with the health or safety of any students or contribute to a hostile or intimidating environment for any student, as noted above.

- Top that covers the majority of the torso and does not expose private parts. Appropriate tops include but are not limited to a shirt, blouse, sweater, sweatshirt, tank.
- Bottom that does not expose private parts or undergarments. Appropriate bottom clothing items include pants, shorts, skirt, dress.
- Footwear.

Students are expected to follow all school rules with respect to wearing any protective clothing, footwear, safety glasses or other protective or safety equipment that may be required for participation in specialized programs. Additionally, this policy allows for reasonable variation in required student attire for participation in activities such as swimming.

Students may not wear clothing, jewelry, or personal items that:

- Are pornographic, contain threats or vulgar language, or promote illegal or violent conduct such as the unlawful use of weapons, drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or drug paraphernalia;
- Demonstrate hate group association/affiliation and/or use hate speech targeting groups based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, or other protected groups;
- Intentionally show private parts (nipples, genitals, buttocks) or undergarments (with the exception of bra straps). Clothing must completely cover private parts in solid, non-sheer material;
- Cover the student's face to the extent that the student is not identifiable (except clothing/headgear worn for a religious or medical purpose); or
- Demonstrate clear gang association/affiliation.

Attire worn in observance of a student's religion is not subject to this policy.

Clothing that displays profanity or other vulgarities create an intimidating and/or hostile environment and disrupt the learning environment, and are not permitted.

Policy Enforcement

Principals are required to ensure that all staff are aware of and understand the core values and associated guidelines of this policy.

Conversations about student apparel should be facilitated where both parties have an equal voice. Such conversations should not occur in front of a class or other students.

Staff will use reasonable efforts to limit disciplining or removing students from class as a consequence of wearing attire in violation of this policy unless the attire creates a substantial disruption to the educational environment, poses a hazard to the health or safety of others, or factors into a student behavior rule violation such as malicious harassment or the prohibition on harassment, intimidation, and bullying. Further, no student shall be referred to as "a distraction" due to their appearance or attire.

Typical consequences for a violation of this policy may include parent/guardian contact or conference and the directive to cover, change, or remove the non-complying attire. A student may be instructed to leave their classroom briefly to change clothes, and every effort shall be made to have clothing items available for loan at the school. The Principal or their designee will notify a student's parent/guardian of the school's response to violations of the student dress code policy. Refusal to abide by this policy and/or repeat violations could result in progressive discipline.

*Legal References: Dress and appearance of students protected [M.G.L. c. 30. §83] *Acts of 2022, Chapter 117
Adopted: June 1996; Revised: March 1998; Amended: April 3, 2023*

Cell Phone and Headphone Classroom Routines

We are proud of our work at Somerville High School and are eager to build on our achievements. Our work centers on productive, engaging, and positive classrooms where teachers build relationships and hold every single student to high expectations. These high expectations include clear, consistent cell phone and headphone routines.

- Students will be asked to place their cell phones and headphones in a designated location when they enter the classroom, **OR** to keep them in their bags.
- If cell phones or headphones become visible during the lesson, the entire class will be reminded of the cell phone and headphone routines.
- After the class is reminded, if a student's cell phone or headphones are visible later in class, the teacher will ask that student to place them in the designated location until the end of class.
- If a student refuses to turn in their cell phone or headphones, teachers may choose from the ***following progression of actions at their discretion follow the Tier 1 Guide (behavior)***

Additional Reminders:

1. Cell phone use should be part of an academic professionalism/participation rubric and grade.
2. **The exception to these routines will be if students are doing an activity where a teacher explicitly asks them to have their cell phones out and in use (Kahoot, educational app).** Cell phones are not allowed as part of IEPs/504 Plans but it is possible a student may need to use headphones for text to speech or speech to text. Consult the IEP or 504 Plan for details.
3. **If a student is awaiting an important call, they should notify their teacher privately at the beginning of class, and that student will be allowed to step out in the hall when they receive the call.**

Photographs and Recordings:

For the privacy and safety of all, the use or appearance of use (showing the device in such a way that could lead an individual to believe they are being photographed or recorded) of any electronic device is not permitted in any locker room or bathroom in the SPS or in any locker room or bathroom at any school sponsored event.

Photographing or recording in any location is prohibited in the SPS unless authorized for educational or school purposes.

Teacher or Administrator Conference or Penalty:

Minor offenses that occur in classrooms are to be dealt with by the individual teacher and may include requiring a conference with a student before or after school, or requiring the student to engage in a restorative action.

Failure to follow through on the teacher's consequence may result in the matter being directed to a Dean or Assistant Principal and may result in additional consequences.

An administrator may temporarily exclude from class any student who infringes on the rights of others.

Assistant Principal/Dean Detention:

Recurring minor offenses and incidents beyond minor offenses will be brought to the attention of the Asst. Principal and/or Dean. The teacher will submit a conduct referral describing the incident and the Assistant Principal or Dean will respond to the teacher as soon as possible, but within five school days, concerning the disposition of the matter. Assistant Principals or Deans may assign consequences including but not limited to, lunch or after-school detention, participation in restorative activities, conflict resolution and/or mediation.

The following specific offenses are considered major infractions, and may result in short- or long-term suspension or expulsion (removal for more than 90 days), pending due process, including a full investigation, disciplinary hearing, and appeal rights for exclusions over 90 school days:

1. Possession of weapons or dangerous weapons. The school will secure the weapon and notify law enforcement as appropriate.
2. Assaulting a teacher, administrator, paraprofessional, or other authorized school personnel. In appropriate circumstances, law enforcement will be notified.
3. Possession of a controlled substance in school, including marijuana.
4. Fire - Starting or attempting to start a fire in the building or on school grounds.
5. False fire alarm, bomb scares, willfully discharging fire extinguisher. A student in violation of this policy, in addition to school department action, will be referred to appropriate authorities.
6. Violation of the Civil Rights of any member of the school community. A student in violation of this policy, in addition to school department action, will be referred to appropriate authorities.
7. The use, possession, distribution, or sale or transfer of alcohol, tobacco products, and drugs, including vaping materials. A student in violation of this policy, in addition to school department action, may be assigned mandatory education sessions and/or be referred for substance abuse counseling.
8. Physical assault of another student.
9. Smoking or using tobacco products in the school or on school grounds.
10. Any and all other serious offenses resulting in danger to the staff or other students, significant damage to the school, or disruption of the educational process.

11. Violent Threat against a School. Law enforcement will be notified as appropriate and the student may be referred for a clinical assessment and support.
12. Hazing. Law enforcement will be notified as appropriate.
13. Hate crimes. Law enforcement will be notified as appropriate.

Disciplinary action, up to and including suspension, may also be considered for the following offenses:

1. Truancy, tardiness, skipping classes, or leaving the school without permission. (May also result in notification of the attendance officer.)
2. Discrimination or harassment based upon a student's sex, gender, race, national origin, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, sexual identity, disability, native language/culture, or ethnic origin.
3. Entering the school without permission on release days, before school, or after dismissal.
4. Entering the building through a door other than the main entrance.
5. Propping open exterior doors or allowing someone to enter the building through a door other than the main entrance.
6. Possessing or using fireworks, matches, or a cigarette lighter.
7. Repeated disruption in the class, the cafeteria, corridors, or playground.
8. Throwing snowballs, stones, or other projectiles.
9. Possessing or using toys/items that look like weapons.
10. Using vulgar language or making obscene gestures.
11. Vandalism or willful destruction of school property. (Restitution will be sought)
12. Theft of individual or school property. (Restitution will be sought)
13. Refusal to leave the building during a fire drill.
14. Failure to comply with instructions during emergency situations.
15. Refusing to identify self or cooperate with staff.
16. Refusal to show ID when asked.
17. Wearing masks or face-coverings/concealing one's identity.
18. Refusal to leave campus at dismissal.
19. Being out-of-bounds inside or outside the building during the school day.
20. Misuse of the elevator.
21. Repeated failure to report to detention or to participate in evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution or restorative justice activities.
22. Failure to report to Assistant Principal or Dean when sent by a teacher or called by the AP/Dean.
23. Horseplay/dangerous behavior.
24. Loitering.
25. Gambling.
26. Forgery.
27. Cheating.
28. Extortion.
29. Fraud.
30. Littering.
31. Inappropriate/extreme public displays of affection.
32. Using social media or electronic communication to harass, threaten, or demean members of the school community to such an extent that it disrupts the educational environment or creates a hostile environment at school.
33. Using inflammatory language; ethnic remarks, epithets, insults, harassment of any type.
34. Inappropriate use of recording devices or cameras.
35. Inappropriate/disruptive use of electronic devices in the classroom (including but not limited to cell phones, headphones, earbuds, laser pointers)
36. Possession of self-defense sprays.
37. Threats to students, teachers, or other members of the school community.
38. Being present when alcohol or drugs are being used illegally.
39. Conviction of a felony, or upon adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony.
40. Felony criminal complaint.

41. Felony delinquency complaint.
42. Entering a door other than the main entrance, giving access to the building, or propping doors may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension.
43. Misuse of school ID (including using someone else's ID) may result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension.

Discipline of Students with Special Needs

In general, all students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in the student handbook and the school's code of conduct. In accordance with Chapter 71B of the Massachusetts General Laws and with federal law IDEA 2004: Section 615 (k), and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973: 29 U.S.C. Section 794 (A), the school may suspend or remove your child from his or her current placement for no more than 10 school days. Special provisions are outlined below for students with a documented disability who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or a Section 504 Plan.

Suspension of Students with Disabilities

Procedures for suspension(s) not exceeding 10 school days:

- Any student with a disability may be suspended for up to ten (10) days during a school year. Disciplinary decisions are the same as for students without disabilities.
- Special circumstances exist if your child: possesses, uses, sells, or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; carries a weapon to school or a school-sponsored event; or inflicts serious bodily harm upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event. Under these circumstances, the principal may place your child in an interim alternate educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days. Your child may remain in this IAES for a period of time not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, your child will return to the previously agreed-upon placement unless a hearing officer has ordered another placement, or you and the school agree to another placement.

Procedures for suspension of students with a disability when suspension exceeds 10 school days:

- If your child is suspended for more than 10 school days in a school year, this removal is considered a "change of placement." A change of placement invokes certain procedural protections under federal special education law and Section 504.
- Prior to any removal that constitutes a change of placement, the school will convene a Team meeting to develop a plan for conducting a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) that will be used as the basis for developing specific strategies to address your child's problematic behavior.
- Prior to any removal that constitutes a change in placement, the school must inform you that the law requires the school district to consider whether or not the behavior that forms the basis of the disciplinary action is related to your child's disability. This consideration is called a "manifestation determination." Parents/Guardians have a right to participate in this process. All relevant information will be considered including the IEP or Section 504 Plan, teacher observations, and evaluations reports.
- At a manifestation determination meeting, the Team will consider:
 - Did the student's disability cause or have a direct and substantial relationship to the conduct in question?
 - Was the conduct a direct result of the district's failure to implement the IEP?
- If the manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary action was related to the disability, then your child may not be removed from the current educational placement (unless under the special circumstances). The team will review the IEP or Section 504 Plan and any behavioral intervention plans.
- If the manifestation determination decision is that the disciplinary action was not related to the disability, then the school may suspend or otherwise discipline your child according to the school's code of conduct. For students with IEPs, during the period of time of removal from school that exceeds 10 school days, the school district must provide educational services that allow your child to continue to make educational progress. For students with Section 504 Plans, there is no automatic right to receive educational services beyond the 10th school day of suspension.

Special circumstances for exclusion

Special circumstances exist if your child: possesses, uses, sells, or solicits illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored event; carries a weapon to school or a school-sponsored event; or inflicts serious bodily harm upon another person at school or a school-sponsored event. Under these circumstances, the principal may place your child in an interim alternate educational setting (IAES) for up to 45 school days. Your child may remain in this IAES for a period of time not to exceed 45 school days. Thereafter, your child will return to the previously agreed-upon placement unless a hearing officer has ordered another placement, or you and the school agree to another placement. For students with Section 504 Plans, there is no automatic right to receive educational services beyond the 10th school day of suspension.

School personnel will provide Parent's Notice of Procedural Safeguards (Special Education) or Notice of Parent and Student Rights Under Section 504 for students with disabilities prior to any suspension exceeding 10 school days in one school year. These notices will provide an explanation of the process should there be disagreement regarding the manifestation determination or any placement decision. The parent/guardian and/or student may petition the Bureau of Special Education Appeals for a hearing or the Office of Civil Rights (Section 504). Until issues are resolved, the student remains in his or her current placement.

SPS School Committee Policy on Student Conduct (File: JIC)

The School Committee recognizes that good citizenship in schools is based upon respect and consideration for the rights of others. It is the policy of the School Committee that every student has a right to an education in a safe, inclusive and supportive environment and that every teacher has a right to expect respectful, prepared students in their classrooms. The purpose of disciplinary action is to restore acceptable behavior and to consider ways to reengage the student in the learning process. The student code of conduct will be crafted and administered with fairness, equity and due process and shall recognize and incorporate culturally and linguistically sensitive behavioral strategies.

The Administration and staff will treat all students consistently and equitably, and will respect the rights of all students to an education in a safe, healthy, supportive and inclusive environment.

The Somerville Public Schools adheres to state and federal laws and regulations with regard to student discipline. The implementation of the general rules of conduct is the responsibility of the Principal and the professional staff of the building and should reflect the district mission to maintain a safe environment that nurtures the curiosity, dignity and self-worth of each individual. The District, with the annual input of the school improvement council, shall develop student handbooks for each school that are consistent with the law and District policy. Each handbook will include language stating that administrators will be judicious in determining whether suspension is the appropriate consequence for student misconduct, and will include evidence-based strategies and programs to strengthen school culture and climate and address behavioral and social-emotional issues that can give rise to student misconduct. The student handbooks shall be considered District policy and shall be approved by the School Committee.

All students are expected to meet the requirements for behavior as set forth in the student handbook. Federal and state laws require that additional provisions be made for students who have been found by an evaluation team to have special needs and whose program is implemented under an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan. Procedures for the discipline of students with special needs are found in the student handbooks.

LEGAL REFERENCE; M.G.L. c. [71:37H](#), [71:37H ½](#); [71:37H3/4](#); M.G.L. c. [76:16](#); [76:17](#)

Approved 12/18/23

Massachusetts General Laws and DESE Regulations Governing Discipline

Section 37H 3/4

(a) This section shall govern the suspension and expulsion of students enrolled in a public school in the commonwealth who are not charged with a violation of subsections (a) or (b) of section 37H or with a felony under section 37H1/2.

(b) Any principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker at a student meeting or hearing, when deciding the consequences for the student, shall consider ways to re-engage the student in the learning process; and shall not suspend or expel a student until alternative remedies have been employed and their use and results documented, following and in direct response to a specific incident or incidents, unless specific reasons are documented as to why such alternative remedies are unsuitable or counter-productive, and in cases where the student's continued presence in school would pose a specific, documentable concern about the infliction of serious bodily injury or other serious harm upon another person while in school. Alternative remedies may include, but shall not be limited to: (i) mediation; (ii) conflict resolution; (iii) restorative justice; and (iv) collaborative problem solving. The principal, headmaster, superintendent or person acting as a decision-maker shall also implement school- or district-wide models to re-engage students in the learning process which shall include but not be limited to: (i) positive behavioral interventions and supports models and (ii) trauma sensitive learning models; provided, however, that school- or district-wide models shall not be considered a direct response to a specific incident.

(c) For any suspension or expulsion under this section, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled, or a designee, shall provide, to the student and to the parent or guardian of the student, notice of the charges and the reason for the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student. The student shall receive the written notification and shall have the opportunity to meet with the principal or headmaster, or a designee, to discuss the charges and reasons for the suspension or expulsion prior to the suspension or expulsion taking effect. The principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall ensure that the parent or guardian of the student is included in the meeting, provided that such meeting may take place without the parent or guardian only if the principal or headmaster, or a designee, can document reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in that meeting. The department shall promulgate rules and regulations that address a principal's duties under this subsection and procedures for including parents in student exclusion meetings, hearings or interviews under this subsection.

(d) If a decision is made to suspend or expel the student after the meeting, the principal or headmaster, or a designee, shall update the notification for the suspension or expulsion to reflect the meeting with the student. If a student has been suspended or expelled for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year, the student and the parent or guardian of the student shall also receive, at the time of the suspension or expulsion decision, written notification of a right to appeal and the process for appealing the suspension or expulsion in English and in the primary language spoken in the home of the student; provided, however, that the suspension or expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing. The principal or headmaster or a designee shall notify the superintendent in writing, including, but not limited to, by electronic means, of any out-of-school suspension imposed on a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3 prior to such suspension taking effect. That notification shall describe the student's alleged misconduct and the reasons for suspending the student out-of-school. For the purposes of this section, the term "out-of-school suspension" shall mean a disciplinary action imposed by school officials to remove a student from participation in school activities for 1 day or more.

(e) A student who has been suspended or expelled from school for more than 10 school days for a single infraction or for more than 10 school days cumulatively for multiple infractions in any school year shall have the right to appeal the suspension or expulsion to the superintendent. The student or a parent or guardian of the student shall notify the superintendent in writing of a request for an appeal not later than 5 calendar days following the effective date of the suspension or expulsion; provided, that a student and a parent or guardian of the student may request, and if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days. The superintendent or a designee shall hold a hearing with the student and the parent or guardian of the student within 3 school days of the student's request for an appeal; provided that a student or a parent or guardian of the student may request and, if so requested, shall be granted an extension of up to 7 calendar days; provided further, that the

superintendent, or a designee, may proceed with a hearing without a parent or guardian of the student if the superintendent, or a designee, makes a good faith effort to include the parent or guardian. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony, cross-examine witnesses, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal in writing within 5 calendar days of the hearing. That decision shall be the final decision of the school district with regard to the suspension or expulsion.

(f) No student shall be suspended or expelled from a school or school district for a time period that exceeds 90 school days, beginning the first day the student is removed from an assigned school building.

Section 37H

The superintendent of every school district shall publish the district's policies pertaining to the conduct of teachers and students. Said policies shall prohibit the use of any tobacco products within the school buildings, the school facilities, or on the school grounds or on school buses by any individual, including school personnel. Said policies shall further restrict operators of school buses and personal motor vehicles, including students, faculty, staff, and visitors, from idling such vehicles on school grounds, consistent with section 16B of chapter 90 and regulations adopted pursuant thereto and by the department. The policies shall also prohibit bullying as defined in section 37O and shall include the student-related sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan required by said section 37O. Copies of these policies shall be provided to any person upon request and without cost by the principal of every school within the district.

Each school district's policies pertaining to the conduct of students shall include the following: disciplinary proceedings, including procedures ensuring due process; standards and procedures for suspension and expulsion of students; procedures pertaining to discipline of students with special needs; standards and procedures to assure school building security and safety of students and school personnel; and the disciplinary measures to be taken in cases involving the possession or use of illegal substances or weapons, the use of force, vandalism, or violation of a student's civil rights. Codes of discipline, as well as procedures used to develop such codes, shall be filed with the department of education for informational purposes only.

In each school building containing the grades 9 to 12, inclusive, the principal, in consultation with the school council, shall prepare and distribute to each student a student handbook setting forth the rules pertaining to the conduct of students. The student handbook shall include an age-appropriate summary of the student-related sections of the bullying prevention and intervention plan required by section 37O. The school council shall review the student handbook each spring to consider changes in disciplinary policy to take effect in September of the following school year, but may consider policy changes at any time. The annual review shall cover all areas of student conduct, including but not limited to those outlined in this section.

Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, all student handbooks shall contain the following provisions:

(a) Any student who is found on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, in possession of a dangerous weapon, including, but not limited to, a gun or a knife; or a controlled substance as defined in chapter ninety-four C, including, but not limited to, marijuana, cocaine, and heroin, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(b) Any student who assaults a principal, assistant principal, teacher, teacher's aide, or other educational staff on school premises or at school-sponsored or school-related events, including athletic games, may be subject to expulsion from the school or school district by the principal.

(c) Any student who is charged with a violation of either paragraph (a) or (b) shall be notified in writing of an opportunity for a hearing; provided, however, that the student may have representation, along with the opportunity to present evidence and witnesses at said hearing before the principal.

After said hearing, a principal may, in his discretion, decide to suspend rather than expel a student who has been determined by the principal to have violated either paragraph (a) or (b).

(d) Any student who has been expelled from a school district pursuant to these provisions shall have the right to appeal to the superintendent. The expelled student shall have ten days from the date of the expulsion in which to notify the superintendent of his appeal. The student has the right to counsel at a hearing before the superintendent. The subject matter of the appeal shall not be limited solely to a factual determination of whether the student has violated any provisions of this section.

(e) Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student in an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

(f) Districts shall report to the department of elementary and secondary education the specific reasons for all suspensions and expulsions, regardless of duration or type, in a manner and form established by the commissioner. The department of elementary and secondary education shall use its existing data collection tools to obtain this information from districts and shall modify those tools, as necessary, to obtain the information. On an annual basis, the department of elementary and secondary education shall make district level de-identified data and analysis, including the total number of days each student is excluded during the school year, available to the public online in a machine readable format. This report shall include district level data disaggregated by student status and categories established by the commissioner.

(g) Under the regulations promulgated by the department, for each school that suspends or expels a significant number of students for more than 10 cumulative days in a school year, the commissioner shall investigate and, as appropriate, shall recommend models that incorporate intermediary steps prior to the use of suspension or expulsion. The results of the analysis shall be publicly reported at the school district level.

Definition of a Dangerous Weapon and Reporting Requirements of Weapon Possession

The building principal has the right to decide, based on sound judgment, whether any object is to be considered a weapon or a “dangerous weapon.” The Somerville Public Schools, as interpreted by the building principal, will define a weapon or a “dangerous weapon” in the broadest sense to protect the health and safety of all students, staff, and visitors and to prohibit the possession of any gun, or form of a knife, or sharp objects, capable of causing harm.

According to MGL Chapter 269, Section 10(j), it is a crime for any officer in charge of a school, and any faculty or school administrator not to report the possession of a “dangerous weapon” to the local Police Department. If there is any uncertainty about whether a particular object is a “dangerous weapon” the police will be consulted.

While our schools will work with students to develop responsible behavior, threats to the safety of others or disruptions to the educational process will not be tolerated.

Section 37H 1/2

Notwithstanding the provisions of section eighty-four and sections sixteen and seventeen of chapter seventy-six:

(1) Upon the issuance of a criminal complaint charging a student with a felony or upon the issuance of a felony delinquency complaint against a student, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may suspend such student for a period of time determined appropriate by said principal or headmaster if said principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and the reasons for such suspension prior to such suspension taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such suspension; provided, however, that such suspension shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the suspension to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent in writing of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the suspension. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the student's request for an appeal. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an

alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the suspension.

(2) Upon a student being convicted of a felony or upon an adjudication or admission in court of guilt with respect to such a felony or felony delinquency, the principal or headmaster of a school in which the student is enrolled may expel said student if such principal or headmaster determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school. The student shall receive written notification of the charges and reasons for such expulsion prior to such expulsion taking effect. The student shall also receive written notification of his right to appeal and the process for appealing such expulsion; provided, however, that the expulsion shall remain in effect prior to any appeal hearing conducted by the superintendent.

The student shall have the right to appeal the expulsion to the superintendent. The student shall notify the superintendent, in writing, of his request for an appeal no later than five calendar days following the effective date of the expulsion. The superintendent shall hold a hearing with the student and the student's parent or guardian within three calendar days of the expulsion. At the hearing, the student shall have the right to present oral and written testimony on his behalf, and shall have the right to counsel. The superintendent shall have the authority to overturn or alter the decision of the principal or headmaster, including recommending an alternate educational program for the student. The superintendent shall render a decision on the appeal within five calendar days of the hearing. Such decision shall be the final decision of the city, town, or regional school district with regard to the expulsion.

Any school district that suspends or expels a student under this section shall continue to provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or expulsion, under section 21 of chapter 76. If the student moves to another district during the period of suspension or expulsion, the new district of residence shall either admit the student to its schools or provide educational services to the student under an education service plan, under section 21 of chapter 76.

Section 37L

In addition, any school department personnel shall report in writing to their immediate supervisor an incident involving a student's possession or use of a dangerous weapon on school premises at any time. Supervisors who receive such a weapon report shall file it with the superintendent of said school, who shall then file copies of said weapon report with the local chief of police, the department of social services, the office of student services or its equivalent in any school district, and the local school committee. Said superintendent, police chief, and representative from the department of social services or its equivalent, shall arrange an assessment of the student involved in said weapon report. Said student shall be referred to a counseling program; provided, however, that said counseling shall be in accordance with acceptable standards as set forth by the board of education. Upon completion of a counseling session, a follow-up assessment shall be made of said student by those involved in the initial assessment. A student transferring into a local system must provide the new school system with a complete school record of the entering student. Said record shall include, but not be limited to, any incident involving suspension or violation of criminal acts or any incident reports in which such student was charged with any suspended act.

CMR 53 ~ Regulations Regarding Student Discipline

53.01: Purpose and Scope

(1) The purpose of 603 CMR 53.00 is:

- (a) for those discipline offenses subject to M.G.L. 71, § 37H½, as set forth in 603 CMR 53.01(2)(a), to limit the use of long-term suspension as a consequence for student misconduct until other consequences have been considered and tried as appropriate;
- (b) to promote engagement of a student's parent in discussion of the student's misconduct, and options for responding to it;

- (c) to assure that every student who is expelled or suspended, regardless of the reason for suspension or expulsion, has the opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of suspension or expulsion; and,
- (d) to keep schools safe and supportive for all students while ensuring fair and effective disciplinary practices.

(2) 603 CMR 53.00 sets forth, for all public preschool, elementary, and secondary schools and programs in Massachusetts, including charter and virtual schools:

- (a) at 603 CMR 53.03 through 53.11, the minimum procedural requirements applicable to the suspension of a student for a disciplinary offense other than:
 - 1. possession of a dangerous weapon;
 - 2. possession of a controlled substance;
 - 3. assault on a member of the educational staff; or
 - 4. a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H or 37H½;
- (b) the minimum requirements and procedures necessary to ensure that all students who have been suspended, in-school or out-of-school, or expelled, regardless of the type of offense, have an opportunity to make academic progress during their period of suspension, expulsion, or removal from regular classroom activities; and
- (c) requirements pertaining to school discipline data reporting and analysis.

53.02: Definitions

Commissioner means the commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education appointed in accordance with M.G.L. c. 15, § 1F, or his or her designee.

Department means the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Disciplinary offense means any alleged or determined disciplinary infraction by a student, except for:

- (a) possession of a dangerous weapon;
- (b) possession of a controlled substance;
- (c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or
- (d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H or 37H½. A disciplinary offense, as defined, is subject to the provisions of M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾ and 603 CMR 53.00.

Disciplinary offense under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H or 37H½ means one or more of the following alleged or determined disciplinary infractions:

- (a) possession of a dangerous weapon;
- (b) possession of a controlled substance;
- (c) assault on a member of the educational staff; and
- (d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H or 37H½.

Expulsion means the removal of a student from the school premises, regular classroom activities, and school activities for more than 90 school days, indefinitely, or permanently, as permitted under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H or 37H½ for:

- (a) possession of a dangerous weapon;
- (b) possession of a controlled substance;
- (c) assault on a member of the educational staff; or
- (d) a felony charge or felony delinquency complaint or conviction, or adjudication or admission of guilt with respect to such felony, if a principal determines that the student's continued presence in school would have a substantial detrimental effect on the general welfare of the school, as provided in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H or 37H½.

In-school Suspension means removal of a student from regular classroom activities, but not from the school premises, for no more than ten consecutive school days, or no more than ten school days cumulatively for multiple infractions during the school year. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. In-school suspension for ten days or less, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, shall not be considered a short-term suspension under these regulations. If a student is placed in in-school suspension for more than ten days, consecutively or cumulatively during a school year, such suspension shall be deemed a long-term suspension for due process, appeal, and reporting purposes.

Long-term Suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for more than ten consecutive school days, or for more than ten school days cumulatively for multiple disciplinary offenses in any school year. A principal may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a long-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days. Except for students who are charged with a disciplinary offense set forth in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H(a) or (b), or M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H ½ no student may be placed on long-term suspension for one or more disciplinary offenses for more than 90 school days in a school year beginning with the first day that the student is removed from school. No long-term suspension shall extend beyond the end of the school year in which such suspension is imposed.

Parent means a student's father, mother, or legal guardian, or person or agency legally authorized to act on behalf of the student in place of or in conjunction with the father, mother, or legal guardian.

Principal means the instructional administrative leader or headmaster of a public school or his or her designee for purposes of school disciplinary matters. The board of trustees of a charter school or virtual school shall designate in the school discipline code who will serve as the principal for purposes of 603 CMR 53.00.

School-wide Education Service Plan means the document developed by a principal, in accordance with M.G.L. c. 76, §21, that includes a list of education services available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days.

Short-term Suspension means the removal of a student from the school premises and regular classroom activities for ten consecutive school days or less. A principal may, in his or her discretion, allow a student to serve a short-term suspension in school. Removal solely from participation in extracurricular activities or school-sponsored events, or both, shall not count as removal in calculating school days.

Superintendent means the chief executive officer employed by a school committee or board of trustees to administer a school system, charter school, or virtual school pursuant to M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 59, 59A, 89, or 94, or his or her designee appointed for purposes of conducting a student disciplinary hearing. The board of trustees of a charter school or virtual school shall designate in the school's discipline code who will serve as the superintendent for the purposes of 603 CMR 53.00.

Suspension means short-term suspension and long-term suspension unless otherwise stated.

53.03: Policies and Procedures

Each school committee and board of trustees shall ensure that policies and procedures are in place in public preschool, elementary, and secondary schools and programs under its jurisdiction that meet, at a minimum, the requirements of M.G.L. c.71, §37H¾, M.G.L. c. 76, § 21, and 603 CMR 53.00.

53.04: Investigation of Disciplinary Incidents

Nothing in 603 CMR 53.00 shall prevent a school administrator from conducting an investigation, including student interviews, of a school-related disciplinary incident.

53.05: Alternatives to Suspension under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾

In every case of student misconduct for which suspension may be imposed, a principal shall exercise discretion in deciding the consequence for the offense; consider ways to re-engage the student in learning; and avoid using long-term suspension from school as a consequence until alternatives have been tried. Alternatives may include the use of evidence-based strategies and programs such as mediation, conflict resolution, restorative justice, and positive interventions and supports.

53.06: Notice of Suspension and Hearing under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾

(1) Except as provided in 603 CMR 53.07 and 603 CMR 53.10, a principal may not impose a suspension as a consequence for a disciplinary offense without first providing the student and the parent oral and written notice, and providing the student an opportunity for a hearing on the charge and the parent an opportunity to participate in such hearing.

(2) The principal shall provide oral and written notice to the student and the parent in English and in the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall set forth in plain language:

- (a) the disciplinary offense;
- (b) the basis for the charge;
- (c) the potential consequences, including the potential length of the student's suspension;
- (d) the opportunity for the student to have a hearing with the principal concerning the proposed suspension, including the opportunity to dispute the charges and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, and for the parent to attend the hearing;
- (e) the date, time, and location of the hearing;
- (f) the right of the student and the student's parent to interpreter services at the hearing if needed to participate;
- (g) if the student may be placed on long-term suspension following the hearing with the principal:
 - 1. the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08 (3)(b); and
 - 2. the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

(3) The principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally of the opportunity to attend the hearing. To conduct a hearing without the parent present, the principal must be able to document reasonable efforts to include the parent. The principal is presumed to have made reasonable efforts if the principal has sent written notice and has documented at least two attempts to contact the parent in the manner specified by the parent for emergency notification.

(4) Written notice to the parent may be made by hand delivery, first-class mail, certified mail, or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or any other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and parent.

53.07: Emergency Removal under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾

(1) Nothing in 603 CMR 53.00 shall prevent a principal from removing a student from school temporarily when a student is charged with a disciplinary offense and the continued presence of the student poses a danger to persons or property, or materially and substantially disrupts the order of the school, and, in the principal's

judgment, there is no alternative available to alleviate the danger or disruption. The temporary removal shall not exceed two school days following the day of the emergency removal, during which time the principal shall:

- (a) Make immediate and reasonable efforts to orally notify the student and the student's parent of the emergency removal, the reason for the need for emergency removal, and the other matters set forth in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
- (b) Provide written notice to the student and parent as provided in 603 CMR 53.06(2);
- (c) Provide the student an opportunity for a hearing with the principal that complies with 603 CMR 53.08(2) or (3), as applicable, and the parent an opportunity to attend the hearing, before the expiration of the two (2) school days, unless an extension of time for hearing is otherwise agreed to by the principal, student, and parent.
- (d) Render a decision orally on the same day as the hearing, and in writing no later than the following school day, which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(2)(c) and (d) or (3)(c) and (d), as applicable.

(2) A principal may not remove a student from school on an emergency basis for a disciplinary offense until adequate provisions have been made for the student's safety and transportation.

53.08: Principal's Hearing under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾

(1) The principal shall determine the extent of the rights to be afforded the student at a disciplinary hearing based on the anticipated consequences for the disciplinary offense. If the consequence may be long-term suspension from school, the principal shall afford the student, at a minimum, all the rights set forth in 603 CMR 53.08(3) in addition to those rights afforded to students who may face a short-term suspension from school.

(2) Principal Hearing - Short-term Suspension

- (a) The purpose of the hearing with the principal is to hear and consider information regarding the alleged incident for which the student may be suspended, provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident, determine if the student committed the disciplinary offense, and if so, the consequences for the infraction. At a minimum, the principal shall discuss the disciplinary offense, the basis for the charge, and any other pertinent information. The student also shall have an opportunity to present information, including mitigating facts, that the principal should consider in determining whether other remedies and consequences may be appropriate as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05. The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.
- (b) Based on the available information, including mitigating circumstances, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, what remedy or consequence will be imposed.
- (c) The principal shall notify the student and parent of the determination and the reasons for it, and, if the student is suspended, the type and duration of suspension and the opportunity to make up assignments and such other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(1). The determination shall be in writing and may be in the form of an update to the original written notice.
- (d) If the student is in a preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, before the short-term suspension takes effect.

(3) Principal Hearing - Long-term Suspension

- (a) The purpose of the hearing is the same as the purpose of a short-term suspension hearing.
- (b) At a minimum, in addition to the rights afforded a student in a short-term suspension hearing, the student shall have the following rights:
 - 1. In advance of the hearing, the opportunity to review the student's record and the documents upon which the principal may rely in making a determination to suspend the student or not;
 - 2. the right to be represented by counsel or a lay person of the student's choice, at the student's/parent's expense;

3. the right to produce witnesses on his or her behalf and to present the student's explanation of the alleged incident, but the student may not be compelled to do so; and
4. the right to cross-examine witnesses presented by the school district; and
5. the right to request that the hearing be recorded by the principal, and to receive a copy of the audio recording provided to the student or parent upon request. If the student or parent requests an audio recording, the principal shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

(c) The principal shall provide the parent, if present, an opportunity to discuss the student's conduct and offer information, including mitigating circumstances, that the principal should consider in determining consequences for the student.

(d) Based on the evidence, the principal shall determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense, and, if so, after considering mitigating circumstances and alternatives to suspension as set forth in 603 CMR 53.05, what remedy or consequence will be imposed, in place of or in addition to a long-term suspension. The principal shall send the written determination to the student and parent by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent. If the principal decides to suspend the student, the written determination shall:

1. Identify the disciplinary offense, the date on which the hearing took place, and the participants at the hearing;
2. Set out the key facts and conclusions reached by the principal;
3. Identify the length and effective date of the suspension, as well as a date of return to school;
4. Include notice of the student's opportunity to receive education services to make academic progress during the period of removal from school as provided in 603 CMR 53.13(4)(a);
5. Inform the student of the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent or designee, but only if the principal has imposed a long-term suspension. Notice of the right of appeal shall be in English and the primary language of the home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate, and shall include the following information stated in plain language:
 1. the process for appealing the decision, including that the student or parent must file a written notice of appeal with the superintendent within five calendar days of the effective date of the long-term suspension; provided that within the five calendar days, the student or parent may request and receive from the superintendent an extension of time for filing the written notice for up to seven additional calendar days; and that
 2. the long-term suspension will remain in effect unless and until the superintendent decides to reverse the principal's determination on appeal.

(e) If the student is in a public preschool program or in grades K through 3, the principal shall send a copy of the written determination to the superintendent and explain the reasons for imposing an out-of-school suspension, whether short-term or long-term, before the suspension takes effect.

53.09: Superintendent's Hearing under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾

(1) A student who is placed on long-term suspension following a hearing with the principal shall have the right to appeal the principal's decision to the superintendent.

(2) The student or parent shall file a notice of appeal with the superintendent within the time period set forth 603 CMR 53.08 (3) (d) 5.a. If the appeal is not timely filed, the superintendent may deny the appeal, or may allow the appeal in his or her discretion, for good cause.

(3) The superintendent shall hold the hearing within three school days of the student's request, unless the student or parent requests an extension of up to seven additional calendar days, in which case the superintendent shall grant the extension.

(4) The superintendent shall make a good faith effort to include the parent in the hearing. The superintendent shall be presumed to have made a good faith effort if they have made efforts to find a day and time for the hearing that would allow the parent and superintendent to participate. The superintendent shall send written notice to the parent of the date, time, and location of the hearing.

(5) The superintendent shall conduct a hearing to determine whether the student committed the disciplinary offense of which the student is accused, and if so, what the consequence shall be. The superintendent shall arrange for an audio recording of the hearing, a copy of which shall be provided to the student or parent upon request. The superintendent shall inform all participants before the hearing that an audio record will be made of the hearing and a copy will be provided to the student and parent upon request.

(6) The student shall have all the rights afforded the student at the principal's hearing for long-term suspension under 603 CMR 53.08(3)(b).

(7) The superintendent shall issue a written decision within five calendar days of the hearing which meets the requirements of 603 CMR 53.08(3)(d)1. through 4. If the superintendent determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the superintendent may impose the same or a lesser consequence than the principal, but shall not impose a suspension greater than that imposed by the principal's decision.

(8) The decision of the superintendent shall be the final decision of the school district, charter school, or virtual school, with regard to the suspension.

53.10: In-School Suspension under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H½

(1) The principal may use in-school suspension as an alternative to short-term suspension for disciplinary offenses.

(2) The principal may impose an in-school suspension for a disciplinary offense under 603 CMR 53.10, provided that the principal follows the process set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(3) through (5) and the student has the opportunity to make academic progress as set forth in 603 CMR 53.13(1).

(3) The principal shall inform the student of the disciplinary offense charged and the basis for the charge, and provide the student an opportunity to dispute the charges and explain the circumstances surrounding the alleged incident. If the principal determines that the student committed the disciplinary offense, the principal shall inform the student of the length of the student's in-school suspension, which shall not exceed ten days, cumulatively or consecutively, in a school year.

(4) On the same day as the in-school suspension decision, the principal shall make reasonable efforts to notify the parent orally as soon as possible of the disciplinary offense, the reasons for concluding that the student committed the infraction, and the length of the in-school suspension. The principal shall also invite the parent to a meeting to discuss the student's academic performance and behavior, strategies for student engagement, and possible responses to the behavior. Such meeting shall be scheduled on the day of the suspension if possible, and if not, as soon thereafter as possible. If the principal is unable to reach the parent after making and documenting at least two attempts to do so, such attempts shall constitute reasonable efforts for purposes of orally informing the parent of the in-school suspension.

(5) The principal shall send written notice to the student and parent about the in-school suspension, including the reason and the length of the in-school suspension, and inviting the parent to a meeting with the principal for the purpose set forth in 603 CMR 53.10(4), if such meeting has not already occurred. The principal shall deliver such notice on the day of the suspension by hand-delivery, certified mail, first-class mail, or email to an address provided by the parent for school communications, or other method of delivery agreed to by the principal and the parent.

53.11: Exclusion from Extracurricular Activities and School-Sponsored Events

The principal may remove a student from privileges, such as extracurricular activities and attendance at school-sponsored events, based on the student's misconduct. Such a removal is not subject to the procedures in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H¾ or 603 CMR 53.00.

53.12: Disciplinary Offenses under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H or 37H½

(1) School districts shall adopt disciplinary policies and procedures applicable to a student who is accused of a disciplinary offense under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H, or 37H½. Such policies and procedures shall be consistent with the applicable statute and provide due process of law.

(2) The principal may remove a student who has committed a disciplinary offense under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H, or 37H½ from school for more than 90 days in a school year.

(3) Any student who is removed from school for a disciplinary offense under M.G.L. c. 71, § 37H, or § 37H½ shall have an opportunity to receive education services and make academic progress during the period of removal, as provided in 603 CMR 53.13.

53.13: Education Services and Academic Progress under M.G.L. c. 71, §§ 37H, 37H½, and 37H¾

(1) Any student who is serving an in-school suspension, short-term suspension, long-term suspension, or expulsion shall have the opportunity to earn credits, as applicable, make up assignments, tests, papers, and other school work as needed to make academic progress during the period of his or her removal from the classroom or school. The principal shall inform the student and parent of this opportunity in writing when such suspension or expulsion is imposed.

(2) Any student who is expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, shall have an opportunity to receive education services and to make academic progress toward meeting state and local requirements, through the school-wide education service plan.

(3) The principal shall develop a school-wide education service plan describing the education services that the school district will make available to students who are expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days. The plan shall include the process for notifying such students and their parents of the services and arranging such services. Education services shall be based on, and be provided in a manner consistent with, the academic standards and curriculum frameworks established for all students under M.G.L. c 69, §§ 1D and 1F.

(4) Notice of Education Services for Students in Long-Term Suspension and Expulsion; Enrollment Reporting.

(a) The principal shall notify the parent and student of the opportunity to receive education services at the time the student is expelled or placed on long-term suspension. Notice shall be provided in English and in the primary language spoken in the student's home if other than English, or other means of communication where appropriate. The notice shall include a list of the specific education services that are available to the student and contact information for a school district staff member who can provide more detailed information.

(b) For each student expelled or suspended from school for more than ten consecutive days, whether in school or out of school, the school district shall document the student's enrollment in education services. For data reporting purposes, the school shall track and report attendance, academic progress, and such other data as directed by the Department.

53.14: Student Suspension and Expulsion Data Collection and Reporting

(1) Every school district, charter school, and virtual school shall collect and annually report data to the Department regarding in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, emergency removals under 603 CMR 53.07, access to education services under 603 CMR 53.13, and such other information as may be required by the Department. Such data shall be reported in a manner and form directed by the Department.

(2) The principal of each school shall periodically review discipline data by selected student populations, including but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student

with a disability status. In reviewing the data, the principal shall assess the extent of in-school suspensions, short- and long-term suspensions, expulsions, and emergency removals under 603 CMR 53.07, and the impact of such disciplinary action on selected student populations. The principal shall further determine whether it is necessary or appropriate to modify disciplinary practices due to over-reliance on expulsion, or in-school or out-of school suspension, or emergency removals, or the impact of such suspensions, removals, and expulsions on selected student populations compared with other students.

(3) In the fall of each year, the Department shall publish an analysis and report of student discipline data disaggregated by district and school, and by selected student populations, included but not limited to race and ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, English language learner status, and student with a disability status. The data shall be reported in a manner that protects the identity of each student and shall be made available to the public online in a machine readable format.

(4) The Department shall annually determine the schools with the highest percentage of students expelled or placed on long-term suspension for more than ten cumulative days in a school year. After review of the discipline data described in 603 CMR 53.14(3) and other relevant school and district information, including but not limited to student demographics, student performance, promotion, attendance, attrition, graduation, and dropout rates, the Commissioner shall identify schools that need assistance to reduce over-reliance on long-term suspension or expulsion as a consequence for student misconduct. The Department shall identify models that such schools may use to incorporate intermediate steps before long-term suspension and expulsion and to foster positive school climate.

Through use of statistical analysis, the Commissioner shall identify schools and districts with data that reflect significant disparities in the rate of suspension and expulsion by race and ethnicity, or disability. Such schools and districts shall develop and implement a plan approved by the Department to address such significant disparities.

Regulatory Authority:

M.G.L. c.69, s. 1B & c.71, s. 37H & 37H 3/4

Suspensions and Expulsions

Chapter 222 of the Acts of 2012

An Act Relative to Student Access to Educational Services and Exclusion from School

A. Discipline procedures: suspensions and expulsions

The law:

- Amends G.L. c. 71 by adding a new section 37H¾ that addresses all suspensions and expulsions for reasons other than those covered in section 37H (dangerous weapons, controlled substances, and assaults on education staff) and section 37H ½ (felony complaint);
- Under section 37H¾, directs school decision makers at student disciplinary meetings or hearings to: 1) exercise discretion in deciding consequences for the student; 2) consider ways to reengage the student in the learning process; and 3) avoid using expulsion as a consequence until other remedies and consequences have been tried;
- Under section 37H¾, requires that districts provide 1) written notice to the student and parent or guardian of the reasons for suspension or expulsion in English and the primary language spoken in the home of the student, and 2) the opportunity for the student to meet with the principal or headmaster to discuss the reasons for suspension or expulsion, before the suspension or expulsion takes effect. The principal must make reasonable efforts to include the parent or guardian in the meeting with the student.
- Defines the process that school officials must follow under section 37H¾ if the decision is made after the meeting to suspend or expel the student, including notice of the student's appeal rights, if applicable, and the appeal process;
- Limits the length of suspensions or expulsions under section 37H¾ to 90 school days;

- Requires the principal to notify the superintendent in writing of the out-of-school suspension of a student enrolled in kindergarten through grade 3, the alleged misconduct, and the reasons for out-of-school suspension, before the suspension takes effect;

B. Opportunity for students to make academic progress while suspended or expelled

The law:

- Amends sections 37H and 37H½ to require districts and charter schools to continue to provide educational services to any student suspended or expelled under these sections;
- Requires principals and headmasters to create a “school-wide education service plan” for all students who are suspended or expelled for more than 10 consecutive school days, whether in or out of school, so that students have an opportunity to make academic progress. Education service plans may include, but are not limited to, tutoring, alternative placement, Saturday school, and online or distance learning;
- States that students who are suspended from school for 10 or fewer consecutive school days, whether in or out of school, must be provided an opportunity to make academic progress during the period of suspension, to make up assignments, and earn credits missed;
- Establishes that if a student moves to another district during a period of suspension or expulsion, the new district must either admit the student or provide educational services to the student during the period of suspension or exclusion;
- Provides for partial reimbursement under G.L. c 71B, § 5A, the circuit breaker provision, for the instructional costs of providing alternative educational services to suspended and expelled students. First payments will be made in fiscal year 2016, partially reimbursing eligible costs incurred in the 2014-15 school year.

Searches and Interrogations (File: JIH)

Searches by Staff:

The right of inspection of students’ school lockers is inherent in the authority granted Somerville School Committees and administrators. This authority may be exercised as needed in the interest of safeguarding children, their own and school property.

Nevertheless, exercise of that authority by school officials places unusual demands upon their judgment. Thus, school officials shall act to protect each child’s constitutional rights to personal privacy and protection from coercion and in the best interest of all students and the schools.

Searches by school officials of students’ automobiles or the student will be conducted in a way that protects the students’ rights consistent with the responsibility of the school system to provide an atmosphere conducive to the educational process.

Interrogations by Law Enforcement Officials:

The schools have legal custody of students during the school day and during hours of approved extracurricular activities. It is the responsibility of the school administration to make an effort to protect each student’s rights with respect to interrogations by law enforcement officials.

Therefore:

1. If law enforcement officials assert the need to enter school premises during the school day or during hours of extracurricular activity to either question students or take students into custody, law enforcement officials may enter school premises to do so only with the written approval of the superintendent, a valid warrant issued by a neutral magistrate or judge, or under exigent circumstances. An effort will be made to contact the student’s parent or guardian so that the responsible individual may be notified of the situation.
2. If custody and/or arrest are involved, the principal will request that all procedural safeguards, as prescribed by law, be observed by the law enforcement officials.

Locker, Desk, and Other School Property Searches (Policy #JIHA)

All lockers, desks, and other school property assigned to students, wherever located, are the property of the school district, and remain the property of the school district while they are being used by students. Students are required to provide their principal with the combination or a key to all locks used on school lockers. If a student uses a lock without providing the principal with the combination or a key, the lock will be removed by the principal upon detection.

Lockers and desks are made available for the use and convenience of students while in school. Students are permitted to use lockers and desks only to store books, school supplies, and personal items that are necessary for use in school, such as coats, footwear, athletic gear, and lunches. Lockers and desks are not to be used to store items that cause, or are reasonably likely to cause, interference with the educational process, that create a potential threat to the health, safety, or security of others, or that are forbidden by law or school rules.

School administrators or designees are authorized to search lockers and desks, including any personal effects such as purses, pockets, knapsacks, etc. that are found therein. School administrators or designees may conduct periodic random inspections of lockers, desks, and their contents, to ensure that school property is being properly used and maintained. Such random inspections may be conducted at any time, with or without notice, and with or without the consent of the student or his/her parent or guardian. Any contraband (i.e., any item that is illegal, prohibited by school rules, potentially dangerous, or evidence of a crime or violation of school rules) that is found as a result of a search of school property will be seized by school authorities and turned over to the appropriate legal authorities. The parent/guardian of a student who is under eighteen (18) years of age will be notified of any such items that are seized by school authorities.

The following rules shall apply to the search of school property assigned to a specific student and the seizure of any item found therein:

- A. A school administrator or designee may search a specific student's locker or desk if there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the locker or desk contains contraband, as described above.
- B. A search of property assigned to a specific student should be conducted in the presence of a witness and, when reasonably possible, in the presence of the student.
- C. Any contraband that is found as a result of a search of school property will be seized by school authorities and turned over to the appropriate legal authorities. The parent/guardian of a student who is under eighteen (18) years of age will be notified of any such items that are seized by school authorities.

The superintendent shall distribute this policy to all students annually.

Adopted: January 2010

Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment

The Somerville Public Schools is committed to enforcing the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. 1232h, included in the Goals 2000 Educate America Act of 1994. PPRA applies to all funding provided by the United State Department of Education and seeks to protect the rights of parents to inspect or survey instructional materials if these materials or surveys are funded by the United States Department of Education.

With respect to survey activities, survey materials, and instruction materials used by students and funded by the United States Department of Education, the Somerville Public Schools will:

- Make such materials available for inspection by parents.
- Obtain written parental consent if students are required to participate in a survey, analysis or evaluation that reveals information such as:
 - ✓ Political affiliations
 - ✓ Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student and their family

- ✓ Sexual behavior or attitudes
- ✓ Illegal or self-incriminating behavior (such as use or possession of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs)
- ✓ Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships
- ✓ Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, doctors, and ministers
- ✓ Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such programs)

With respect to voluntary surveys of students, parents/guardians of students being surveyed will be contacted by a written notice in advance of the survey. This letter will include:

- The purpose and benefit of the survey
- Whether participation is encouraged or required
- How anonymity will be protected
- When, where, and by whom the survey will be administered
- How results will be disseminated
- Procedures for reviewing survey materials prior to administration
- Procedures for parents/guardians to inform the District if they wish to not have their child participate in the survey.

If student participation in a survey is required, then the school must obtain written parental consent prior to administration of the survey.

Parents of students who believe their rights under PPRA may have been violated may file a complaint with the United States Department of Family Compliance Office at (202) 260-3887. Complaints must contain specific allegations of facts giving reasonable cause to believe that a violation of PPRA has occurred.

Approved by Somerville School Committee: January 9, 2012

Smoking on School Premises (File: ADC)

Use of any tobacco products* within the school buildings, school facilities, or on school grounds or school buses by any individual, including school personnel and students, is prohibited at all times.

A staff member determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action.

A student determined to be in violation of this policy shall be subject to disciplinary action pursuant to the student discipline code.

This policy shall be promulgated to all staff and students in appropriate handbook(s) and publications. Signs shall be posted in all school buildings informing the general public of the district policy and requirements of state law.

*Tobacco Product: Any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco or nicotine that is intended for human consumption, whether smoked, chewed, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, snorted, sniffed, or ingested by any other means, including, but not limited to: cigarettes, cigars, little cigars, chewing tobacco, pipe tobacco, snuff, or electronic cigarettes, electronic cigars, electronic pipes, electronic hookah, or other similar products, regardless of nicotine content, that rely on vaporization or aerosolization. "Tobacco product" includes any component or part of a tobacco product. "Tobacco product" does not include any product that has been approved by the United States Food and Drug Administration either as a tobacco use cessation product or for other medical purposes and which is being marketed and sold or prescribed solely for the approved purpose.

LEGAL REF: M.G.L. 71:37H

Adopted: January 1996 - Reviewed: October 2008 - Amended: December 2015

Also reference Policy GBED – Use of Tobacco Products on School Property by Staff Members; and Policy JICG – Tobacco Use by Students

DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE BY STUDENTS (File: JICH)

In view of the fact that the use of alcohol can endanger the health and safety of the user, and recognizing the deleterious effect the use of alcoholic beverages can have on the maintenance of general order and discipline, the Somerville School Committee prohibits the use of, serving of, or consumption of any alcoholic beverage on school property or at any school function.

The Somerville School Department and the Somerville School Committee prohibit the possession, use, purchase or sale of drugs, alcohol, drug paraphernalia, or any controlled substance in any place or vehicle under the school jurisdiction and at all school-sponsored activities regardless of location.

If a student finds themselves in the presence of students using drugs/alcohol, that student must leave the area immediately or be subject to the same penalties as the users.

Additionally, any student, regardless of age, who has been drinking alcoholic beverages prior to attendance at, or participation in, a school sponsored activity, will be barred from that activity and subject to disciplinary action.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [272:40A](#) M.G.L. [71:37H](#)

Revised: January 18, 1996; Amended: November 2009

Transfer Students

In accordance with Section 37 L of the Education Reform Act of 1993, a student transferring into a local school system must provide the new school system with a complete school record of previous school attendance. Said record shall include, but not be limited to, any incidents involving suspension, expulsion, or any misdemeanors or felonies with which the student has been charged. Student records should include any incident reports in which the student was charged with any suspended act.

EMERGENCY PLANS (File: EBC)

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 police, fire and emergency personnel, 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.

The Superintendent shall annually review the response sequence with local police and fire officials. Plans shall be submitted to local police and fire officials and the DESE at least every 3 years by September 1 or when changes occur. 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 (at least once per year) 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; Section 363 of Chapter 159 of the Acts of 2000; Section 7 of Chapter 284 of the Acts of 2014

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

Adoption date: January 1996; Reviewed: December 2008; Revised: August 2012; Revised by MASC: August 2015

Revised: February 2016

FIRE DRILLS

Fire drills are held regularly. At the sound of the alarm students should move quickly and quietly under the supervision of the staff. Students are to remain outside the building until directed by the staff to return to class. It is a serious offense to cause a false alarm; as noted in the Disciplinary Regulations, suspension or expulsion may result as well as a referral to appropriate authorities. Refusal to leave the building during a fire drill may also result in disciplinary action.

BOMB THREAT POLICY (File: EBC-R-1)

The 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 would provide them with your 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 they can initiate the action plan as it relates to the Bomb Threat Protocol.
- The person who received the call will next notify the Principal or designee that a bomb threat has been received.
- The Principal and/or designee will immediately report the threat to the Superintendent and to the Director of Student Services.
- Based upon information received, the Principal or 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 to not 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 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 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 2 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 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 their 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 designee will address the media and provide formal information about the issue.

Level 3 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 2.
- 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 designee notifies the Mayor's office.
- A Command post will be established as described in Level 2.
- Assemble the school crisis team and plan what to do.
- The Superintendent of Schools or 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 parents/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 properly respond including, but not limited to, education on what and how to look for and how to identify suspicious and unusual items. A three-hour video will be produced with a copy for 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.

VANDALISM (File: ECAC)

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 them 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 they see 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

Any student who willfully and maliciously paints, marks, scratches, etches or otherwise injures, mars, defaces or destroys real or personal property and whoever uses sprays or applies paint (known as “tagging”) on walls or other school property will be subject to the penalties described in Mass. General Law c. 266, 126A & 126B which punishes such vandalism with fines and imprisonment. A student convicted of vandalism will have their driver’s license suspended for one year. If the individual convicted of defacing or vandalizing property is under the age of sixteen then one year shall be added to the minimum age of eligibility for driving.

HAZING

Hazing is any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person.

Hazing is prohibited in the Somerville Public Schools. Leaders of student clubs and athletic teams are required to review this policy and prohibition at least annually, and must agree to zero tolerance for hazing. If claims of hazing by student athletic teams or organizations are substantiated, the aggressors will face disciplinary consequences.

Prohibition of Hazing (File: JICFA)

In accordance with Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 536 of the Acts of 1985, the School Committee hereby deems that no student, employee, or school organization under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing a student while on or off school property, or at a school-sponsored event regardless of the

location. No organization that uses the facilities or grounds under the control of the School Committee shall engage in the activity of hazing any person while on school property.

Any student who observes what appears to them to be the activity of hazing another student or person should report such information to the principal including the time, date, location, names of identifiable participants, and the types of behavior exhibited. Students and employees of the district are obligated by law to report incidents of hazing to the Police Department.

Any student who is present at a hazing has the obligation to report such an incident. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action by the school against that student and could involve suspension from school for up to three days.

Any student who participates in the hazing of another student or other person may, upon the approval of the Superintendent of Schools, be suspended from school for up to ten (10) school days.

Any student determined by the principal to be the organizer of a hazing activity may be recommended for expulsion from school but will receive no less disciplinary action than that of a participant.

In all cases relating to hazing, students will receive procedural due process.

SOURCE: MASC LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 269:17, 18, 19

Adopted: November 2009

Hazing (File: JICFA-E)

CH. 269, S. 17. CRIME OF HAZING; DEFINITION; PENALTY

Whoever is a principal organizer or participant in the crime of hazing as defined herein shall be punished by a fine of not more than three thousand dollars or by imprisonment in a house of correction for not more than one year, or by both such fine and imprisonment.

The term “hazing” as used in this section and in sections eighteen and nineteen, shall mean any conduct or method of initiation into any student organization, whether on public or private property, which willfully or recklessly endangers the physical or mental health of any student or other person. Such conduct shall include whipping, beating, branding, forced calisthenics, exposure to the weather, forced consumption of any food, liquor, beverage, drug, or other substance, or any other brutal treatment or forced physical activity which is likely to adversely affect the physical health or safety of any such student or other person, or which subjects such student or other person to extreme mental stress, including extended deprivation of sleep or rest or extended isolation. Notwithstanding any other provisions of this section to be contrary, consent shall not be available as a defense to any prosecution under this action.

CH. 269, S. 18. DUTY TO REPORT HAZING

Whoever knows that another person is the victim of hazing as defined in section seventeen and is at the scene of such crime shall, to the extent that such person can do so without danger or peril to himself or others, report such crime to an appropriate law enforcement official as soon as reasonably practicable. Whoever fails to report such crime shall be punished by a fine of not more than one thousand dollars.

CH. 269, S. 18. HAZING STATUTES TO BE PROVIDED; STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE AND DISCIPLINE POLICY REQUIRED

Each secondary school and each public and private school or college shall issue to every group or organization under its authority or operating on or in conjunction with its campus or school, and to every member, plebe, pledge, or applicant for membership in such group or organization, a copy of this section and sections seventeen and eighteen. An officer of each such group or organization, and each individual receiving a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen shall sign an acknowledgment stating that such group, organization, or individual has received a copy of said sections seventeen and eighteen.

Each secondary school and each public or private school or college shall file, at least annually, a report with the regents of higher education and in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education, certifying that such institution has complied with the provisions of this section and also certifying that the school has adopted a disciplinary policy with regards to the organizers and participants of hazing. The Board of Regents and, in the case of secondary schools, the Board of Education shall promulgate regulations governing the content and frequency of such reports, and shall forthwith report to the attorney general any such institution which fails to make such a report.

Revised: June 3, 1996

Reviewed: September 2009

ATHLETIC CONCUSSION POLICY (File: JJIF)

Introduction:

The purpose of this policy is to provide information and standardized procedures for persons involved in the prevention, training management and return to activity decisions regarding students who incur head injuries while involved in extracurricular athletic activities¹ including, but not limited to, interscholastic sports, in order to protect their health and safety as required by Massachusetts law and regulations. The requirements of the law apply to all public middle and high schools, however configured, serving grades six through high school graduation. In addition to any training required by law, the following persons shall complete one of the head injury safety training programs approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (DPH) as found on its website: coaches; certified athletic trainers; trainers; volunteers; school and team physicians; school nurses; athletic directors; directors responsible for a school marching band; employees or volunteers; and students who participate in an extracurricular activity and their parents.

Upon the adoption of this policy by the School Committee, the Superintendent shall ensure that DPH receives an affirmation on the school district letterhead that the district has developed policies and the School Committee has adopted a final policy in accordance with law. This affirmation shall be updated by September 30, 2013 and every two years thereafter upon review or revision of its policies.

The Superintendent shall maintain or cause to be maintained complete and accurate records of the district's compliance with the requirements of the Concussion Law, and shall maintain the following records for three years or, at a minimum, until the student graduates, unless state or federal law requires a longer retention period:

1. Verifications of completion of annual training and receipt of materials;
2. DPH Pre-participation forms and receipt of materials;
3. DPH Report of Head Injury Forms, or school based equivalents;
4. DPH Medical Clearance and Authorization Forms, or school based equivalents; and
5. Graduated reentry plans for return to full academic and extracurricular athletic activities.

This policy also applies to volunteers who assist with extracurricular athletic activities. Such volunteers shall not be liable for civil damages arising out of any act or omission relating to the requirements of law, unless such volunteer is willfully or intentionally negligent in his act or omission.

Most student athletes who sustain a concussion can fully recover as long as their brain has time to heal before sustaining another hit; however, relying only on an athlete's self-report of symptoms to determine injury recovery is inadequate as many high school athletes are not aware of the signs and symptoms or the severity concussive injuries pose, or they may feel pressure from coaches, parents, and/or teammates to return to play as quickly as possible. One or more of these factors will likely result in under-diagnosing the injury and a premature return to play. Massachusetts General Laws and Department of Public Health regulations make it imperative to accurately assess and treat student athletes when concussions are suspected.

¹ Extracurricular Athletic Activity means an organized school sponsored athletic activity generally occurring outside of school instructional hours under the direction of a coach, athletic director or marching band leader including, but not limited to, Alpine and Nordic skiing and snowboarding, baseball, basketball, cheerleading, cross country track, fencing, field hockey, football, golf, gymnastics, horseback riding, ice hockey, lacrosse, marching band, rifle, rugby, soccer, skating, softball, squash, swimming and diving, tennis, track (indoor and outdoor), ultimate frisbee, volleyball, water polo, and wrestling. All interscholastic athletics are deemed to be extracurricular athletic activities.

Student athletes who receive concussions may appear to be “fine” on the outside, when in actuality they have a brain injury and are not able to return to play. Incurring a second concussion can prove to be devastating to a student athlete. Research has shown that young concussed athletes who return to play before their brain has healed are highly vulnerable to more prolonged post-concussion syndrome or, in rare cases, a catastrophic neurological injury known as Second Impact Syndrome.

The following protocol will discuss and outline what a concussion is, the mechanism of injury, signs and symptoms, management and return to play requirements, as well as information on Second Impact Syndrome and past concussion syndrome. Lastly, this policy will discuss the importance of education for our athletes, coaches and parents and other persons required by law.

This protocol should be reviewed on a yearly basis with all staff to discuss the procedures to be followed to manage sports-related concussions. This protocol will also be reviewed on a yearly basis by the athletic department as well as by nursing staff. Any changes in this document will be approved by the school committee and given to athletic staff, including coaches and other school personnel in writing. An accurate synopsis of this policy shall be placed in the student and faculty handbooks.

Click here for: [Concussion Management Plan](#)

For more information: [Athletic Training Room](#)

LEGAL REFS: M.G.L. 111:222; 105 CMR 201.000

Chapter 166 of the Acts of 2010, an Act Relative to Safety Regulations for School Athletes

Adopted by Somerville School Committee: January 9, 2012

Amended: November 4, 2013; Amended: December 2015

CHROMEBOOKS

All students at Somerville High School will be issued a chromebook to use for their four years at SHS. Students will be required to sign the [Somerville High School Acceptable Chromebook Use Agreement](#) before being issued a chromebook and charger. If chromebooks or chargers are lost, stolen, or damaged beyond repair there will be a fee to replace the items.

NETWORK ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY FOR STUDENTS (File: [JRE](#))

PURPOSE

The Somerville Public Schools is pleased to offer its students access to the district’s computer network, including access to the Internet. Access to the network will enable students to explore thousands of libraries, databases, and bulletin boards. Potentially, students will also be exposed to advertisements of various kinds.

The Somerville Public Schools believes that there is educational value in the Internet, and recognizes its potential to support district curriculum. Through the Internet, it's possible to communicate with people all over the world through discussion forums and electronic mail. Many valuable educational files may be downloaded from the Internet. Because of its sheer size and seemingly limitless resources, the Internet’s educational potential is boundless. However, because of its broad reach the Internet also contains the potential for misuse. The following guidelines are intended to help ensure that students use this valuable resource in a safe and appropriate manner. Families should be aware that some material that is accessible via the Internet might contain content that is illegal, defamatory, inaccurate, or offensive. While our goal is to provide Internet access to support and promote student learning, students will have access to other information as well. The district believes that the benefits of student access to the Internet far exceed the disadvantages. Somerville Public Schools will make every effort to ensure that students use the Internet properly and students are expected to conduct themselves in a responsible manner when accessing the district network and the Internet. The district will seek to ensure that all student use of the Internet will be conducted under faculty supervision. However, faculty members cannot monitor student use at every moment and each student is expected to use it in a responsible manner and is accountable for his or her own appropriate use of the Internet. Before students are authorized to access the Internet they are required to review these Guidelines with their teacher and/or building Technology Facilitator.

ACCEPTABLE USE

Internet access through the Somerville Public Schools is a privilege and not a right and access may be terminated if this privilege is misused. Inappropriate conduct may also be subject to disciplinary action as outlined in the policy manual of the Somerville Public Schools. The intent of this policy is to ensure that all use of the Internet is consistent with the educational goals of the Somerville Public Schools.

The following actions violate the Policy:

- Use of the Network for personal or recreational purposes or activities;
- Sending "chain" type letters and unsolicited bulk mails (Spamming);
- Accessing social networks, social bookmarking, blogs, wikis, discussion groups or "chat rooms", multiuser role-playing environments and video games for a purpose not directly related to an educational task;
- Use of the Network to buy, sell or advertise any goods or services;
- Use of the Network for gambling purposes;
- Any use of the Network for political or commercial purposes that is not directly related to the educational purposes of the Somerville Public Schools;
- Use of the Network to transmit profane, obscene, vulgar, sexually explicit, threatening, defamatory, abusive, discriminatory, harassing, criminal or otherwise objectionable messages or materials. (Students are also prohibited from visiting Internet sites that post such materials and downloading or displaying such materials.);
- Use of the Network for any illegal purpose or in support of illegal activities or in a manner that violates any federal or state law or statute, or an activity prohibited by any Policy of the district including but not limited to the use or dissemination of copyrighted materials;
- Plagiarism. (i.e. the taking of material created by others and presenting it as if it were one's own);
- Revealing one's own password, using the network login (user name and password) of another individual or pretending to be someone else when using the Network;
- Accessing, reading, altering, deleting or copying another user's messages or data without express written approval;
- Using technology resources to promote, support or celebrate religion or religious institutions;
- Use of the Network download or transmit profanity, vulgarities, obscenity or using other language that is considered offensive or degrading to others;
- Using harassing, racial, sexist or discriminatory remarks and other antisocial behaviors;
- Using encryption or security measures to avoid monitoring or review in the ordinary course of business or routine maintenance by the system administrator;
- Using district resources in a wasteful manner including but not limited to ink, toner and paper;
- Using the network in a manner that is inconsistent with the directions from teachers and other staff and generally-accepted network etiquette;
- Purposefully posting or divulging any type of private or personal information about yourself or another person;
- Using invasive software such as viruses, "worms" and other detrimental activities;
- Downloading freeware, shareware or other software which affects the system software of a computer;
- Attempting to log-on to the Network as the system administrator;
- Attempting to gain unauthorized access to the Network, including but not limited to, the use of personal hardware and attempts to override the domain policies of the Network.

RE: CYBER-BULLYING

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Bill S2404, Section 5, defines Cyber-bullying as:

"...bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the

definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying."

In accordance with the zero-tolerance **Bullying Prevention Plan** of the Somerville Public Schools, Cyber-bullying is prohibited on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at school-sponsored or school-related activities, functions or programs (whether on or off school grounds), at bus stops, on school busses or other vehicles owned or operated by the SPS or their contractors, or through the use of technology or electronic devices owned, leased or used by the District, regardless of whether the Cyber-bullying occurs on or off the Network.

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Access of material that has been deemed inappropriate for educational use by Somerville Public Schools' faculty or staff is strictly prohibited. If users encounter such material by accident, they should quit the application immediately. Students should report the incident directly to a teacher. Students will not have the opportunity to simply "surf" the Internet or browse among World Wide Web pages. Students will use the Internet for a specific educational purpose during lab time or for a class assignment.

ACCESS TO STUDENT FILES

All student files, including e-mail files and other Internet files and usage may be monitored by faculty for educational and administrative purposes, including the need to ensure that these Guidelines are being followed. Also, faculty may be asked to provide access to student files and records to law enforcement authorities. Students should not assume that the uses of Somerville Public Schools Internet access will be private.

PERSONAL SAFETY

The Internet is accessible to the public and to those individuals who may seek to contact students for inappropriate purposes. The Somerville Public Schools seeks to but cannot entirely screen the Internet for such inappropriate uses. Students are urged to be diligent, cautious and prudent about divulging personal information via the internet. Students should promptly inform their teacher or school administrator of any on-line communication that the student feels is threatening, harassing or otherwise inappropriate.

SYSTEM SECURITY AND RESOURCE LIMITS

Students are expected to follow procedures and guidelines that are issued in order to ensure the security of district computer systems and to respect technology resources limits. These include downloading guidelines and virus protection procedures that may be issued. Students are prohibited from utilizing non-district flash drives or other external storage device in a school computer without permission from district staff. The installation of any kind of software on district computers is strictly prohibited. Students are not allowed to use the district's computer resources to create their own web page unless it is in conjunction with a class assignment.

LIABILITY

The Somerville Public Schools assumes no responsibility or liability for:

- Any unauthorized charges or fees incurred as a result of use of the system/Network, including but not limited to telephone charges, long distance charges, per minute surcharges and/or equipment or line charges;
- Any financial obligations arising out of the unauthorized use of the Network for the purchase of products or services;
- Any user data, information, or materials stored on the Network;
- Any cost, liability or damages caused by user violation of this Policy, or any other inappropriate use of electronic resources of the SPS;
- The SPS makes no guarantee, implied or otherwise, regarding the reliability of the data connection, and shall not be liable for any loss or corruption of data resulting while using the system/Network.

Approved by the Somerville School Committee: June 3, 2002 Revised: November 27, 2007

Approved by the Somerville School Committee: December 17, 2007 Reviewed: May 2009

Amended: June 2011; Amended: March 2015

Access to Digital Resources (File: IJND)

The School Committee supports the right of students, employees, and community members to have reasonable access to various information formats and believes it is incumbent upon users to utilize this privilege in an appropriate manner.

Safety Procedures and Guidelines

The Superintendent, in conjunction with the Director of Technology, shall develop and implement appropriate procedures to provide guidance for access to digital resources. Guidelines shall address teacher supervision of student computer or tablet use, ethical use of digital resources and issues of privacy versus administrative review of electronic files and communications. In addition, guidelines shall prohibit utilization of digital resources for prohibited or illegal activities and for the use of other programs with the potential of damaging or destroying programs or data.

Internet safety measures shall be implemented that effectively address the following:

- Controlling access by minors to inappropriate matter on the Internet as defined by the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA) and the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA);
- Safety and security of minors when they are using e-mail, instant messaging applications, and other forms of direct electronic communications;
- Preventing unauthorized access, including hacking, viruses, and other unlawful activities by minors online;
- Unauthorized disclosure, use and dissemination of personal information regarding minors.

The School District shall provide reasonable public notice to address and communicate its internet safety measures.

Empowered Digital Use

All students and faculty must agree to and sign an Empowered Digital Use form prior to the student or staff member being granted independent access to digital resources and district networks. The required form, which specifies guidelines for using digital resources and district networks, must be signed by the parent or legal guardian of minor students (those under 18 years of age) and also by the student. This document shall be kept on file as a legal, binding document. In order to modify or rescind the agreement, the student's parent/guardian (or the student who is at least 18 years old) must provide the Director of Technology with a written request.

Employee Use

Employees shall use district email, district devices, and district networks only for purposes directly related to educational and instructional purposes.

Community Use

On recommendation of the Superintendent in conjunction with the Director of Technology, the district shall determine when and which computer equipment, software, and information access systems will be available to the community. All guests will be prompted to, and must accept the district's Access to Digital Resources Policy before accessing the district network.

Disregard of Rules and Responsibility for Damages

Individuals who refuse to sign required Empowered Digital Use documents or who violate district rules governing the use of district technology or networks shall be subject to loss or restriction of the privilege of using equipment, software, information access systems, and network.

Individuals shall reimburse the district for repair or replacement of district property lost, stolen, damaged, or vandalized while under their care.

SOURCE: MASC LEGAL REFS: 47 USC § 254 Adopted: August 2015

Note: FCC regulations that went into effect April 20, 2001, implementing The Children's Internet Protection Act (47 U.S.C. § 254) require each school/district to certify compliance with certain policy requirements in order to maintain eligibility for Internet access discounts and other services provided by the federal government.

INTERNET PUBLICATION (File: IJNDC)

I. Purpose

The School District has established a district-wide web page that links users to web pages for the district's individual schools. The School District maintains these web pages for educational purposes only, in furtherance of the educational mission of the School District. All published pages and corresponding links to other sites must relate to the district's educational mission.

II. Supervision and Approval of Web Pages

The Superintendent (or designee) may select the person or persons ("the Webmaster") responsible for overseeing the school district's web pages and maintaining the web pages in a manner consistent with this policy and the school district's Access to Digital Resources Policy. The Webmaster must approve all links from the district web pages to other sites on the Internet. The Webmaster will review the links to ensure that the links are related to the district's educational mission.

Staff members may publish web pages related to their class projects or courses on their school's web site. Staff members must submit their material to the Webmaster for approval before the material can be published. Staff members may not publish or link to personal web pages as part of the school district website.

Student or staff work (e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces and graphic or other artwork) may be published on the district's web pages, as detailed below. All work that is published will be accompanied by a copyright notice written by the Webmaster that prohibits copying the work without the written consent of the copyright holder.

III. Content Standards

All web page materials are expected to be accurate, grammatically correct and free of spelling errors. Student work may deviate from this standard depending upon the age and grade level of the student. Web pages should be well-organized and professional in appearance. Web pages must not contain copyrighted or trademarked material belonging to others unless written permission to display such material has been obtained from the owner and the owner is credited on the school's web page.

IV. Safety Precautions

A. In general

Identifying information about students, such as first and last names, personal phone numbers or home addresses, will not be published. First names or first names and the first letter of the student's last name may be used where appropriate.

B. Student photographs

- Student photographs may be published only with the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.
- Student photographs will not be accompanied by identifying information about the student(s).

C. Student work

Student work, e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces, and graphic or other artwork, may be published only with the written consent of the student's parent or guardian.

D. Staff photographs, identifying information and work

- Photographs of staff members, accompanied by the staff member's full name, may be published only with the staff member's written consent.
- Staff work, e.g. voice, likeness, quotes, written material, musical pieces and graphic or other artwork, may be published only with the staff member's written consent.

SOURCE: MASC; Adopted: August 2015

Acceptable Use of Personal Electronic Devices (File: IJNDB-R)

(Use of cameras/video/audio/recording devices)

No individual may use any type of camera, video, audio or computer recording device in any manner that interferes with or is disruptive of the educational process, invades the privacy of any individual, or violates the academic integrity of any school activity.

Students may not possess or use any cameras or video or audio equipment on school property or at a school-sponsored event, except under the following conditions:

- A student may possess and use the camera or video or audio equipment at the direction of and with direct supervision by a classroom teacher as part of classroom activities.

- A student may possess and use a camera or video or audio equipment if that student receives prior written permission from the school principal for a specific purpose. At no time will permission be granted for socializing or other non-essential purposes, or if the use will violate another individual's privacy.
- A student may possess and use a camera or video or audio equipment while attending and not participating in an event held on school grounds after school hours and open to the general public, as long as the possession and use are neither disruptive or in any way unlawful. This privilege may be revoked on a case-by-case basis at any time for any reason by the principal or school administrator, or by their designee.

Cell phones with camera and/or video functions must not be used to take or transmit any image or video at any time, even if the use of the cell phone is otherwise permitted.

For the privacy and safety of all, the use or appearance of use (showing the device in such a way that could lead an individual to believe they are being photographed or recorded) of any electronic device is not permitted in any locker room or bathroom in the SPS or in any locker room or bathroom at any school sponsored event.

Photographing or recording is prohibited in the SPS unless authorized for educational or school purposes.

SECURITY CAMERAS IN SCHOOLS (File: ECA)

The School Committee works to maintain a safe and secure environment for its students, staff, visitors, and facilities. Security means more than having locks and making certain that doors are locked at the proper times. Security also means minimizing fire hazards, reducing the possibility of faulty equipment, keeping records and valuables in a safe place, protection against vandalism and burglary, the prosecution of vandals, and developing crisis plans.

School facilities and their contents, constitute one of the greatest investments of the community. The School Committee believes it to be in the best interest of students and taxpayers for the district to exert every reasonable means to protect the investment adequately.

In pursuit of this objective, the School Committee authorizes the use of security cameras in school district buildings and on its property to ensure the health, welfare and safety of all students, staff and visitors, to deter theft, vandalism and other negative behavior, to safeguard district buildings, grounds and equipment, and to monitor unauthorized individuals in or on school property. Security cameras may be used in locations as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent of Schools in consultation with school officials as well as local law enforcement and emergency response agencies. They may be used in any area, inside or outside of school buildings where there is no reasonable expectation of privacy.

The district shall notify students and staff through student and employee handbooks and appropriate signage that security cameras have been installed and may be used at any time. Students or staff identified on security cameras in violation of School Committee policies will be subject to disciplinary action.

The Superintendent shall ensure that proper procedures are in place and are followed regarding use, viewing, disclosure, retention, disposal and security of video recordings or photographs from security cameras in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. A video recording used for security purposes in school district buildings and/or on school property shall be the sole property of the school district. All video recordings will be stored in their original format and secured to avoid tampering and to ensure confidentiality in accordance with applicable laws and regulations. Access to video recordings from security cameras shall be limited to school administrators (Superintendent/designee, School Principal/designee). Law enforcement and emergency response officials shall be granted access to video recordings or the security system after giving prior notice to the School Superintendent/designee. The Superintendent may, from time to time, issue further guidance that is consistent with current laws and this policy.

SOURCE: MASC Adopted: August 2015

Security cameras are installed at Somerville High School and may be used at any time. Additionally, vape detectors and Guardian shot detectors are installed at Somerville High School.

McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act

The McKinney Vento Homeless Education Liaison for Somerville Public Schools is housed in the [Basic Needs and Housing Supports Services Office](#), part of the Somerville Family Learning Collaborative.

Homeless students have the following rights:

- Children and youth experiencing homelessness have the right to attend school; a permanent address is not needed to enroll in school.
- Children in homeless situations have the right to stay in the school they attended before becoming homeless or where they last enrolled (school of origin) if the parent or guardian so chooses.
 - Schools must provide a written explanation if a placement dispute occurs; parents/guardians may contact the district's Homeless Liaison.
- A homeless child cannot be denied school enrollment just because school records or other enrollment documentation are not immediately available, and must be enrolled immediately.
- A homeless child has the right to participate in extracurricular activities and all federal, state, or local programs for which they are eligible.
- A homeless child is entitled to free breakfast and lunch, transportation assistance, and to receive Title I services.

Unaccompanied youth, homeless youth not living with parent(s) or guardian(s), have these same rights.

Purpose (File: JFABD)

The goal of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act is to ensure that each homeless child or youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths. The Somerville Public Schools (SPS) shall ensure that every effort is made to comply with this legislation.

Definition:

SPS is in compliance with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary Education (MADESE) which has adopted Section 725 (2) of Act regarding the definition of homeless children and youth:

- Individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence or have a primary nighttime residence in a supervised, publicly or privately, operated shelter for temporary accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill), an institution providing temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

This definition shall include:

- children and youth who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason; are living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations; are living in emergency or transitional shelters; are abandoned in hospitals; or are awaiting foster care placement (temporary, transitional, or emergency placements);
- children and youth who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings;
- children and youth who are living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings; and
- unaccompanied youth – a youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian.

Liaisons

The McKinney-Vento Act requires every school district to designate a staff person to serve as the Homeless Education Liaison whose role is to assist homeless students enroll in school, remove all barriers to enrollment,

ensure that homeless students receive the educational services for which they are eligible, and have access to all school activities and events. This liaison may have other duties within the school district. The liaison for the Somerville Public Schools is Jennifer Ochoa. She may be reached at by email at jochoa@k12.somerville.ma.us

Enrollment

The Somerville Public Schools will immediately enroll homeless students in school, even if they do not have the documents usually required for enrollment – such as school records, medical records, proof of residency, discipline records, or birth certificate.

Furthermore:

- homeless students have a right to either remain in their school of origin or to attend school where they are temporarily residing;
- students who choose to remain in their school of origin have the right to remain there until the end of the school year in which they get permanent housing;

The Homeless Education Liaison will assist students who arrive without records by contacting the previously attended school system to obtain the required records.

Transportation

The Somerville Public Schools shall ensure that transportation is provided according to state guidelines, at the request of the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth, to and from the school or origin:

- if the homeless student continues to live in the area served by the district in which the school of origin is located, that district must provide or arrange transportation according to the established school committee policy;
- if the homeless student moves to an area served by another district, though continuing his or her education at the school of origin, the district of origin and the district in which the student resides must agree upon a method to apportion responsibility and costs for transportation to the school of origin; and
- if the districts cannot agree upon such a method, the responsibility and costs must be shared equally.

Access to Comparable Services

Homeless students are to be provided services and education programs comparable to those received by other students and for which they meet eligibility criteria, such as services provided under Title I or similar state or local programs; programs for students with disabilities; programs for students with limited English proficiency; vocational or technical programs; gifted and talented programs; tutoring; MCAS remediation; homework assistance; referral to counseling; medical services; school supplies; and school nutrition programs. Homeless students will be enrolled immediately in the free breakfast and lunch program.

NOTE: To expedite the delivery of nutritional benefits, school officials may accept documentation that students are homeless from the local educational liaison or the director of the homeless shelter where the students reside as the determination of eligibility for free lunch.

Access to Preschool

An important goal of McKinney-Vento is to offer homeless preschoolers the same opportunity to enroll, and attend and succeed in preschool as non-homeless preschoolers, thereby minimizing their educational disruption due to homelessness. The Somerville District Homeless Education Liaison and early care and education providers, including child development and preschool program personnel childcare resource and referral agencies, and other service providers, must coordinate and collaborate to review and revise practices, or policies that inadvertently act as barriers to the enrollment of homeless children in childcare and early education programs.

Dispute Resolution

If a dispute arises over school selection (school of origin or school in which homeless child is residing) or enrollment, the Somerville Public Schools will immediately enroll the homeless student – pending resolution of the dispute – and must provide the parent, guardian, or unaccompanied youth with both a written statement of the school placement decision and a notice of the right to appeal the decision. The SPS shall refer the unaccompanied

youth, parent, or guardian to the Homeless Education Liaison, who will expeditiously carry out the dispute resolution process. Disputes that cannot be resolved within the district will be sent to the Massachusetts Department of Education, and the final decision in such a situation resides with Massachusetts Commissioner of Education.

Unaccompanied Youth & Children and Youth in State Care or Custody

Unaccompanied youth are youth who are homeless; not in the physical custody of a parent/guardian; and not in the custody of a state agency. This definition includes youth living on the street, in inadequate housing, denied housing by their families, those who have left home voluntarily, even when their parent/s want them to return home, and youth doubled up with friends or relatives. Also, in collaboration with the Department of Social Services, MADOE has determined that children and youth in state care or custody who have been placed out of their homes into temporary, transitional, or emergency living placements are awaiting foster care placement and are therefore homeless. For example, Stabilization, Assessment, and Rapid Reintegration/Reunification (STARR) Programs are short-term DCF placements that have replaced the temporary, transitional, or emergency housing previously provided by “bridge” homes, diagnostic assessment centers, and shelters, and as a result, placement in STARR Programs, both latency and adolescent, are considered temporary, transitional, or emergency homeless housing under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

Unaccompanied youth or students in state care or custody who are awaiting foster care are entitled to the same educational rights and services, including transportation, under McKinney-Vento as any homeless child or youth in the care of their parent(s)/ guardian(s).

Adopted: May 15, 2006 - Amended: October 5, 2009

HOME SCHOOLING POLICY:

These procedures are intended to provide home schooling parents of high school age students with important information, and specific procedures in the event that a decision is made to enroll the student at Somerville High School (SHS).

I. General Procedure for Homeschooling High School Age Students

A. Parent Responsibilities (For students under 16 years of age)

1. Parents are required by state law to have a homeschool plan approved annually by the School District for any child who is under 16 years of age. Plans are submitted to and approved by the Assistant Superintendent for Academics prior to the start of the home schooling program. Program requirements are available through the Assistant Superintendent's office.
2. Parents are responsible for maintaining all pertinent records concerning homeschooling. Parents should provide documentation of the student's completion and achievement results, consistent with the approved plan, to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum no later than June 30 of each school year.

B. District Responsibilities (For students under 16 years of age)

The Assistant Superintendent for Academics will approve the educational plan for all home schooled students. The Counseling Department will annually review the student's progress and achievement in accordance with the approved plan.

C. Parent/Guardian Requirement (for students 16 years of age and older)

1. Parents/guardians may, but are not required, to submit a plan to the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum for approval once a student has reached 16 years of age.

II. General Procedures for enrolling a Homeschooled student at Somerville High School

A. High School diploma

Should a home-schooled student seek to enroll at SHS for purposes of earning a Somerville High School diploma, please contact SHS School Counseling Office for registration information.

B. Grade/Credit

1. An approved and assessed home schooling plan that includes a curriculum of studies must be on file for every school year regardless of the student's age.
2. As part of the enrolling process, high school credits will be awarded commensurate with all other SHS courses. Grading completed as a homeschool student may reflect a pass/fail credit option.

For letter grades, SHS will use these criteria: If the course is from a local community college or comparable institution, all 101 courses will be given standard level weighting. All upper level college courses will be given Honors weighting. Generally any other course work will be given standard level weighting. Honors weighting may be given if there is substantiation that the curriculum matches or is consistent with the SHS Honors curriculum.

SHS Graduation Requirements according to the following:

1. Successful completion of 105 credits, at least 20 earned in senior year.
2. Enrollment in high school for four years beyond the 8th grade
3. English 1,2,3 and 4 (or appropriate MLE courses)
4. Social Studies, including World History and U.S. History, 15 credits
5. Physical Education, 5 credits
6. Health, 5 credits
7. Mathematics, including a sequence of Algebra 1/Geometry/Algebra 2 or equivalent, 20 credits
8. Science, 15 credits
9. Fine Arts or Performing Arts (Music, Visual Arts, Theatre, or Media Art), 5 credits
10. World Language, 10 credits

Awarding of SHS credits is at the discretion of the SHS Principal with the above procedures as a guideline.

1. Assessment may involve the following options: home school network courses, portfolios, curriculum-aligned tests, standardized tests, other tests, and summer school courses. SHS may require that an assessment, consistent with local course expectations, be taken for credit determination.

2. Upon enrolling in high school, home schooled students will be placed at a grade level depending upon the SHS credits awarded. A typical full year course earns 5 credits.

SHS uses the following credit distribution:

25 total credits must have been earned to gain sophomore status

50 total credits must have been earned to gain junior status

70 total credits must have been earned to gain senior status

105 total credits are required for graduation

3. All students must pass the required Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) exams in order to be eligible to receive a high school diploma from Somerville High School.

BULLYING IN SCHOOLS (POLICY: JICFB)

www.somerville.k12.ma.us/no_bullying

A safe learning environment is one in which every student develops emotionally, academically, and physically in a caring and supportive atmosphere free of intimidation and abuse. Bullying of any type has no place in a school setting. The Somerville Public Schools will endeavor to maintain a learning and working environment free of bullying. The Somerville School Committee and all of the Somerville Public Schools shall not tolerate bullying.

Definition:

“Bullying” is the repeated use by one or more students or by a member of a school staff including, but not limited to an, educator, administrator, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a victim that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the victim or damage to the victim’s property; (ii) places the victim in reasonable fear of harm to themselves or of damage to their property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the victim; (iv) infringes on the rights of the victim at school; or (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. For the purposes of this section, bullying shall include cyber-bullying.

“Cyber-bullying” is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, which shall include, but shall not be limited to, any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo optical system, including, but not limited to, electronic mail, internet communications, instant messages or facsimile communications. Cyber-bullying shall also include (i) the creation of a web page or blog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or (ii) the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages, if the creation or impersonation creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying. Cyber-bullying shall also include the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons, if the distribution or posting creates any of the conditions enumerated in clauses (i) to (v), inclusive, of the definition of bullying.

Bullying shall be prohibited: (i) on school grounds, property immediately adjacent to school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by a school district or school, or through the use of technology or an electronic device owned, leased or used by a school district or school and (ii) at a location, activity, function or program that is not school-related, or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by a school district or school, if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school. Nothing contained herein shall require schools to staff any non-school related activities, functions, or programs.

Retaliation against a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying shall be prohibited.

Plan:

The plan shall apply to students and members of a school staff, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to an extracurricular activity and paraprofessionals.

The school district shall provide age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade that is incorporated into the curriculum of the school district or school. The curriculum shall be evidence-based. The school district shall develop, adhere to and update a plan to address bullying prevention and intervention in consultation with teachers, school staff, professional support personnel, school volunteers, administrators, community representatives, local law enforcement agencies, students, parents and guardians. The consultation shall include, but not be limited to, notice and a public comment period; provided, however, that a non-public school shall only be required to give notice to and provide a comment period for families that have a child attending the school. The plan shall be updated at least biennially.

Each plan shall include, but not be limited to: (i) descriptions of and statements prohibiting bullying, cyber-bullying and retaliation; (ii) clear procedures for students, staff, parents, guardians and others to report bullying or retaliation; (iii) a provision that reports of bullying or retaliation may be made anonymously; provided, however, that no disciplinary action shall be taken against a student solely on the basis of an anonymous report; (iv) clear procedures for promptly responding to and investigating reports of bullying or retaliation; (v) the range of

disciplinary actions that may be taken against a perpetrator for bullying or retaliation; provided, however, that the disciplinary actions shall balance the need for accountability with the need to teach appropriate behavior; (vi) clear procedures for restoring a sense of safety for a victim and assessing that victim's needs for protection; (vii) strategies for protecting from bullying or retaliation a person who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying or witnesses or has reliable information about an act of bullying; (viii) procedures consistent with state and federal law for promptly notifying the parents or guardians of a victim and a perpetrator; provided, further, that the parents or guardians of a victim shall also be notified of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation; and provided, further, that the procedures shall provide for immediate notification pursuant to regulations promulgated under this subsection by the principal or person who holds a comparable role to the local law enforcement agency when criminal charges may be pursued against the perpetrator; (ix) a provision that a student who knowingly makes a false accusation of bullying or retaliation shall be subject to disciplinary action; and (x) a strategy for providing counseling or referral to appropriate services for perpetrators and victims and for appropriate family members of said students. The plan shall afford all students the same protection regardless of their status under the law.

The school district plan shall include a provision for ongoing professional development to build the skills of all staff members, including, but not limited to, educators, administrators, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, athletic coaches, advisors to extracurricular activities and paraprofessionals, to prevent, identify and respond to bullying. The content of such professional development shall include, but not be limited to: (i) developmentally appropriate strategies to prevent bullying incidents; (ii) developmentally appropriate strategies for immediate, effective interventions to stop bullying incidents; (iii) information regarding the complex interaction and power differential that can take place between and among a perpetrator, victim and witnesses to the bullying; (iv) research findings on bullying, including information about specific categories of students who have been shown to be particularly at risk for bullying in the school environment; (v) information on the incidence and nature of cyber-bullying; and (vi) internet safety issues as they relate to cyber-bullying.

The plan shall include provisions for informing parents and guardians about the bullying prevention curriculum of the school district or school and shall include, but not be limited to: (i) how parents and guardians can reinforce the curriculum at home and support the school district or school plan; (ii) the dynamics of bullying; and (iii) online safety and cyber-bullying. The plan also requires that the school principal or designee notify the parents or guardians of a victim about DESE problem resolution system, and the process for seeking assistance or filing a claim under the problem resolution system. The principal is required to provide that information when they notify the parent or guardian about the bullying incident.

The school district shall provide to students and parents or guardians, in age-appropriate terms and in the languages which are most prevalent among the students, parents or guardians, annual written notice of the relevant student-related sections of the plan.

The school district shall provide to all school staff annual written notice of the plan. The faculty and staff at each school shall be trained annually on the plan applicable to the school. Relevant sections of the plan relating to the duties of faculty and staff shall be included in a school district or school employee handbook. The plan shall be posted on the website of each school district.

Each school principal or the person who holds a comparable position shall be responsible for the implementation and oversight of the plan at their school. A member of a school staff, including, but not limited to, an educator, administrator, school nurse, administrative assistant, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, athletic coach, advisor to an extracurricular activity or paraprofessional, shall immediately report any instance of bullying or retaliation the staff member has witnessed or become aware of to the principal or to the school official identified in the plan as responsible for receiving such reports or both. Upon receipt of such a report, the school principal or a designee shall promptly conduct an investigation. If the school principal or a designee determines that bullying or retaliation has occurred, the school principal or designee shall (i) notify the local law enforcement agency if the school principal or designee believes that criminal charges may be pursued against a perpetrator; (ii) take appropriate disciplinary action; (iii) notify the parents or guardians of a perpetrator; and (iv) notify the parents or

guardians of the victim, and to the extent consistent with state and federal law, notify them of the action taken to prevent any further acts of bullying or retaliation.

If an incident of bullying or retaliation involves students from more than one school district, the school district or school first informed of the bullying or retaliation shall, consistent with state and federal law, promptly notify the appropriate administrator of the other school district or school so that both may take appropriate action. If an incident of bullying or retaliation occurs on school grounds and involves a former student under the age of 21 who is no longer enrolled in a local school district, the school district or school informed of the bullying or retaliation shall contact law enforcement.

Whenever the evaluation of the Individualized Education Program team indicates that the child has a disability that affects social skills development or that the child is vulnerable to bullying, harassment or teasing because of the child's disability, the Individualized Education Program shall address the skills and proficiencies needed to avoid and respond to bullying, harassment or teasing. The anti-bullying plan is required to recognize that certain students may be more vulnerable to become a target of bullying or harassment on actual perceived "differentiating characteristics" that may make certain students more vulnerable to bullying including: race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, socioeconomic status, homelessness, academic status, gender identity or expression, physical appearance, pregnant or parenting status, sexual orientation, mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability or by association with a person who is perceived to have 1 or more of these characteristics.

HARASSMENT POLICIES

Student-To-Student Harassment (File: JBA)

Harassment of students by other students will not be tolerated in the Somerville Public Schools. This policy is in effect while students are on school grounds, School District property or property within the jurisdiction of the School District, school buses, or attending or engaging in school activities.

Harassment prohibited by the District includes, but is not limited to, harassment on the basis of race, sex, gender identity, creed, color, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, marital status or disability. Students whose behavior is found to be in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension or expulsion.

Harassment means conduct of a verbal or physical nature that is designed to embarrass distress, agitate, disturb or trouble students when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of a student's education or of a student's participation in school programs or activities;
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions affecting the student, or;
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's performance or creating an intimidating or hostile learning environment.

Harassment as described above may include, but is not limited to:

- Verbal, physical or written (including texting, blogging, or other technological methods) harassment or abuse;
- Repeated remarks of a demeaning nature;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, or other school matter.
- Demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the student.

The District will promptly and reasonably investigate allegations of harassment. The Principal of each building will be responsible for handling all complaints by students alleging harassment.

Retaliation against a student, because a student has filed a harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment investigation or proceeding, is also prohibited. A student who is found to have retaliated against

another in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including suspension and expulsion.

The Superintendent will develop administrative guidelines and procedures for the implementation of this policy.

SOURCE: MASC

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 151B:3A Title VII, Section 703, Civil Rights

Act of 1964 as amended BESE 603 CMR 26:00

REFS.: "Words that Hurt," American School Board Journal, September 1999

National Education Policy Network, NSBA, Revised: October 15, 2012

SEXUAL HARASSMENT (File: ACAB)

The Somerville School Committee and Somerville Public Schools are committed to maintaining an education and work environment for all school community members. that is free from all forms of harassment, including sexual harassment. The members of the school community include the School Committee, employees, administration, faculty, staff, students, volunteers in the schools, and parties contracted to perform work for the Somerville Public Schools.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature. The definition includes unwelcome conduct on the basis of sex that is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies a person equal access to the school's education program or activity. Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal, nonverbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual harassment includes conduct by an employee conditioning an educational benefit or service upon a person's participation in unwelcome sexual conduct, often called quid pro quo harassment and, sexual assault as the Federal Clery Act defines that crime. Sexual violence is a form of sexual harassment. Sexual violence, as the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) uses the term, refers to physical sexual acts perpetrated against a person's will or where a person is incapable of giving consent (e.g., due to the student's age or use of drugs or alcohol, or because an intellectual or other disability prevents the student from having the capacity to give consent). A number of different acts fall into the category of sexual violence, including rape, sexual assault, sexual battery, sexual abuse and sexual coercion. Massachusetts General Laws Ch. 119, Section 51A, requires that public schools report cases of suspected child abuse, immediately orally and file a report within 48 hours detailing the suspected abuse to the Department of Children and Families. For the category of sexual violence, in addition to Section 51A referrals these offences and any other serious matters shall be referred to local law enforcement. Schools must treat seriously all reports of sexual harassment that meet the definition of sexual harassment and the conditions of actual notice and jurisdiction as noted above. Schools must promptly respond to allegations of sexual harassment that are alleged to have occurred in the school's program or activities in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent (clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances).

While it is not possible to list all those additional circumstances that may constitute sexual harassment, the following are some examples of conduct, which if unwelcome, may constitute sexual harassment, depending on the totality of the circumstances, including the severity of the conduct and its pervasiveness:

- Unwelcome sexual advances-whether they involve physical touching or not;
- Implied or explicit threats concerning one's grades, achievements, or other school matter;
- Sexual epithets, jokes, written or oral references to sexual conduct, gossip regarding one's sex life; comment on an individual's body, comment about an individual's sexual activity, deficiencies, or prowess;
- Displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons;
- Unwelcome leering, whistling, brushing against the body, sexual gestures, suggestive or insulting comments;
- Inquiries into one's sexual experiences; and,
- Discussion of one's sexual activities.

The legal definition of sexual harassment is broad and in addition to the above examples, other sexually oriented conduct, whether it is intended or not, that is unwelcome and has the effect of creating an environment that is

hostile, offensive, intimidating, to male, female, or gender non-conforming students or employees may also constitute sexual harassment.

Because the District takes allegations of harassment, including sexual harassment, seriously, we will respond promptly to complaints of harassment and following an investigation where it is determined that such inappropriate conduct has occurred, we will act promptly to eliminate the conduct and impose corrective action as is necessary, including disciplinary action where appropriate. In accordance with Title IX, a complainant's wishes with respect to whether the school investigates an allegation of sexual harassment will be respected unless the Title IX Coordinator determines that signing a formal complaint to initiate an investigation over the wishes of the complainant is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances. However, in certain cases sexual harassment of a student may constitute child abuse under Massachusetts law. The Somerville Public Schools will comply with all legal requirements governing the reporting of suspected cases of child abuse. The Somerville Public Schools will also report instances of harassment that may involve a crime to the Somerville Police Department as appropriate.

Please note that while this policy sets forth our goals of promoting an environment that is free of harassment including sexual harassment, the policy is not designed or intended to limit our authority to discipline or take remedial action for conduct which we deem unacceptable, regardless of whether that conduct satisfies the definition of harassment or sexual harassment.

Retaliation against a complainant, because they have filed a harassment or sexual harassment complaint or assisted or participated in a harassment or sexual harassment investigation or proceeding, is prohibited. A student or employee who is found to have retaliated against another in violation of this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including student suspension and expulsion or employee termination. The complainant does not have to be the person at whom the unwelcome sexual conduct is directed. The complainant, regardless of gender, may be a witness to and personally offended by such conduct.

NOTICE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

The Title IX regulations require a school district to respond promptly when the district has actual notice of sexual harassment in a manner that is not deliberately indifferent. School districts have actual notice when an allegation is made known to any school employee. Schools are required to investigate every formal Title IX complaint and respond meaningfully to every known report of sexual harassment in order to stop any harassment; to remedy the effects of any harassment and to prevent future harassment.

Title IX requires that the District provide supportive measures to a complainant which are designed to preserve or restore access to the school's education program or activity, with or without a formal complaint. Where there has been a finding of responsibility, the District will implement remedies designed to restore or preserve access to the school's education program or activity.

DUE PROCESS PROTECTIONS

Due process protections include the following:

- 1) A presumption that respondent is not responsible throughout the grievance process, with the burden of proof on the school;
- 2) A prohibition of the single investigator model, instead requiring a decision-maker separate from the Title IX Coordinator or investigator;
- 3) The preponderance of the evidence, subject to limitations;
- 4) The opportunity to test the credibility of parties and witnesses through questions submitted to decision-maker subject to "rape shield" protections;
- 5) Written notice of allegations and an equal opportunity to review the evidence along with the opportunity to select an advisor of the party's choice who may be, but need not be, an attorney;
- 6) Title IX Coordinators, investigators, and decision-makers must be free from bias or conflict of interest;
- 7) Parties must be provided notice of appeal rights;
- 8) Upon filing a formal complaint, the District must give written notice to the parties containing sufficient details to permit a party to prepare for any initial interview and proceed with a factual investigation. For

K-12 schools a hearing is optional but the parties must be allowed to submit written questions to challenge each other's credibility before the decision-maker makes a determination. After the investigation, a written determination must be sent to both parties explaining each allegation, whether the respondent is responsible or not responsible, including the facts and evidence on which the conclusion was based by applying the preponderance of the evidence standard.

For additional information regarding due process protections under Title IX and the District's Grievance Procedure for Complaints of Sexual Harassment under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ([ACAB-R](#)).

RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

Schools must create and maintain records documenting every formal Title IX sexual harassment complaint including the formal complaint, investigation, relevant evidence; decision-makers determination and any appeal. This could also include mediation, restorative justice, or other models of alternative dispute resolution. Additionally, schools must maintain records regarding the school's response to every report of sexual harassment of which it becomes aware even if no formal complaint was filed, including documentation of supportive matters offered and implemented for the complainant.

This policy, or a summary thereof that contain the essential policy elements shall be distributed by the Somerville Public Schools to its students and employees and each parent or guardian shall sign that they have received and understand the policy.

Name and phone number of the District's Title IX Coordinator: Mariana MacDonald, Director of Human Resources, Somerville Public Schools, 167 Holland Street, Somerville, MA 02144; 617-625-6600, x6015.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. [151B:3A](#); Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972; BESE 603 CMR [26:00](#); 34 CFR 106.44 (a), (a)-(b); 34 CFR 106.45 (a)-(b) (1); 34 CFR 106.45 (b)(2)-(b)(3,4,5,6,7) as revised through June 2020

SOURCE: MASC July 2020; Revised by School Committee October 18, 2021

SOURCE: MASC December 2021; Revised and Approved: November 7, 2022; Approved by: Somerville School Committee

(Title IX procedures are under review and may be revised due to changes in regulations.)

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE FOR COMPLAINTS OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT UNDER TITLE IX OF THE EDUCATION AMENDMENTS OF 1972 (File: [ACAB-R](#))

The following grievance procedures apply to all complaints made by students or staff of sexual harassment, sexual assault or sexual violence under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and in accordance with School Committee Policy [ACAB](#).

I. Reporting of Sexual Harassment Complaints

A. How to Report a Complaint of Sexual Harassment

Students and employees who believe they have experienced or witnessed sexual harassment should notify the District's designated Title IX Coordinator, Mariana L. MacDonald (mmacdonald@k12.somerville.ma.us). If the complaint concerns allegations against the Title IX Coordinator, then the complaint should be filed with the Superintendent or designee.

Employees who witness sexual harassment or have a reasonable belief that it is occurring, are required to report it immediately to the Title IX Coordinator.

Reports of sexual harassment may also be made by employees to their direct supervisor and by students to a teacher, counselor, school nurse or building administrator, who shall immediately bring such report to the attention of the Title IX Coordinator.

The complaint may be filed by the alleged victim or any other party. Any person filing a complaint is encouraged to do so within a short time after the occurrence giving rise to the complaint, to assure a prompt investigation and fair resolution.

B. Handling of Sexual Harassment Complaints

All complaints shall be processed in a fair, expeditious and confidential manner. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for overseeing the complaint response, including implementation of supportive measures and the grievance/appeal process. In doing so, the Title IX Coordinator may delegate certain duties to a designee. Complaints can be investigated by a building administrator, district-level staff member, or the Title IX Coordinator. The decision-maker must be a separate individual from the investigator. The Title IX Coordinator (or designee), investigator and decision-maker shall not have a conflict of interest or bias. All Title IX personnel shall receive appropriate training in accordance with Section VIII below.

II. Supportive Measures and Filing of a Formal Complaint

A. Supportive Measures

Once a report of sexual harassment has been received, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will promptly contact the alleged victim (the "Complainant") to discuss the availability of supportive measures and consider the Complainant's wishes with respect to supportive measures. The District must investigate sexual harassment allegations in any formal complaint. The District must inform the Complainant of the availability of supportive measures with or without filing a formal complaint, and explain to the Complainant the process for filing a formal complaint. Supportive measures shall also be offered to the Respondent as necessary to ensure continued and equal access to the education program and/or activity during any investigation.

"Supportive measures" are individualized services reasonably available that are nonpunitive, non-disciplinary, and not unreasonably burdensome to the other party while designed to ensure equal educational access, protect safety, and deter sexual harassment. Supportive measures must be offered to both the Complainant and the Respondent, and may include, but not be limited to: no contact orders, change of class schedules, modifications of assignments/work, leaves of absence, increased security and monitoring of certain areas of the campus, and other appropriate measures.

In addition to the above supportive measures, the District, in its discretion, may consider the emergency removal of a student in accordance with applicable student discipline regulations. The District may place an employee on paid administrative leave during the course of an investigation of sexual harassment allegations against said employee as determined appropriate and consistent with any applicable collective bargaining agreement.

B. Filing a Formal Complaint

A formal complaint may be filed in writing by the Complainant or presented verbally and put into writing and signed by the Title IX Coordinator or designee. The District will respect the wishes of the Complainant with respect to whether the District investigates a report of sexual harassment, unless the Title IX Coordinator determines that signing a formal complaint to initiate an investigation over the wishes of the Complainant is not clearly unreasonable in light of the known circumstances.

C. Contents of a Formal Complaint

A formal complaint is signed by a Complainant or the Title IX Coordinator or designee alleging sexual harassment against a Respondent and requesting that the District investigate the allegation of sexual harassment. At the time of filing a formal complaint, a Complainant must be participating in or attempting to participate in the education program or activity of the District. A formal complaint may be filed with the Title IX Coordinator or designee in person, by mail, or by electronic mail, by using the contact information set forth herein.

The District must investigate sexual harassment allegations in any formal complaint. If the allegations in the formal complaint do not meet the definition of sexual harassment as set forth under Title IX, or did not occur in the District's education program or activity, the District must dismiss such allegations for the purposes of Title IX, but may still address the allegations in any manner that the District deems appropriate consistent with its policies, procedures and code of conduct, including but not limited to its anti-bullying policies and plan.

III. Informal or Formal Resolution of Complaint

The District must offer the Complainant a formal resolution process and may offer an informal resolution process. If the District does not provide the option of informal resolution, the formal resolution process shall be followed.

A. Informal Resolution Process

If the District elects to offer an informal resolution process, such process shall be offered and implemented at the election of the Complainant and only after receipt of voluntary, informed, written consent of both the Complainant and the Respondent. The Complainant may elect informal resolution of a complaint at any time prior to a final determination by the decision-maker. This may include conciliation and/or mediation by an individual trained to conduct such processes. At any time prior to agreeing to a resolution, either party has the right to withdraw from the informal resolution process and resume the formal complaint grievance process.

The District shall not offer an informal resolution process when a student alleges sexual harassment by staff.

B. Formal Resolution Process

The formal complaint process will comply with the grievance procedures outlined below.

IV. Grievance Procedure

In accordance with Title IX and its supporting regulations, the District shall implement the following process when investigating formal complaints of sexual harassment:

A. The Complainant and Respondent will be treated equally throughout the investigation process and be provided with written notice of the allegation (including sufficient details known at the time and with sufficient time to prepare a response before any initial interview), the grievance process, the range of possible remedies the District may provide a Complainant and disciplinary sanctions the District might impose on a Respondent, following determinations of responsibility. Both parties have the right to have a representative/advisor participate in the process on their behalf.

B. Any interim supportive measures, as appropriate, will be offered to both parties.

C. The investigator will conduct an objective evaluation of all available evidence. This shall include an interview of both the Complainant and the Respondent, during which each party shall have a full opportunity to state their case through the presentation of witnesses and other evidence. Witnesses and other persons relevant to the complaint, if any, may also be interviewed. Please note that, during the investigation, rape shield protections apply to the Complainant and Complainants may generally not be asked about their prior sexual behavior.

D. During the investigation process, the parties shall not be prohibited from discussing the complaint or collecting evidence.

E. The investigation shall be completed in a reasonable time frame within thirty (30) school days except for good cause. Good cause may include, but not limited to, unavailability of a party, concurrent pending law enforcement investigation, or need for interpreter or accommodation of any party or witnesses' disability.

F. During the investigation, there is a presumption that the Respondent is not responsible for the alleged conduct until a determination is made at the conclusion of the grievance process.

G. The investigator will make findings based on a preponderance of the evidence standard.

H. The investigator will not request or solicit information from any party or witness that constitutes disclosure of information that is protected under a legally recognized privilege, unless the holder of the privilege voluntarily waives the privilege.

I. Prior to the conclusion of the investigation, and at least ten (10) calendar days prior to completion of the investigation, the Complainant and Respondent will both be provided a copy of the investigation report and an opportunity to submit any additional information they would like considered by the investigator before their report is finalized. Both parties shall be provided the opportunity to submit written, relevant questions that a party wants asked of any party or witness, provide each party with the answers, and allow for additional, limited follow-up questions from each party.

J. Once the investigation has been completed, the investigator will submit their investigation report, with recommendations with regard to responsive measures, to the decision-maker. The Complainant and Respondent shall also be advised, in writing, of the investigator's findings and recommendations.

K. The decision-maker will review the investigation report and hold a disciplinary hearing with the Respondent, in accordance with applicable procedures (for student or employee).

L. The decision-maker will advise both parties of the final determination and any related remedial/responsive measures in a manner that complies with applicable laws regarding student confidentiality and appeal rights. The Respondent will be notified of any disciplinary action and other remedial measures, if the complaint is substantiated. Notice of such final determination will be made in writing and sent simultaneously to the parties along with information about how to file an appeal.

V. Disciplinary Action

If a complaint is substantiated, the District will act promptly to eliminate the behavior and will refer the matter to the proper supervisor or administrator for appropriate responsive measures, including but not limited to disciplinary action and restoring a sense of safety for the Complainant. For students, discipline will be imposed consistent with the Code of Conduct and Massachusetts Student Discipline Law.

Discipline of employees will be consistent with collective bargaining procedures, if applicable, and may include disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

Responsive measures will also include any steps necessary to prevent the recurrence of any discrimination and/or harassment and will include corrective action aimed at eliminating any discriminatory effects on the complainant and others, as appropriate.

VI. Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation in any form against any person because of or related to a sexual harassment or retaliation complaint, or because of or related to cooperation with an investigation of a sexual harassment or retaliation complaint, is unlawful and prohibited. Retaliation is also prohibited against any individual that participates or chooses not to participate in the grievance process.

If retaliation occurs, it could be considered grounds for discipline, up to and including suspension and/or discharge for employee(s), and appropriate disciplinary action for students.

VII. Appeal Procedure

Both parties have the right to appeal the decision-maker's determination to the Superintendent or designee. Any appeal should be submitted in writing to the Superintendent within ten (10) calendar days of receipt of the final determination.

The Superintendent or designee in reviewing the appeal may consider the following factors:

A. Was there any procedural irregularity with the investigation process?

B. Is there any new evidence not reasonably available at the time of the investigation?

C. Did the Title IX investigator have a conflict of interest?

The decision of the appeal process is final and is not subject to further review by the School Committee.

VIII. Training Requirements

All Title IX personnel including Title IX Coordinators, investigators, decision-makers, people who facilitate any informal resolution process shall receive training as required by Title IX and its supporting regulations. All training materials shall be made available to the public for inspection upon request.

Title IX, Chapter 622, and Section 504

The Somerville Public Schools does not discriminate in its programs, facilities, or employment or educational opportunities on the basis of race, color, age, religion, disability, pregnancy, home status, marital/civil union status, sex/gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, citizenship status, place of birth, national origin, ancestry, cultural identity, genetics or military status, and does not tolerate any form of retaliation, or bias-based intimidation, threat, or harassment that demeans individuals' dignity or interferes with their ability to learn or work. The following Somerville Public Schools administrators have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Section 504

Margaret DePasquale
Director of Student Services
Somerville Public Schools
167 Holland Street; Somerville MA 02144
(617) 625-6600 x6028

Title IX or Chapter 622

Mariana MacDonald
Director of Human Resources
Somerville Public Schools
167 Holland Street; Somerville, MA 02144
(617) 625-6600 x6015

Students with Disabilities, Section 504

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 states that no otherwise qualified handicapped individual shall, solely by reason of his or her handicap, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.

Title IX

Important pieces of legislation affecting the public schools were passed during the past several years. Title IX of the 1972 Education Amendment is the first comprehensive federal law which prohibits sex discrimination in the programs, policies, and practices of educational programs and activities.

Chapter 622

The state law, Chapter 622, of the General Laws, Acts of 1971, states that no person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any city or town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation.

These laws make it clear that all aspects of public school education must be fully open and available to females as well as males and to minority groups. No school may exclude a child from any course, activity, service, or resource available in that public school on account of race, color, sex, disability, gender identity, religion, national origin, or sexual orientation.

Gender Identity Anti-Discrimination Statute

An Act Relative to Gender Identity (Massachusetts General Law Chapter 199 of the Acts of 2011), which became effective on July 1, 2012, amended several Massachusetts statutes prohibiting discrimination on the basis of specified categories, to include discrimination on the basis of gender identity. The law defines gender identity as:

“...a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth. Gender-related identity may be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely

held as part of a person's core identity; provided, however, that gender-related identity shall not be asserted for any improper purpose."

Among the statutes amended under An Act Relative to Gender Identity is G.L. c. 76, §5, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of gender identity against students who enroll in or attend the public schools. G.L. c. 76, §5 now reads as follows:

Every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where he actually resides, subject to the following section. No school committee is required to enroll a person who does not actually reside in the town unless said enrollment is authorized by law or by the school committee. Any person who violates or assists in the violation of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly-attended public schools. No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town, or in obtaining the advantages, privileges and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin or sexual orientation.

In June 2012, the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education adopted revised Access to Equal Education Opportunity Regulations, 603 CMR 26.00, and Charter School Regulations, 603 CMR 1.00, to reflect the broadened student anti-discrimination provision in G.L. c. 76, §5.

GRIEVANCE AND COMPLAINTS FOR TITLE IX AND CHAPTER 622 (File: JB-R)

The purpose for Title IX and Chapter 622 is the elimination of discrimination on the basis of race, color, sex, religion or national origin.

Complaints and grievances regarding compliance with Title IX or Chapter 622 may be addressed to Title IX Chapter 622 Coordinator, Mariana MacDonald, Director of Human Resources, Somerville Public Schools, 167 Holland Street, Somerville, MA 02144; 617-625-6600, x6015.

Title IX requires the establishment of grievance procedures for parents, students, and teachers so that alleged violations of the law may be corrected. The following procedures will be followed in grieving alleged violations.

STUDENTS:

1. Level One

A student with a grievance shall first discuss it with his/her principal or the principal's designee with the objective of resolving the question informally.

2. Level Two

If the student is not satisfied with the disposition of their grievance at Level One, or if no decision has been rendered within five (5) school days after the grievance hearing, they may file the grievance in writing with the Title IX/Chapter 622 Coordinator, in the Office of the Superintendent of Schools. The written grievance must be submitted to the Superintendent/Designee within fifteen (15) school days after presenting it at Level one. Within ten (10) school days after receipt of the written grievance, the Superintendent/Designee shall meet with the aggrieved student in an effort to resolve the question.

3. Level Three

If the student is not satisfied with the disposition of their grievance at Level Two, or if no decision has been rendered within five (5) school days after the grievance hearing, they may then submit their grievance to the Superintendent of Schools within fifteen (15) school days after having submitted it at Level Two. The Superintendent, or their designee, shall hear the grievance within ten (10) school days of receiving it. Within fifteen (15) school days, a written decision shall be returned to the student of complaint or hearing.

4. Level Four

If the student is not satisfied with the disposition of his/her grievance at Level Three, or if they have not received a decision within the specified fifteen (15) school days, they may carry the grievance to the Somerville School Committee within thirty (30) days of the grievance hearing at Level Three. The

School Committee shall return a decision on the grievance within thirty (30) school days. The School Committee decision shall be the last recourse provided within the school system.

PARENTS:

The complaint procedure shall be outlined in Regulation 9.00 of Chapter 622 which is as follows:

9.01: A parent, guardian or other person or group who believes that Chapter 76, Section 5 of the General Laws or these regulations has been or is being violated, may request a written statement of the reasons thereof from the responsible Somerville School Committee through the Superintendent and may submit a copy of such requests to the Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity of the Department of Education. If such request is made, a copy of such request shall be sent by the School Committee to the Bureau of Educational Opportunity.

9.02: The Somerville School Committee shall respond promptly, but not later than thirty (30) days, in writing, to the complaining party. The Somerville School Committee shall also send a copy of its response to the Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity.

9.03: The Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity shall act as the representative of the Board of Education for the purpose of receiving complaints pursuant to these regulations.

9.04: The Bureau of Equal Educational Opportunity shall, pursuant to a complaint received under Section 9.01, or on its own initiative, conduct reviews to insure compliance with Chapter 76, Section 5 of these regulations. The Somerville School Committee and the specific school(s) involved shall cooperate to the fullest extent with such review.

9.05: In the event of non-compliance with Chapter 76, Section 5 of these regulations, the Board of Education may take such action as it sees fit, including, but not limited to, withholding of funds or referral of the matter to the Office of the Attorney General for appropriate legal action.

10.01: Nothing in these regulations shall abridge or in any way limit the right of a parent, guardian, or person affected to seek enforcement of Chapter 622 of the Acts of 1971 in any court or administrative agency of competent jurisdiction.

Adopted: November 2009

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY (File: AC)

Public schools have the responsibility to overcome, insofar as possible, any barriers that prevent children from achieving their potential. The public school system will do its part. This commitment to the community is affirmed by the following statements that the School Committee intends to:

1. Promote the rights and responsibilities of all individuals as set forth in the State and Federal Constitutions, pertinent legislation, and applicable judicial interpretations.
2. Encourage positive experiences in human values for children, youth and adults, all of whom have differing personal and family characteristics and who come from various socioeconomic, racial and ethnic groups.
3. Work toward a more integrated society and to enlist the support of individuals as well as groups and agencies, both private and governmental, in such an effort.
4. Use all appropriate communication and action techniques to air and reduce the grievances of individuals and groups.
5. Carefully consider, in all the decisions made within the school system, the potential benefits or adverse consequences that those decisions might have on the human relations aspects of all segments of society.
6. Initiate a process of reviewing policies and practices of the school system in order to achieve to the greatest extent possible the objectives of this statement.

The Committee's policy of nondiscrimination will extend to students, staff, the general public, and individuals with whom it does business; No person shall be excluded from or discriminated against in admission to a public school of any town or in obtaining the advantages, privileges, and courses of study of such public school on account of race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability. If someone has a complaint or feels that they have been discriminated against because of their race, color, sex, gender identity, religion, national origin, sexual orientation or disability, their complaint should be registered with the Title IX compliance officer.

The Scholarship Committee is an affirmative action/equal opportunity committee and does not discriminate against any applicant because of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, veteran status, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special-need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language or prior academic achievement or any other legally protected group.

SOURCE: MASC; Amended: October 15, 2012

LEGAL REFS.: Title VI, Civil Rights Act of 1964 Title VII, Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended by the Equal Employment Opportunity Act of 1972 Executive Order 11246, as amended by E.O. 11375 Equal Pay Act, as amended by the Education Amendments of 1972 Title IX, Education Amendments of 1972

Rehabilitation Act of 1973 Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 M.G.L. 71B:1 et seq. (Chapter 766 of the Acts of 1972) M.G.L. 76:5; Amended 2011 M.G.L. 76:16

BESE regulations 603CMR 26.00 Amended 2012 BESE regulations 603CMR 28.00

CROSS REFS.: ACA- ACE, Subcategories for Nondiscrimination GBA, Equal Employment Opportunity JB, Equal Educational Opportunities

SCHOOL COUNSELING DEPARTMENT/STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

School Counseling Department Head	Lindsey Dobbins
Registrar and Data Supervisor	Julie Phylis
Administrative Assistant	Carla Tippets
School Counselor - Beacon Community	Justin LaBerge
School Counselor - Beacon Community	Melanie Banks
School Counselor - Elm Community	Anne Herzberg Eden
School Counselor - Highland Community	Jeremy Rischall
School Counselor - Highland Community	Kelly Albrecht
School Counselor - Broadway Community	Natalia Ruiz Toro
School Counselor - Broadway Community	Cathy Maguire
RISE Program	Elly Mullins
Adjustment Counselor/BRIDGE Program	Anne Irwin
Adjustment Counselor	Alyssa O'Donnell
Bilingual Adjustment Counselor/Newcomer Seminar	Ilana Flores
Bilingual Adjustment Counselor	Ashley Costa
School-Based Social Worker	Tori Bauer
College and Career Readiness Director	Melanie Kessler
College and Career Counselor	Kayla Schutte
College and Career Advisor	Elijah Baldwin

What is counseling?

It is a professional relationship which empowers diverse individuals, families, and groups to accomplish mental health, wellness, education and career goals.

-American Counseling Association

Mission:

To facilitate the academic, personal/social and career development of all students through a School Counseling program that is comprehensive, preventative and developmentally appropriate. **Comprehensive:** A comprehensive program specifically identifies what students should know and understand in order to enhance their academic, personal/social and career competencies. **Preventative:** School counseling programming seeks to identify predictable challenges and prepare students with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate these challenges when they arise. **Developmental:** School counseling programming is designed and implemented with full awareness of the developmental needs of adolescence.

Core values:

Strengths-Based
Comprehensive
Developmental
Preventative
Proactive

Services:

Personal, Social, Emotional Support
Academic advising
Postsecondary Planning
Career Exploration
Coordination of Services
College Application Support
Referrals to Community/School Resources
Collaboration and Consultation
Crisis Intervention
Enrichment Opportunities
Awards and Scholarships
Advisory
9th, 10th, 11th, 12th Grade Individual Meetings
Small and Large Group Meetings
RISE
Adjustment Counseling
College and Career Readiness Events

Confidentiality:

A counseling relationship involves the development of trust and confidentiality, which must not be breached by the counselor except where there is bullying or a clear and present danger to the individual receiving counseling, or to other persons. The counselor may share information gained during the counseling process in essential consultation with other appropriate persons specifically concerned with the individual. Confidential information may be released only with the consent of the individual being counseled, except when required by law or when a clear and present danger exists.

SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES

The Somerville Public Schools, in accordance with state (603 CMR Section 28) and federal (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 97) law, provides a variety of instructional programs and support services designed to meet the needs of students with disabilities. Any high school student up to age 22 is entitled to an evaluation to determine if they have a disability that interferes with the student's ability to make progress in the general curriculum. Students may be referred for evaluation by any professional staff, parent/guardian or student if 18 years of age or older. Letters requesting evaluation should be addressed to: **Special Education Department, 167 Holland Street, Somerville, MA 02144.**

SPED eligibility for services often results from the evaluation and the finding of a disability. These services are determined through a Team Meeting that includes parents, the student, administrators, evaluators, school counselors, teachers and other support staff. An Individualized Education Program (IEP) is developed at the meeting that outlines the scope and effect the disability has on learning, and the type and amount of service required by the student to make effective progress in the general curriculum. Among the support services provided to students through the IEP are academic instruction and support, counseling, and related services such as speech/language therapy, occupational therapy, etc.

Drug and Alcohol Counseling

The School Department can provide drug and alcohol counseling services at Somerville High School. Counselors will be available upon request. Referrals can be made through our Student Support/Community Teams.

ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION AND OTHER RESOURCES

SCHOOL AGE PARENTS OR EXPECTANT PARENTS (File: JJE)

School-age parents, unless they receive adequate assistance, might drop out of school without acquiring the necessary education or without marketable skills. Expectant or new parents will be actively encouraged to continue in school. The students and their physician, in cooperation with the school staff, will develop an appropriate educational plan if it is agreed they should no longer attend school regularly. Every effort will be made to see that the educational program of the student is disrupted as little as possible; that health counseling services and case management, as well as instruction are offered; that return to school after delivery is encouraged; and that every opportunity to complete high school is provided.

LEGAL REF.: M.G.L. 71:84 Title IX: 20 U.S.C. 1681

Adopted: January 1996; Revised: March 2009; Reviewed: September 2009; Amended: April 2021

Mediation

The Somerville Mediation Program provides mediation, conflict resolution, and crisis intervention services to the high school. The program promotes understanding, cooperation and diversity through group work and activities. Mediation is a voluntary process, and under adult supervision, trained peer mediators work with students who are involved in conflicts and assist them in communicating and understanding one another, and come to a mutually satisfactory agreement. Confidentiality is an integral part of the program. The mediators do not judge, impose a decision or force a solution. When a case is referred, staff mediators will do an initial intake with each party involved to determine what is going on, who is involved and the potential for escalation. After intakes are complete, a mediation will be set up with peer mediators. Each year we recruit and train 20 new students through a 2-day program. The student mediators are chosen to reflect the school community in terms of gender, race, cultural background and academic abilities. Students who have completed the training then serve as mediators in the program. Students who think they may benefit from mediation or who are interested in becoming mediators should contact the Mediation Program (Room C109), any teacher, counselor or administrator.

Lead Mediator: Jeannine Nye, jnye@k12.somerville.ma.us

Library and Makerspace

ABOUT - The Somerville High Library & Makerspace offer a wide variety of resources. The print and digital collections are curated to support the school curriculum and the library [mission](#). The library provides ebooks and audiobooks through a website at <https://sites.google.com/view/shs-library>. There are 3-D printers, sewing machines, audio/video equipment, art & craft supplies and other technologies for use in the Makerspace.

ACCESS - Library & Makerspace staff work with teachers to plan and implement information literacy instruction and collaborative class visits. Students may also visit during class with a pass from their teacher, or without a pass before school, during their lunch and after school. Library and Makerspace staff work with the community to develop and implement programming that reinforces and expands classroom learning.

LOST LIBRARY MATERIAL PROCEDURE - Student library patrons are financially responsible for all materials signed out to them. Library users with overdue materials are sent a notice with replacement cost. Students can fill out a lost/non-returned book form to document extenuating circumstances. After two months, a letter will be sent to the parent/guardian/caregiver asking for payment. Checks should be made out payable to Somerville High School/(Library).

Free and Reduced Price School Meals

SPS recently was approved for midyear district-wide CEP effective 12/1/2023. Students eat for free in all Somerville Public Schools. We still ask that our families fill out the free and reduced school meals application form so that

they can access services through the schools, city, and state. [Food and Nutrition Services Department \(FNSD\) | Somerville Public Schools](#)

Alternative Education Programs:

In an effort to provide educational opportunities for all students, the Somerville Public Schools offer alternative educational programs designed to meet the diverse needs of students. These programs are Next Wave, Full Circle, GOAL, and SCALE. Detailed descriptions of these programs can be obtained by calling or writing to the individual program, c/o the Somerville Public Schools.

Next Wave/Full Circle

Next Wave /Full Circle is a tight-knit school community, located at 153 School Street, for students who have experienced academic setbacks and benefit from a personalized approach to learning. In order to meet the needs of our students we emphasize: Trusting Relationships, Authentic Learning Experiences, Growth Mindset and Student Voice and Choice, as essential components in our daily work. Our students graduate with the skill set needed to adapt to challenges and lead meaningful and productive lives.

For more information: [NWFC Program of Study and Course Catalog 2023/2024](#)

GOAL

GOAL is an approved alternative education program for older English Learners/SLIFE (students with limited/interrupted formal education) who enroll in high school between the ages of 17-20 and are 3 or 4 credit years behind traditional high school peers. In partnership with SCALE, SHS provides GOAL students with appropriate instruction designed to support the successful completion of the Adult Diploma Program (ADP), including meeting MCAS requirements and completing five ADP tasks. Upon successful completion of ADP requirements, GOAL students graduate with an Adult High School diploma from the City of Somerville.

SCALE

SCALE (Somerville Center for Adult Learning Experiences), was established in 1974 as an adult basic education provider and is an entity within the Somerville Public Schools. The school is located at 167 Holland Street and provides adult education programs for residents of Somerville and surrounding towns who are 16 years of age or older. SHS students who are unable to complete the requirements for their high school diploma should be encouraged and referred to SCALE so they can complete their educational goals within the Somerville School System. At present, SCALE offers three programs that will lead to the attainment of a High School Equivalency credential or High School Diploma.

The High School Equivalency Credential (HiSet or GED) is awarded by the Massachusetts Department of Education upon the successful completion of five multiple choice subject tests in Writing, Social Studies, Science, Reading, and Mathematics (HiSet) or four multiple choice subject tests in English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies and Science (GED). Students are eligible for the HiSet or GED exam if they are 16 years of age or older and have withdrawn from SHS. Students under 18 must present an official letter of withdrawal from SHS. SCALE offers the High School Equivalency program both in English and Spanish.

The Adult Diploma Program (ADP) leads to an alternative adult diploma that is awarded by the Somerville School Committee. The ADP is an excellent option for those students who have been unable to complete their regular Somerville High School program. To be eligible for the ADP a student must be at least 17 years of age. Students obtain the ADP upon successful completion of 5 tasks that contain competency skills equivalent to those expected of a high school graduate, and obtain a passing score on the MCAS ELA, Math and Science.

SCALE encourages SHS students to discuss these diploma options with their School Counselors.

SCALE can be reached by calling either 617-625-6600, ext. 6900 or 617-629-5500.

HEALTH SERVICES

There are three full-time Registered Nurses at the high school. They are available Monday through Friday from 8:00am – 2:30pm.

Health Services Provided at School:

- Liaison between home, school, and community resources
- First aid and illness assessment for students
- Care for chronic diseases
- Health education, including EpiPen training for staff
- Development and case management of students needing Individual Health Plans/Emergency Action Plans in school
- State mandated health screenings including hearing, vision, scoliosis, SBIRT (brief motivational interview about substance use), and height and weight (BMI)
- Health counseling
- Care of students with special health care needs, including those assisted by medical technology
- Resource to staff in health-related matters; first aid for staff
- Medication administration – see Medications in School (below)
- Review and reminder of required immunizations – see Immunizations (below)
- Referral for health care, insurance
- Help obtaining glasses or other health-related items

Documentation Requirements

Physical Examination:

A complete physical examination (done within one year prior to school entry) is required of all children new to the Somerville Public School system as well as those children entering Prekindergarten, Kindergarten, 4th, 7th, and 11th grades. In addition, yearly physical exams are required for students who wish to participate in school-sponsored athletic teams.

Immunizations:

Immunizations, Lead Test and TB Test/Risk Assessment

MGL Ch. 76, Sec. 15 requires that children be up to date with immunizations for school entry. The medical record must indicate dates of immunizations – month, day, and year. Massachusetts Department of Public Health guidelines (105 CMR 460.050) also require a lead test prior to PK or K entry. All children must also have a TB risk assessment or, if deemed high risk, a TB skin test or IGRA. If you need help obtaining insurance or locating a local doctor, please call 617-625-6600, x6967.

	Prekindergarten	Kindergarten	Grades 1-6	Grades 7-8	High School
Hepatitis B	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses	3 doses
DTap/Td	4 doses	5 doses *4 if fourth given on or after 4th birthday	5 doses *4 if fourth given on or after 4th birthday	5 doses *4 if fourth given on or after 4th birthday	5 doses History of primary series
DTap/Td	4 doses	5 doses *4 if fourth given on or after 4th birthday	5 doses *4 if fourth given on or after 4th birthday	5 doses *4 if fourth given on or after 4th birthday	5 doses History of primary series
Tdap				1 dose (required for entry to Gr. 7)	1 dose
Polio	3 doses	4 doses	4 doses	4 doses	4 doses

		*fourth dose must be on or after 4th birthday	*fourth dose must be on or after 4th birthday	*fourth dose must be on or after 4th birthday	*fourth dose must be on or after 4th birthday
MMR	1 dose/proof of immunity	2 doses/proof of immunity	2 doses/proof of immunity	2 doses/proof of immunity	2 doses/proof of immunity
Varicella	1 dose/proof of immunity	2 doses/proof of immunity	2 doses/proof of immunity	2 doses/proof of immunity	2 doses/proof of immunity
MenACWY (Meningococcal)				1 dose	2 doses *2nd dose must be given on/after 16th birthday
Hib	1-4 doses				
Lead Test	Within 12 months	Previous result			
Physical Exam	Within 12 months of school entry	Within 12 months of school entry	Within 12 months of school entry	Within 12 months of school entry	Within 12 months of school entry
TB Assessment	Documented low risk or TB test result	Documented low risk or TB test result	Documented low risk or TB test result	Documented low risk or TB test result	Documented low risk or TB test result

Medical exemptions (dated statement signed by a physician stating that a vaccine(s) are medically contraindicated for a student) and religious exemptions (dated statement signed by a parent/guardian, or by the student if 18 years of age, stating that a vaccine(s) are against sincerely held religious beliefs) must be renewed annually, at the start of school.

Medications in School:

The administration of medication in school is regulated by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (105 CMR 210.00) and by MGL, Ch. 71, Sec. 54B.

Before any medication can be given at school, the following requirements must be met:

- A current doctor's order must be on file for any prescription medication and, if needed, emergency medical plans such as a seizure action plan or allergy/asthma plan
- A Medication Administration Plan must be signed by the parent/guardian giving consent to the school nurse to administer medication
- A parent/guardian must deliver all medications to the school nurse
- Medications must be in a pharmacy-labeled container with the child's name, dose, and instructions
- New medications should be started at home and monitored by the parent/guardian for 24 hours prior to administration at school
- Students with life threatening allergies MUST have an EpiPen for school
- Students with asthma MUST have a rescue inhaler (albuterol) if indicated on the physical exam form
- Students who require medications at school or at school-sponsored events must have current orders and medication administration plans to participate in events such as field trips and off-campus activities

Medications must be kept in the nurse's office with the following exceptions:

- Students who have parental and school nurse permission may carry rescue inhalers, EpiPens, insulin and glucose testing equipment and enzymes required for cystic fibrosis provided there is a current order and plan on file. Parents, students, and school nurses must work together to ensure safe and age-appropriate monitoring of such conditions.

Over the Counter Medications:

Over the counter (OTC or non-prescription) medications such as Motrin and Tylenol may not be carried in school. They can be administered by school nurses only if parents have given verbal or written permission. An OTC permission form can be filled out online or on paper and returned to the school nurse.

Medication for Short-Term Conditions:

Medication for short-term conditions, such as antibiotics for strep throat or an ear infection, should be administered at home for 24 hours before your child returns to school. These medications can be administered in school without a doctor's order provided they are delivered to school in a pharmacy-labeled prescription container with your child's name, dosage, and instructions. We strongly recommend you ask the pharmacy for two containers: one for home and one for school so it does not need to be transferred back and forth.

Health Forms:

Health forms can be found online on the Medications in School page or by contacting your school nurse.

When to Contact the School Nurse:

Contact the school nurse about any special health considerations such as: daily medications, allergies, asthma, diabetes, hearing or vision difficulties, seizures, tube feedings, special dietary needs, or difficulty with mobility. The nurse will help plan any accommodations and discuss with the parent/guardian what level of education other school staff may need regarding the special health care concerns. Ongoing restrictions in physical activity, including outdoor recess and physical education, should be noted in writing by the primary care provider.

When to Keep Your Child Home:

Children learn best when they are rested and feel well. In order to maintain the health of all children, students who are actively ill (and most likely contagious) should not attend school.

Please keep your child home in the following situations:

- Temperature of 100 degrees or higher in the past 24 hours
- Vomiting or diarrhea in the past 24 hours
- Undiagnosed rash
- Antibiotic treatment until the child has been treated for a full 24 hours
- Contagious illness such as COVID-19, influenza
- Feeling too ill to participate in usual activities

A student with a fever should remain home for at least 24 hours after the fever has resolved without use of medication.

CHA Somerville Teen Connection Health Center

Cambridge Health Alliance's Teen Health Center is a school-based clinic where you can see a primary care provider and get your annual check-up, immunizations and school and sports exams. Most insurance is accepted. In addition to a Nurse Practitioner, reproductive and mental health services are also available. We encourage you to call or stop by for further information. Our phone number is 617-575-5690.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES AT SOMERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

Students are encouraged to discover and develop their talents through participation in school activities. Activities add a unique social dimension to the high school experience. Experience in teamwork, competition, and leadership is gained, and lasting friendships are formed. A positive social climate is nurtured within groups of similar interests. Achievement in these activities has brought personal satisfaction and public recognition to the many teams and clubs of which SHS can be justly proud.

CLUBS:

Somerville High School offers a wide range of clubs and after school activities. We encourage students to get involved. View the [Club Booklet](#) here or access the list of available clubs at by visiting the high school website or clicking on this link: <https://somerville.k12.ma.us/schools/somerville-high-school> Students can learn about clubs at SHS by attending the annual club fair, or by contacting the club's faculty advisor. **Proposals for new clubs and funding for clubs will be determined through an annual review process. All official SHS clubs must have a faculty advisor.**

ATHLETICS:

Students may participate in a wide variety of sports at the interscholastic level. Thirty-six levels of teams represent Somerville High School in the Greater Boston League (GBL) providing year round opportunities for competition.

For a full list of sports offered at Somerville High School view the [Teams Page](#) here or visit the SHS Athletics webpage at: [Athletics | Somerville Public Schools](#)

Requirements for Participation in Athletics

Students must register online through Family ID at [Register My Athlete](#).

Students must have a yearly sports physical that clears them to play.

At least 20 credits of work must have been passed the previous quarter. For fall sports, at least 20 Carnegie credits of academic work must have been passed for the previous year. Students involved in athletics must be prepared to practice and play throughout the entire season, including holidays and vacation weeks.

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS (File: JJA)

Student organizations in the District shall be encouraged when they meet the criteria of contributing to student self-esteem and performance and should operate within the framework of state statutes, Somerville School Committee policies, and administrative procedures.

Each building principal shall develop general guidelines for the establishment and operation of student organizations within the particular school. Among other provisions, such guidelines shall require the approval of the principal prior to the formation of any club or organization in the school and the assignment of at least one faculty or designated adult advisor to each approved student organization. Within such guidelines will be provisions for a periodic review of all student organizations.

The formation of any student organization that may engage in activities of a controversial nature shall require approval by the board.

All student organizations shall be required to open membership to all interested and/or eligible students.

Disruptive groups, secret societies, and/or gangs shall not receive recognition in any manner under this policy (see also Policy JICF).

All forms of hazing in initiations shall be prohibited in a student organization. No initiation shall be held for a student organization which will bring criticism to the school system or be degrading to the student.

The faculty or designated adult advisor must attend every meeting of the student organization whether conducted on school premises or at another location.

Student Organizations - High Schools

In addition to the above requirements, all clubs or organizations at the high school level will support some aspect of the High School's mission. The High School will encourage membership in its various clubs and activities in support of volunteerism, civic responsibility, tolerance, and healthful choices. These groups will model ethical behavior and help students in the daily activities of school and social interaction. The Principal is responsible for determining that the purpose of a student organization is related to the curriculum. The Principal is authorized to deny requests by unauthorized student organizations desiring to meet or form in a particular school; the Principal shall inform the group of the reasons for the denial. The students and/or group may submit a written request to the Director of Student Services for review of the Principal's decision.

LEGAL REF.: 603 CMR [26.06](#)

Revised: January 18, 1996; Amended: January 2010

National Honor Society

Juniors who have achieved a grade point average (GPA) of 3.7 or above will be invited in writing to apply for membership in the National Honor Society. The National Honor Faculty Council will determine if, beyond scholastic achievement, these students have met the ideals of the official National Honor Society Constitution (used nationwide); these ideals include demonstrated scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Selected students must maintain and extend the qualities that earned them selection. Membership is thus both an honor and a commitment.

National Honor Society members who fall below the standards that were the basis for their selection shall be promptly warned by the chapter advisers and given a reasonable amount of time to correct the deficiency. In the case of flagrant violation of school rules or the law, a member does not have to be warned and will be dismissed.

Other Honor Societies at SHS include: Tri M Music Honor Society; International Thespian Honor Society; Science National Honor Society; National Technical Honor Society; National Art Honor Society; Mathematics Honor Society; World Language Honor Societies in French, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. See respective department heads/supervisors for more information and guidelines for membership. Eligibility is determined by each specific department.

Insert links here for criteria for membership in honor societies.

PTSA

Membership in the Parent, Teacher, Student Association is open to all students, parents, and teachers of the SHS community. Membership dues are minimal. The PTSA meets three times a year, on the same dates as parent/teacher conferences. Various issues relating to high school education are addressed. The PTSA also has a generous scholarship program for SHS seniors. To be eligible for these scholarships, either the student or their parents must be members of the PTSA. Parents and students are encouraged to attend and participate in all of the PTSA activities.

School Improvement Council

The SHS Council is made up of the Principal, teachers, parents, students, each elected by their own constituencies, and community representatives. The Council assists in the identification of the educational needs of the students, in the review of the annual school budget and in the formulation of a school improvement plan subject to committee review. The School Improvement Council will publish a calendar of meeting times at the beginning of the school year.

VISITORS

All visitors to SHS must first report to the Main Office and sign in upon arrival. Students cannot bring visitors to school. No visitor will be admitted whose own school is in session that day, and no young children will be admitted without a parent or guardian. Somerville High School students are not allowed to bring children/siblings to school. Students who wish to shadow an SHS student because they are interested in attending SHS must complete a request form at least three days in advance of the visit. Shadowing request form is linked [here](#). Students from other schools who are interested in enrolling at Somerville High School should contact the enrollment center at 617-629-5670 for more information. The Somerville Family Learning Collaborative (SFLC) provides tours for prospective students and families. To inquire about a tour, please fill out the [request form](#). Please note—SHS tours are for prospective students and families only. Somerville Public Schools has a regular program for visits by 8th grade students who are considering attending SHS.

HEALTH EDUCATION:

Parent Notification

Students are offered health information through Health Education 1 and Health Education 2/health elective courses. Both courses are required for graduation. Topics discussed in these courses include the following: hygiene; nutrition and food groups; personal safety; tobacco, alcohol and drugs; accident prevention, household safety;

staying healthy: mental, physical, family, and social; growth and development; HIV/AIDS awareness, diseases, immune system; family, values, attitudes, respecting others, consent; basic first aid; STDs; puberty and body changes; violence prevention, conflict resolution, and decision-making; reproduction; abstinence; wellness, self-esteem, depression, suicide prevention, and fitness; heimlich maneuver, introduction to CPR.

These units are designed to provide the students with information and decision making techniques. The units will also help the students develop responsible behavior as well as reinforce the values relationships.

If you have questions regarding any health course, please contact: Blair Williams, Supervisor of Health and Physical Education at 617-625-6600 ext 611030.

Under Massachusetts law and School Committee policy, parents/guardians may exempt their child from any portion of the curriculum that primarily involves human sexual education or human sexuality issues. To receive an exemption from this portion of the curriculum, please contact the Principal in writing about the topic/s from which you want your child excluded.

PHOTO / PUBLICITY / NAME USE RELEASE FORM

The Somerville Public Schools publishes a variety of information about our schools and their activities through various print and electronic mediums. Your child's name, work, or photograph may be published throughout the year in order to recognize achievement or to promote programs, activities, and projects taking place in our schools. ***If you DO NOT want your child's name or photograph to be published*** by the Somerville Public Schools in association with their achievements and positive work, please check the "No" box and complete the form below, and return to your child's Asst. Principal/Community within 30 days of your child starting classes.

☐ No, I do not give permission for the school department to photograph, videotape or audio tape and/or use my child's name or image in any print or electronic media, or in any other school-related efforts.

Name of Student: _____

(Last Name)

(First Name)

School: _____ Grade: _____

Name of parent/guardian: _____

(Last name)

(First name)

Address: _____

Relationship to Student: _____

Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian: _____ Date: _____

(or student signature if 18 years of age or older)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF STUDENT HANDBOOK

Dear STUDENT:

Please take the time to read the student Handbook, particularly the sections relating to the attendance policy, the Disciplinary Regulations, the Extended Campus Lunch Policy, the Drug/Alcohol Policy, Network Acceptable Use, and Title IX/Chapter 622. Please be advised that, according to Massachusetts State Law, all students entering grade 9 must have a physical exam by their primary care provider before October 1st. Failure to comply will result in exclusion.

Sign below to confirm that you have read and understand the policies set forth in the Somerville High School Student Handbook, particularly the attendance policy, the Disciplinary Regulations of Somerville High School, the Extended Campus Lunch Policy, the Drug/Alcohol Policy of the Somerville Public Schools, the Network Acceptable Use section, the state law on hazing, and the rights guaranteed by Title IX/Chapter 622.

Every student will be presented a separate sheet acknowledging receipt of the Student Handbook. Every student will sign and date this sheet and a copy of the receipt will be kept on file with the respective Assistant Principal. Thank you for your cooperation.

Print student's name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Address: _____

Date: _____

Year of Graduation: _____

Community: _____

Please read this Handbook and become familiar with the policies.

