

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

**Monday, December 1, 2025 - Regular Meeting**

7:00 p.m. – City Hall Chambers

**Members present:** Ms. Pitone, Dr. Ackman, Mr. Green, Mr. Biton, President Davis, Ms. Barish, Dr. Phillips, and Ms. Krepchin. **Members Absent:** Mayor Ballantyne

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 with a moment of silence, followed by a salute to the flag of the United States of America. Chair Krepchin asked Superintendent Carmona to call the roll, the results of which were as follows:

PRESENT – 8 –Ms. Pitone, Dr. Ackman, Mr. Green, Mr. Biton, President Davis, Ms. Barish, Dr. Phillips, and Ms. Krepchin **ABSENT** – Mayor Ballantyne

**II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

Student Representatives Bhavika Kalia and Aiden Becker were both present and reported the following:

**Student Representative Update – Aiden**

- Fall Pep Rally held last Wednesday with strong turnout, especially from the freshman class.
- Students participated by wearing their designated class colors, showing improved school spirit.
- Pep rally raffle auctioned two Celtics tickets and raised over \$200 for the school food drive.
- Event featured performances and participation from the drumline, cheer team, chorus, and student volunteers.
- Recognized GBL All-Stars, MVPs, and champions across all SHS sports in a more formal setting.
- Attended the Greater Boston Regional Student Advisory Council meeting at Roxbury Prep with Eva Pasico.
- Meeting focused on planning a January community dialogue on student mental health, including:
  - Sleep
  - Chronic absenteeism
  - Somerville-specific concerns
- Discussed outreach to principals, counselors, nurses, and potentially inviting staff from the CHA Teen Connections Clinic.

**Student Representative Update – Bhavika**

- Ongoing discussions about increasing recognition and visibility for clubs at SHS, particularly within the School Improvement Council.
- Growing student interest in starting new clubs and forming partnerships with external organizations.
- Challenges noted due to limited funding and difficulty compensating club advisors; some advisors are currently unpaid.
- Positive shift in school culture observed:
  - More students from diverse backgrounds stepping into leadership roles.
  - Increased initiative among students to address gaps in the school community.
- Student representatives are brainstorming a year-long project, with ideas including:
  - More representative and inclusive curriculum or new electives.
  - Better systems to spotlight and celebrate clubs throughout the year.
- Student representatives will meet again this week to decide on project focus.

- Upcoming events:
  - Equity Team hosting an X-Block discussion titled "Community Conversation: Let's Stop the Hate" to address increased hate speech.
  - Community Service Club organizing a clothing swap, with strong student interest and participation.

### **Comments/Questions**

**Ms. Pitone:** Thank you, through the Chair, to our student representatives. I appreciate you sharing your advocacy work, particularly around organizing an X-Block event to address hate speech. These conversations can be painful, but confronting the issue is a brave and important step. I'm encouraged to see the student body supporting this effort and hope the event is successful. Please let us know if there is anything the School Committee can do to support you.

**Mr. Biton:** Through the Chair, I would like to thank our student representatives. I'm especially interested in the student leadership you described whether through establishing clubs or identifying opportunities for greater representation in the curriculum. As Ms. Pitone noted, I would welcome hearing more about this work. I hope that, in collaboration with school administration, we can identify opportunities to support clubs where there is active engagement, particularly where funding gaps exist. The Committee has been supportive of finding ways to address those needs, and I appreciate you sharing these updates. Thank you.

**Ms. Pitone:** Thank you. I have a question either for the student representatives or for the Superintendent. We've experienced some scheduling challenges with the Student Advisory to the School Committee, and I would like to know by next week whether we can put a meeting date on the calendar. It's important for everyone to be aware that a Student Advisory to the School Committee exists. In addition to student representatives presenting at meetings which is wonderful, we are required to meet at least every other month. I believe Massachusetts General Law specifies a student advisory composed of elected students. We have held these meetings on Zoom in the past and try to include as many School Committee members as possible. If feasible, could we have a date identified by our next meeting?

**Chair Krepchin:** My understanding is that scheduling has been in progress. Thank you for raising this I had not forgotten, and I appreciate the reminder.

### **III. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Krepchin read the public comment regulations and asked those who had signed up to comment at this time.

### **IV. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT**

#### **A. District Report**

*Notes- Superintendent Update: School Committee Meeting- Monday, December 1, 2025*

**Dr. Carmona:** Through the Chair, I want to thank Aiden and Bhabika for their reports. I believe that student voice and empowerment are central to what we want for our students, and it is encouraging to hear about the opportunities students have to advocate for themselves. I shared that we are currently engaged in a joint study with the SEU to review class stipends, which is part of our effort to support student involvement and advocacy. I also want to acknowledge the cultural shift taking place, which does not happen by chance but through intentional work and student engagement. Thank you for partnering with us in building a strong school community.

Good evening, everyone. Before we begin, I want to take a moment to acknowledge that this season holds many meaningful celebrations for members of our community across different cultures, faiths, and traditions. Whether you are observing holidays now or later in the winter months, I hope this time brings rest, joy, and connection for you and your loved ones.

- Thank you for being here tonight and for your continued partnership on behalf of our students.

### **NOTES | WINTER WEATHER**

Now, only days after we enjoyed a fairly mild Thanksgiving, it looks like snow is in the forecast!

As always, we are prepared for any necessary weather emergencies, delays, or school cancellations.

- If school must be canceled due to inclement weather, families and staff will be notified by voicemail, email, social media, and other district and city communication platforms.
- We make every effort to share these decisions the evening before so families can plan accordingly.
- If conditions allow for a 2-hour delayed opening instead of a cancellation, we expect to notify families by voicemail and email the evening before.

Our main focus remains the safety of our students, as well as our staff, as we anticipate what is *predicted* to be a rather cold and snowy winter.

## **NOTES | LISTENING SESSIONS**

Hopefully the weather will not impact our Family Listening Sessions, which continue in January and February. These meetings bring our school community together for thoughtful conversations on various topics including Special Education, Multilingual Learning, and Out-of-School Time.

I'm pleased to share that early feedback from our first Special Education session has been very positive, and we still have four different sessions still to come, including two evening options just added for January and February.

Dates and times are available in the district newsletter and on the SPS website, and we encourage parents and guardians to join us and help strengthen the work we do in our schools.

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## **NOTES | DESE VISIT**

And lastly, before we begin our department reports for this evening, the district was excited to welcome DESE Commissioner Pedro Martinez to Somerville High School just before the holiday break. He and his team joined us, along with State Senator Pat Jehlen, State Representative Erika Utterhoeven, and SEU President Dayshawn Simmons, led on an extensive tour of the CTE program by a group of students, with Principal Kersten and CTE Director Jim Hachey.

What stood out to me most during his visit was how the Commissioner connected with our CTE students — and how confidently they talked about their coursework, their skills, and their future goals.

To wrap up the visit, the Commissioner sat down for a roundtable conversation where he spoke candidly with our student representatives as they asked thoughtful questions about challenges to access programs and best ways to strengthen CTE options for all our students.

We look forward to welcoming the Commissioner back in the spring, when we'll have the chance to showcase some of the great work happening in our PK-8 schools as well.

Our first presentation this evening highlights our Adult Learning program, which offers an essential pathway for older students to complete the coursework critical to their lives and future careers - particularly for those who might not otherwise have the opportunity.

The ongoing efforts to strengthen and expand Adult Learning have been deeply impactful and, for many participants, truly life-changing.

The City has been a dedicated partner in our effort to provide high-quality adult education, supporting programs like Basic Education, English Learning, and Equivalency Diploma programs with essential funding through the Job Creation and Retention Trust Fund.

Last year, we celebrated 115 graduates - the largest number in the program's history - including 45 High School Equivalency graduates and 31 Para Educator diplomas.

This is a clear indication of the need for these adult learning opportunities and the willingness of our community to embrace it and continue to grow.

Joselyn Marte joins us this evening, along with some special guests. Joselyn is the Director of Continuing Education and SCALE: the Somerville Center for Adult Learning Experiences.

- **SCALE Department Presentation**

Joselyn Marte, Director of Continuing Education and SCALE, shared her presentation, which was as follows:  
*Presentation below*

*Director Marte was joined by former and current students who shared their experiences in SCALE*

**Angel Segura- Somerville High School GOAL/Adult Diploma & PACMAN Graduate-** He shared that he is very grateful to the Somerville community for providing opportunities for young people to access training programs like the one he completed this summer. He emphasized that immigrant youth come not to take, but to contribute and give back. He expressed appreciation to the City of Somerville for offering these opportunities. He noted that after completing the PACMAN program and a one-month paid internship, he was able to secure a job.

**Aly Flores- Somerville High School/High School Equivalency & PACMAN Graduate-** *I came to SCALE because I was struggling in high school. I felt like I was being pushed around too much, and it wasn't the right environment for me, so I left. One of the biggest challenges after that was not having a high school diploma, especially when it came to finding jobs. I knew I needed support to stay in school. I connected with someone I had known for a long time, and he helped me enroll at SCALE. My experience there has been really positive everyone was supportive and helped me succeed. Through SCALE, I was also able to participate in the PACMAN program, which was a great experience, including working at the high school. SCALE was flexible and patient with my schedule, which helped me get through the program. I'm currently looking for a job, and the SCALE staff are continuing to support me with that.*

**Dr. Ackman:** I don't have a question; I just want to share that, while we may be sitting here in professional attire, many of us did not have an easy experience in school. We are here because we understand that education can be complicated and challenging. When the system doesn't feel like it's working for you, choosing to trust it again and return is incredibly difficult. I am very proud of you, and I hope you are proud of yourself as well. We truly understand these challenges, and we are glad you found a place in Somerville that worked for you.

**President Davis:** Through the Chair, I want to thank both speakers for coming forward. It takes a great deal of courage to speak in front of people you don't know. I also want to share that one of my City Council colleagues, who is a SCALE graduate, reached out to express pride and appreciation. We are very grateful for the SCALE program and impressed by your commitment to completing it.

**Mr. Green:** I want to echo the pride shared by my colleagues. You mentioned that you are currently looking for a job, and I wanted to ask what type of work you're interested in. After hearing your interest in electrical work or HVAC, I want you to know that there are many connections in this room, and we're happy to help however we can.

**Ms. Pitone:** I want to add how important it is for us to hear directly from you. We are here to ensure continued investment in our students and in alternative pathways. I know it may not be easy to speak publicly, but your willingness to do so is incredibly important to our work. Hearing your story helps us continue to support these programs. Thank you.

**Natasha Rosario- Para Educator Graduate & Current SPS Employee-** *Good evening. My name is Natasha Rosario, and I am a paraprofessional in the SEEK program at the Kennedy School. I learned about SCALE through*

*Head Start while I was a single mother of two, working full-time as a restaurant manager. At the time, returning to school felt overwhelming, but I decided to try. Balancing school, work, and parenting required significant sacrifices, but the consistent support and encouragement from SCALE staff helped me persevere. Completing the program has allowed me to work fewer hours, spend more time with my children, and feel more energized. I now love my work in the school and my students. I am continuing my professional growth through district-supported coursework and am joining the interpreter pool, which is opening new opportunities. I am very grateful for the funding and support that made this experience life-changing. Thank you.*

**Dr. Ackman:** I want to note, Angel, that while my Spanish is not very strong, I truly appreciated hearing you speak Spanish confidently. To me, that represents equity—our district supporting people as their full selves. I was very glad to hear that, and I want to thank Jocelyn as well. Thank you for sharing your time with us and for taking time away from your children to be here; we truly appreciate it. I echo my colleagues' comments and also want to ask: as someone who went through this experience as a working single parent, are there things you would recommend we consider to better support others in similar situations, even if we cannot change program requirements?

**Natasha Rosario:** Honestly, I feel that I had the support I needed to succeed. When I was exhausted or struggling to keep up with coursework because of work demands, the staff were very understanding and flexible. They helped me adjust my work hours and connected me with resources such as grants, which made it possible for me to continue in the program while still supporting my family. What I would recommend is expanding outreach and communication about available resources. Before I was connected, it was very difficult to find help, especially if you don't already know the right people. Many Hispanic families, particularly immigrant families or those who don't speak English, may feel afraid or hesitant to ask for help. Culturally, pride can make it hard to say you need support, even when you do. Making resources more visible and easier to access would help others feel less alone and more confident asking for assistance.

**Mr. Biton:** I want to thank you for taking what you learned and earned through SCALE and bringing your gifts back to Somerville Public Schools. I am truly grateful that you are here and reinvesting in our students. I know your own children are incredibly important to you, which makes your commitment even more meaningful. This program is a shining jewel in our district, and you—and the other speakers—are wonderful representations of what it offers. I am very grateful that you have chosen to continue your journey with us. Thank you.

**Mr. Green:** Building on those comments, I think it's important to recognize that we are seeing the real-world impact of our work as a Committee. This includes not only programs that help people become paraprofessionals or teachers in the district, but also the long-term investments we have made in paraprofessional pay. Through collaboration with our unions, starting pay has increased significantly over the past decade. In the coming school years, paraprofessionals will start at approximately \$50,000 annually, which is a life-changing investment. Seeing examples like Natasha reinforces that these were the right decisions, and it gives me confidence in defending this work in the future.

**Ms. Pitone:** Thank you for being here. My question is more global and relates to sustainability. Programs like PAC-MAN have clearly had a meaningful impact on students, but they rely on grants, and once funding ends, the programs often stop. I'd like to know how we, as a district or city, can decide whether to sustain successful programs long-term. Can we self-fund initiatives like PAC-MAN? What is the process for making those decisions? My concern is that valuable work gets done, grants prove their effectiveness, and then the program disappears. I'd appreciate a report back on how we can support sustaining effective programs and, more broadly, workforce development opportunities for students.

**Director Marte:** *We applied for JCRT funding through the Facilities Maintenance Department to recruit students into a program that builds on the success of PAC-MAN. The JCRT grant is for two years, allowing us to offer a full cohort, though with less funding than PAC-MAN, so we cannot pay participants the same stipends. We are also pursuing funding through the Career Technical Institute (CTI), which supports vocational schools and adult evening programs. These multi-year grants will help sustain programs and develop curriculum for young adults and adults.*

**Chair Krepchin:** Can you remind us what CTI stands for?

**Director Marte:** CTI stands for Career Technical Institute. The planning grant we are applying for is specifically for vocational schools to create adult evening programs. There is significant funding available, and we are working to tap into that.

**Ms. Pitone:** Just to clarify, PAC-MAN ended, and the JCRT program will serve similar students. It would be helpful for the School Committee to know what resources or funding are needed to make the program fully effective so we can advocate for it. Any memo or guidance on what's needed to recruit the right students and provide necessary support would be appreciated.

Ana Julia Portillo- High School Equivalency & Para Graduate-Good evening. My name is Anna Giulio Portillo, and it has been a pleasure to study at SCALE for nearly two years. I first completed my GED classes and was then given the opportunity to participate in the paraprofessional teacher assistant training. This experience helped me adjust not only my educational goals, but also my personal goals as a Latina and as a mother of three children under the age of 16. I am proud of myself, and I can now tell my children that if I was able to do this, they can too. Achieving goals can be difficult, but with hard work and the right support, anything is possible. SCALE has been that support for me. Thanks to SCALE, I am now working as a teacher assistant in a Somerville Public School, doing work that I love. This job allows me to support my family while also receiving the benefits of working for Somerville Public Schools. I am very grateful to SCALE and the entire team for creating these programs and for opening opportunities for immigrants like me. Thank you very much.

### **Comments/Questions on the presentation**

**Mr. Green:** He noted that, from his professional experience in workforce development and philanthropy, Somerville invests more in workforce development than many communities, though still not at the level of Boston or Cambridge. He emphasized that current investment is not sufficient and expressed strong support for identifying additional city and state revenue to sustain workforce development programs. He shared that recent efforts have focused on expanding state funding and noted emerging opportunities for philanthropic and state investment, particularly in areas such as ESOL and CNA programming. He expressed interest in continuing conversations offline to ensure SCALE is positioned to access these funding opportunities.

**Mr. Davis:** He asked a clarifying question about the data presented, specifically noting a significant drop in English language learner participation in FY26 and inquiring about the reason.

**Director Marte:** explained that the FY26 numbers reflect partial-year data and that participation is expected to increase by the end of the fiscal year.

**Ms. Barish:** I don't have anything new to add, but I want to sincerely thank you and the graduates you brought with you this evening. We truly appreciate the opportunity to meet them and are very grateful for the work you do and for the time everyone shared with us tonight. We are very lucky, thank you.

**Mr. Green:** Building on President Davis's earlier point, I want to note a structural challenge facing programs like SCALE: ESOL funding is currently based on attendance rather than achievement or proficiency. This creates pressure to focus on enrollment rather than outcomes. Despite a statewide ESOL waitlist of approximately 25,000 people, most seeking job-related language skills, only a small portion of ESOL funding is focused on workforce integration. SCALE is a leader in this area. There is a significant opportunity for statewide advocacy; reducing the waitlist by even 10,000 learners would result in substantial long-term economic gains. At a time of workforce shortages and broader challenges facing immigrant communities, increased state investment in integrated ESOL is a meaningful and achievable strategy. We are fortunate to have SCALE, but there is much more the Commonwealth could be doing.

**Director Marte:** Thank you. I also want to share that I have been appointed Chair of the Adult Advisory Council to the Commissioner, and we recently held our first meeting. Our goal is to raise awareness and develop creative solutions to better serve individuals on ESOL waitlists. Currently, SCALE has approximately 650 people waiting for ESOL services.

**Mr. Biton:** Through the Chair, and building on Mr. Green's comments, I recognize that Somerville and the School Committee alone cannot meet all regional needs. That is why I am grateful for the diligent work you and your colleagues have done to secure grant funding. I hope that, in partnership with the City and the new administration, we can identify additional funding opportunities to make these programs more sustainable. I am encouraged by the direction this work is heading.

**Dr. Boston-Davis:** Through the Chair, I want to echo those comments and had in mind to highlight that Jocelyn has been appointed Chair of the advisory board to the Commissioner. I have the pleasure of working closely with Jocelyn and her team, and their leadership and vision are evident. Many of the programs we heard about today did not exist or were far smaller just a few years ago. I want to thank Jocelyn, her team, and the students and staff who shared their stories this evening. Your work is truly impactful.

**Director Marte:** Thank you for your support. We could not do this work without the support of the Superintendent, the School Committee, and our partners. We remain committed to serving Somerville residents and the students we support through SCALE.

**Chair Krepchin:** I want to add that funding alone is not enough, it takes strong people to make programs successful. Your presentations always remind me of that, and it is exciting to see what can be accomplished with dedicated leadership. Thank you again.

- **Communication Department Presentation**

As you know, we welcomed Darryl Nash, our new Chief Communications Officer, earlier this year. He has traded west coast sunshine for New England winters, and shifted from a charter school system in Los Angeles to our public school district here in Somerville. With five months under his belt, Darryl is here to talk to us tonight about strategy and planning in Communications for the school year and beyond, including some new methods of reaching our audiences to share the great achievements and successes that come out of our schools everyday.

**Darryl Nash, Chief of Communications:** Thank you, Dr. Carmona. Thank you, Chair, and members of the Committee. I'm pleased to be here this evening to discuss district strategy, planning, and communications. Before beginning my report, I would like to acknowledge Ruth Ronen, our Communications Specialist, who is present this evening. Ruth played a critical role in keeping the department running smoothly during the period without a director earlier this year and continues to be instrumental to our success. We are working closely together toward further strengthening the department. I have been in this role for approximately six months and have spent that time working with Ruth to conduct an informal audit of our communications channels and practices. This work has informed the development of a Year One plan to enhance, align, and evolve district-wide communications and marketing. This evening, I am pleased to share a summary of that plan. ( Presentation below)

### **Comments/Questions**

**Mr. Green:** Thank you. This is an impressive amount of work for what is still a small but strong team. I am especially excited about the emphasis on telling our stories beyond our immediate school community. Nationally, there is a trend showing that as the percentage of residents with children in public schools decreases, public support for school funding often declines. Somerville has historically avoided this trend, but it remains a concern particularly as data show this pattern accelerating in communities with high immigrant populations and in places like Cambridge, where the disconnect between the voting population and the school population has grown. For these reasons, the need to clearly communicate the value of Somerville Public Schools has never been greater. I strongly support this ambitious plan and want to ask what resources will be needed to implement and sustain it.

**Mr. Nash:** While we could always use more hours in the day, the focus will be on prioritizing and sequencing the work to achieve our goals over time. This will be a gradual process rather than an immediate transformation. Strong school districts are those that earn the trust and support of community members beyond families currently enrolled in schools. Reaching residents without direct ties to the schools is essential, and we will work intentionally to engage those audiences and maintain broad community support.

**Mr. Green:** I asked about prioritization, noting that time is limited and increasing focus in some areas means reducing effort elsewhere. Are there tasks we're doing that may not be worth the time?

**Mr. Nash:** We've set four main goals with three target outcomes each. They're ambitious but attainable, and based on my experience and Ruth's, I'm confident we can make strong progress in Year One.

**Ms. Barish:** Thank you. I want to echo much of what Mr. Green said. As we continue the MSBA process and prepare for a Proposition 2½ override vote, storytelling and raising community awareness about the great work in our schools becomes even more important. I'm excited to see this as a priority, and I love the idea of a printed newspaper I plan to seek it out in libraries and cafes. With Somerville already having a low ratio of school-aged children to residents, it's crucial we keep the community engaged. Thank you for making this a focus.

**Chair Krepchin:** I'd add that the newspaper could be a great way to reach older residents who vote but don't have children. Distribution in assisted living facilities or through Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services could help maximize its impact.

**Mr. Nash:** One of the main goals of this project is to reach people we don't normally reach, catching them in places like cafes or libraries, is an ideal way to engage the broader community.

**Mr. Davis:** I appreciate the presentation and am excited about the print newspaper. Have you considered incorporating student input, through coursework or clubs, to make it a learning experience? And how will social media integrate with the print version?

**Mr. Nash:** Social media integration is definitely part of the plan, with stories cross-posted online. I also think involving high school students—either for credit or extra work would be an excellent way to reflect what we're doing and give them hands-on experience creating content for the publication.

**Dr. Ackman:** Thank you. I want to build on points about celebrating our schools and community. Beyond highlighting student achievements, I hope we also celebrate our community ties. Somerville is a small, dense city, and our facilities like the Fab Lab, which offers services such as low-cost haircuts belong to residents. Many resources, including Prop 2½ override funds, support these spaces, and it's important that residents know they are welcome to use and engage with them. Messaging should highlight both the great work of our students and educators and the fact that these resources are for the whole community.

**Ms. Pitone:** Thank you. I'm excited about the updated website, storytelling, and in-house communication development. I also see a missed opportunity in using SMS to reach families who aren't engaged by email or social media. My question is about two-way dialogue how are we using communications to support community engagement, beyond promoting our brand, and how does it fit into our overall strategy?

**Mr. Nash:** We work closely with the SFLC to connect our one-way communications with their two-way engagement, including listening sessions and multilingual events. Regarding SMS, the current platform has limitations, and we are evaluating whether it can be improved or if a different solution is needed

**Mr. Biton:** Thank you, Mr. Nash and Ms. Ronen, for this clear, proactive presentation. I'm excited about how it ties into the strategic plan and supports district-wide professional development. Communication is embedded in nearly every role in the district, so strengthening it benefits educators, principals, and families alike. My question is about social media how will you disaggregate engagement data to understand meaningful responses versus superficial ones?

**Mr. Nash:** We track trends rather than individual reactions. Even negative responses can increase reach and engagement, which helps spread our messages. We analyze comments and interactions to gauge community sentiment and adjust accordingly. Within the district, we've also begun sharing brief communications tips at team meetings, which has been well-received and will continue to support staff in improving communication practices.

**Dr. Phillips:** Thank you for the presentation and all your work. As a parent, I find it very difficult to locate teachers' contact information online it's inconsistent across schools and frustrating. I hope this will be addressed when the website is updated.

**Mr. Nash:** We're currently consulting with principals and liaisons to identify the most-requested information. A clear, consistent staff directory will be included in the updated school pages.

**Dr. Ackman:** On slide 13, I wanted to mention parent access portals. Many parents struggle with having multiple apps ClassDojo one year, TalkingPoints the next, plus others for literacy coaches. Consistent, district-supported portals for communication would be greatly appreciated. I also want to recognize PTAs that have created WhatsApp groups by grade, which help families share information, and hope we can see more consistency across grades.

**Mr. Nash:** We've reviewed several education platforms and continue to explore options that could provide the consistent parent access you're describing, considering budget and implementation feasibility.

**Dr. Ackman:** I want to express deep appreciation this is very impressive. Thank you, Ms. Ronan, for keeping things running. I love how you're using data, tying it to the strategic plan just excellent work.

**Mr. Green:** A follow-up: when doing this work, it's important to meet people where they already are. For example, PTAs use WhatsApp because that's what many immigrant communities already use.

**Chair Krepchin:** Just a comment: thinking about the earlier SCALE presentation, it highlighted how hard it can be for single parents to know about resources. This connects directly to the importance of the communication plan.

**Mr. Nash:** One way we're addressing this is by highlighting the great stories we see in programs like SCALE. We're also redesigning how certain departments are reflected on the website to give them a unique presence and energy, making it a more useful resource for participants and those considering the program.

**Mr. Green:** I want to highlight recent leadership in storytelling. During the commissioner's visit, Somerville's work stood out even beyond high MCAS scores. Our superintendent also effectively shared the district's priorities publicly, like supporting rent stabilization. These examples show the power of clear, coherent storytelling to communicate the district's work.

**Dr. Carmona:** I have to credit Daryl and Ruth they've been essential in making this storytelling possible. Sharing the successes of our high school and CTE programs is actually easy with the right support and mediums. The only thing I regret is not sending the message in Spanish and Portuguese, which would have been simple to do. Overall, it really reflects the strength of our team and our community.

With that, I'd like to introduce Dr. Boston-Davis to talk about the draft 2026–2027 school year calendar.

- **2026-2027 School Calendar -First Draft**

**Dr. Boston-Davis:** In your packet, you'll see the first draft of the 2026–2027 school year calendar, along with relevant state guidance. I included this to clarify the committee's role, why certain days are scheduled, and the regulations we follow. At a high level: the committee schedules up to 185 days, though the school year only needs to operate for 180. There's also specific guidance around kindergarten scheduling. Our draft calendar includes additional features. For example, the first day of school is before Labor Day, which allows a "soft launch" for teachers to establish routines, connect with students, and set up classrooms. This was originally added after a snowy school year and also aligns with union contract requirements for breaks like February and April. I've also included tentative school committee meeting dates for your reference. One correction: the last day of school for the Keys is currently listed as June 12, but it should be June 21.

I'm happy to take questions or feedback.

**Dr. Ackman:** I just want to give a standing ovation for all the hard work you've put into this working with designers and making it clearer each year. I love seeing this level of communication and transparency. One quick note: I noticed the last day listed as June 21 falls on a Monday after a long weekend. Have you considered whether it could be moved to end on the 17th? I understand snow days and other contingencies, but with fewer snow days now, it might be worth reviewing for instructional purposes.

**Dr. Boston Davis:** Thank you, Chair. I want to thank Erika Garcia for all her work updating the calendar adjusting dates, colors, and fonts. We had originally set June 18 as the last day of school, which aligns with the federal observance of Juneteenth since it falls on a Saturday. Many breaks are contractually fixed December 24, February

vacation, and April break so there's limited flexibility. I'll continue reviewing the calendar and comparing with neighboring districts to see if any adjustments make sense.

**Dr. Ackman:** I'm curious if we wanted the last day of school on the 18th and observe Juneteenth on the 21st instead, would that be legally permissible? Does the observed day have to match the federal date?

**Dr. Boston Davis:** Thank you, that's a great question. Some districts do observe federal holidays differently. I'll look into it, but my guess is the committee has discretion. I'll confirm and report back.

**Ms. Pitone:** Through you, Chair, I appreciate Dr. Ackman's creative thinking. It might be worth checking with our SEU partners about observing holidays differently this year like Good Friday just to see if educators have preferences or concerns, though it wouldn't set a precedent. Also, I'm curious about the first school committee meeting date. Why is it proposed for the 21st instead of the 31st of August, given past practice? I know Erika will help with planning, but I wanted to flag it.

**Dr. Boston Davis:** Thank you for bringing that up. Good Friday is also off per contract, so we can discuss any adjustments. We can also review the school committee meeting dates. The proposed dates are placeholders, and the body will decide, though last year we received feedback about inconsistencies with the first and third Monday pattern.

**Chair Krepchin:** Our policy does state meetings are on the first and third Monday of the month.

**Mr. Green:** I want to commend the administration this is the earliest I've ever seen a first draft of the calendar, almost ready at the last meeting. I agree we should start a collaborative conversation with the SEU about any changes so everyone is aligned.

Dr. Phillips: I second, my colleagues' praise for this calendar. I think since you've taken it over, it's turned into this beautiful. Really efficient document, so thank you. Minor thing, just wanted to flag that the Diwali and Eid-Al-Adha need to be underlined, I think.

Chair Krepchin: We will have this on our agenda again at the next meeting.

## **V. REPORTS OF SUBCOMMITTEES**

### **A. School Committee Meeting for the Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting: November 20, 2025 (Ms. Barish)**

Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting  
November 20, 2025

Ms. Barish called the meeting to order at 5:36PM. At the start of the meeting, in addition to Ms. Barish, fellow subcommittee member Andre Green was present, along with Alicia Mallon from MASC, and SPS Director of Communications, Darryl Nash. There were two people in the audience. The meeting was held virtually. There were four items on the agenda.

#### **1. Approve Report from October Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting**

Mr. Green moved to approve the report from the October meeting, seconded by Ms. Barish. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **2. Policy Manual Review**

Sections D and E require further administrative review. Ms. Anosike and Mr. Beretta will provide feedback at a future meeting.

Ms. Barish shared with attendees that she failed to move that the full committee pass Sections H and L of the Policy Manual "in form." Ms. Mallon advised that when the next sections are brought before the full committee, H and L should be included in the "in form" motion.

Ms. Barish requested clean versions of Sections A, B, and C from Ms. Mallon so that they can be brought to the full committee.

Subcommittee member Leiran Biton arrived at 5:40.

Ms. Mallon invited Mr. Beretta to reach out to her directly with any questions about Section D.

### **3. Policy KHC - Distribution of Notices**

Mr. Green has given the proposed language further thought and can't find a way to word this policy that would allow a teacher to hang a sign supporting LGBTQ youth, for example, and ban all of the things people seem to want to ban. He will not vote for a policy that would not allow that type of sign; he can't square it with our values.

Based on his read and feedback from legal advisers, Mr. Biton doesn't believe the message Mr. Green described would be banned. Mr. Biton agrees that would be inconsistent with our values. He is confident in the lawyer's assessment that this language threads that needle and trusts our superintendent - who asked for a policy like this - to implement in a way that is sensitive and honors the academic freedom enshrined in our contract with the SEU. He believes the values described are core and not violated by this draft.

LB moved to approve the proposed KHC language on the right hand side of the document and to recommend it for passage at School Committee.

Ms. Barish provided the second, then proposed a friendly amendment: to move this draft to the full committee (without a recommendation for passage). She noted her ambivalence about the policy - not certain she would vote for it in the full committee, but feeling a responsibility to offer the full committee an opportunity to consider it given that the administration requested a policy like this.

Mr. Green expressed appreciation that this is something to bring to the full committee. And he shared his concern that the fact that there is any question as to what is or isn't in this policy opens the district to a lot of risk, predicting that any parent who has the political capital to challenge something will push this forward. He has yet to see an example of something that isn't a violation of other policies (harassment, hate speech, indecency, unprofessionalism, etc.) but is somehow inappropriate for classrooms. He don't want to put staff in a position where they have to constantly make those calls, because he knows how it plays out.

Subcommittee members voted as follows: Mr. Green, no; Mr. Biton, yes; Ms. Barish, yes.

### **4. JE-E - Student Attendance - High School**

Ms. Barish shared that it was brought to the attention of district staff that this policy says 900 hours rather than the required 990 hours. The policy was last updated in 2008. She made a first attempt at updating the language.

Mr. Green noted that the change to 990 is not controversial, but he is curious why Ms. Barish recommended a change from 4 missed classes to 5.

Ms. Barish stated that this aligns with the current SHS attendance policy.

Mr. Biton reminded everyone that Principal Kersten discussed lowering the attendance threshold with students when the last major handbook revision was being made, and opted not to lower the number, keeping it at 5.

Ms. Mallon shared the MASC version which is very different and includes legal references and drop-out prevention language. She suggests holding this revision until we get review Section J in our Policy Manual Review.

Mr. Biton noticed that this policy says a student may be given a passing grade with permission from the department head but he is not sure that is currently true.

Ms. Barish agreed that it isn't clear what is currently allowed. She hopes to make sure that is codified if it is allowed. She will bring the policy to Ms. Kersten and to Dr. Boston Davis.

Mr. Biton also suggested some moderation of the "No days off for any reason" language in order to recognize cultural/religious reasons, etc. Subcommittee members agreed. Ms. Mallon reminded members that JH is the MASC model policy, and that there is another policy that talks about religious and cultural observances.

Ms. Barish noted that this incorrect language has been on the books for many years, and asked Ms. Mallon if we need

to update this right away. Ms. Mallon suggested taking up Section J in the next subcommittee meeting and going forward from there unless principals are flagging this as an issue.

Ms. Barish reminded everyone that the next Rules meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 15 at 5:30PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:07PM.

#### **Documents Used**

Draft Policy JE-E - Student Attendance - High School  
KHC - Draft policy 3.31.25 (1)  
October 2025 Rules Report

**MOTION:** There was a motion by Ms Barish, seconded by Mr. Biton, to accept the report of the School Committee Meeting for the Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting: November 20, 2025

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

### **VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

#### **A. MSBA**

### **VII. NEW BUSINESS**

#### **A. SCALE Unit D- ratify MOA Evaluation Tool**

**MOTION:** There was a motion by Dr. Ackman, seconded by Dr. Phillips, to authorize the chair and the Superintendent to sign the SCALE Unit D ratify MOA Evaluation Tool

**Ms. Pitone:** Thank you to everyone involved in this work. It's exciting to see the collaboration and the improved evaluation tool.

**Chair Krepchin:** Absolutely and it's no surprise, given the amazing work Ms. Marte is doing at SCALE.

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

#### **B. AFSCME Cafeteria Employees Union Evaluation Side Letter**

**MOTION:** There was a motion by Dr. Phillips seconded by Mr. Biton, to Authorize the Chair and the Superintendent to sign the Evaluation Side Letter with the AFSCME Cafeteria Employees Union

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

#### **C. November Bill Rolls**

**MOTION:** There was a motion by Dr. Phillips, seconded by Ms Pitone, to approved the November bill rolls  
The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

#### **D. CAG recommendations (review and vote)**

**Chair Krepchin:** We discussed the CAG at our last meeting. You should have received a draft of the CAG recommendations from Ms. Garcia shortly afterward, but my understanding is that the final recommendations are not yet complete.

**Mr. Green:** That's correct. The final recommendations are still in progress, with a goal of completion by Christmas. At the last meeting, there was some consensus and some disagreement. The CAG unanimously recommends rebuilding at Sycamore. The group overwhelmingly but not unanimously recommends building as large as feasible and appropriate for the district. There were some dissenting views, notably from Councilor Strezzo, who raised concerns about the

district's ability to operate a school of that size. There was no consensus on making a recommendation regarding the future of the Brown School, though there was strong agreement that this is an issue the School Committee should address as part of the process.

**Chair Krepchin:** Just a clarifying question, since we've asked this before and it may still be uncertain: if we build the largest school at Sycamore that the MSBA will fund, would that require us to close the Brown School?

**Mr. Green:** It's been frustrating not to get a definitive answer to that. The best good-faith response I've heard is that nothing is guaranteed. The general sense is that if we build the largest possible school, it's unlikely though not certain that the MSBA would later fund a major renovation of Brown. That said, closing Brown is not a formal requirement of moving forward with the Sycamore project. However, there was a sense within the CAG that having a clearer plan around this issue may be necessary to make the debt exclusion proposal viable.

**Mr. Green:** I've heard conflicting information on that point. It did not come up in the CAG, but there has been some discussion about potentially moving the debt exclusion vote to 2026. However, I haven't received any clear direction or confirmation on that.

**Chair Krepchin:** Given that there is not yet a final recommendation from the CAG, does it make sense for this body to deliberate now, or should we wait until the final recommendations are before us? Does anyone have thoughts on that?

**Mr. Green:** What I can say is that the consistent message I've heard from the CAG is that the more guidance they receive from us, the better.

**Ms. Pitone:** I think the larger question is whether the School Committee wants to weigh in at all. If the CAG report isn't coming out until the 25th, and the mayor won't be weighing in until then, we need to decide whether we want to have a voice in this process. That could be now, at the meeting on the 15th, or in January. I don't have a strong preference on timing, but I do think the committee should weigh in, especially given Mr. Green's helpful clarification about what the CAG agreed on, what had broad support, and what lacked consensus.

**Chair Krepchin:** With that in mind, if someone would like to make a motion for us to discuss, that would be in order.

**Motion:** Ms. Barish made a motion, seconded by Dr. Ackman, to endorse the majority CAG recommendation as expressed in the November 2025 draft.

**Mr. Green:** Just to clarify are we endorsing the draft as a whole? What exactly is being endorsed?

**Ms. Barish:** To clarify, the motion is to endorse the majority CAG recommendation in the document, specifically regarding the location and school size.

**Chair Krepchin:** Thank you. I have a motion by Ms. Barish, seconded by Dr. Ackman.

**Dr. Phillips:** Just for clarification, the majority CAG recommendation is to build a school at the Sycamore Street site at the maximum capacity allowed by the MSBA. I wanted to state that directly so we're all clear.

**Mr. Biton:** Thank you, Chair. Through you, to Ms. Barish just to clarify, would that mean a school of approximately 925 seats?

**Ms. Barish:** That is my understanding of the maximum size the MSBA would fund, though I'm happy to be corrected if that's not accurate.

**Mr. Davis:** On the clarified motion and the concept outlined in the draft, I strongly disagree with this approach, which

is likely no surprise. My perspective comes from my experience as a Somerville parent, the son of a career public school teacher, the brother of a public school teacher, and as someone deeply connected to families across our district. I believe small schools serve a critical and irreplaceable role, especially in a district like ours. In my view, this process was unnecessarily sidetracked by the idea of creating a mega school. I don't believe that was required, and I do believe it has cost us time. The better approach would have been to rebuild Winter Hill as quickly as possible, return those students to their community, and then move on to the next school in line. I still believe that is the right path. A school of the proposed size risks reducing educational variety and opportunities for students. Separately and just as importantly, I will not support any plan that leaves a ward in this city without a public school. That runs counter to our commitment to neighborhood-based options and will inevitably increase car traffic unless we significantly expand busing. It also raises serious concerns about walkability for many families in Ward 6. I also share the frustration that we still lack clarity about the future of the Brown School. Building a large school at Sycamore without addressing Brown leaves too much unresolved. I am concerned that the process and the narrative presented to the CAG may have steered members toward a predetermined conclusion. Finally, I do not believe it is wise to bring a plan to voters that I cannot support and that I expect many in the community will question or oppose. Doing so puts the Winter Hill project at risk. Any plan that removes two of the district's smallest schools in favor of a mega school, and leaves one ward without a public school, is something I will oppose.

**Dr. Phillips:** To clarify, we're talking about a building that seats 925 students, not necessarily one school. We could house multiple small schools in a single building other districts, like Chicago, do this successfully. Ward 3 hasn't had a K-8 school since the Comings closed, and families have adapted. What matters most is that all students have access to a strong school. Right now, we can't guarantee that especially for Brown students, since Kennedy and West lack sufficient capacity, which creates ongoing uncertainty for middle school placement. If we don't address this through this process, we risk putting the issue off for another 10-15 years. So while I respect Mr. Davis's perspective, I see this differently.

**Ms. Pitone:** Thank you, Chair. This is a complicated and emotional issue, especially when decisions affect existing school communities. I approach this through the lenses of equity, access, educational quality, operations, location, and cost. After 12 years on the committee and as a parent I've seen how difficult student placement is, particularly for small schools. It's never easy or satisfying for families. While I value small school communities and agree there are creative models that could work, keeping the Brown School long term without a funded plan to address its serious equity and access issues is unacceptable to me. The building does not provide the same opportunities as our other schools, especially for students with special needs, and the estimated \$55-65 million needed for repairs is not something I can support without a clear, funded commitment from the city particularly in our current budget climate. Sustaining a high-risk school without a real plan limits equity and is deeply concerning. For those reasons, I support the motion. I respect the differing viewpoints and the strong community at Brown, and I hope that if this recommendation moves forward, the community can come together, acknowledge the real sense of loss, and work collaboratively toward the best outcome for all students.

**Mr. Green:** At its core, my view is simple: when MSBA offers more seats, you take them. A larger school at Sycamore gives the district flexibility for the next 20-30 years, even if it doesn't meet all current needs. While small schools like Brown have value, we need to be honest about why they're considered "special." They serve fewer low-income students and are not teaching better than other schools. Renovating Brown for \$60 million wouldn't create a modern, equitable learning environment for all students. The footprint is too small, and long-term sustainability is unrealistic. Somerville is a small, walkable city, but our commitment to equity means ensuring differentiated programming is accessible to all students, regardless of location or resources. For me, endorsing the largest school at Sycamore is the practical and equitable choice, while still recognizing the benefits of small schools in certain contexts like summer programs.

**Mr. Biton:** Thank you, Chair. First, I want to acknowledge the tremendous work of Mr. Green, the CAG, and all community members who dedicated countless hours to this process. I also want to recognize the strain on families,

especially Winter Hill, who have endured displacement, uncertainty, and declining building conditions. Two points stand out for me. One, rebuilding trust with families and educators is essential. This means transparency, proactive engagement, and partnership at every stage. Two, school identity matters. Families value the unique culture, close-knit relationships, and strong educator communities at Winter Hill and Brown, and data shows many want to preserve these smaller school environments. While school size can influence outcomes schools over 700 students often see challenges with engagement, equity, and behavior a 900-student K–8 raises serious concerns for learning quality, community, and equity. Diversity can be addressed through enrollment policies rather than building size. The Winter Hill community deserves a stable, modern school that meets enrollment needs without merging into an oversized school. Moving forward cautiously, respecting families' voices, and aligning with evidence on school size will help restore trust and set up a sustainable, community-centered plan. For these reasons, I cannot support the motion.

**Mr. Green:** I looked into the school size issue, especially after hearing concerns about diversity and academic outcomes. While smaller schools are often thought to perform better, research shows that much of the variation in outcomes is tied to race and class, not size alone. Poorer districts tend to have larger schools out of necessity, and outcomes reflect broader systemic inequities rather than the building itself. Families' concerns about a "mega school" are often about losing their school community, not the size per se. While some worry that a large school might undermine diversity or integration, I believe a well-planned school of 700–900 students can maintain pluralism and serve all students equitably. Size alone does not determine the quality or fairness of education.

**Ms. Barish:** I made this motion because we need to have this important conversation. As a former Brown School parent, I understand the community's attachment. That said, I'm concerned about the building's capacity and sustainability. Currently, students receiving services are limited by space, and future growth could worsen that. Renovating Brown might require students to relocate temporarily, creating challenges with distance and walkability, as we saw with Winter Hill. I also worry about relying on MSBA funding years from now—it may not materialize. While I don't know if Brown must close, we need a solution that can serve more students and maintain equity. I empathize with families' attachments, but we can't risk leaving students without adequate schools. We must balance community, capacity, and equity in planning for the future.

**Mr. Davis:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I want to respond to several points for the record. My position isn't about affection for a particular school, my concern is about the impact on students, especially those who need specialized support. Small schools can be beneficial, but that depends on context, not demographics or economics alone. Co-locating schools, as suggested, hasn't worked well in the city before, so I view that cautiously. Relocating students during renovations, as with the Brown School roof collapse, is temporary, but permanently closing a school leaves a significant part of the city without accessible K–8 options. For these reasons, I believe closing the school would be a mistake. We need a better, forward-looking plan that maintains access, equity, and stability for all students. This should have been addressed earlier, and we shouldn't repeat past mistakes.

**Dr. Phillips:** I appreciate everyone's thoughtful comments. I have a few points before we vote. First, while it's important to hear the school community, we shouldn't always let community preference override our district values and goals. For example, keeping the CHOICE program would not have aligned with integration goals. Second, to clarify: we are not combining Winter Hill and Brown. We are discussing building a larger school at the Sycamore site, with district-wide redistricting as part of SEU negotiations. This is not a decision about merging existing schools. Third, some CAG members expressed concern about voting tonight. Final recommendations will include guidance for the administration and educators shaping the school's vision—not a decision for the school committee.

**Mr. Green:** The school committee will vote to approve the vision, likely in February or March.

**Dr. Phillips:** Exactly like what happened with the high school, the vision comes from the administration and educators, not the committee. Also, as of October, there are three majority-white schools in the district, including Brown.

Chair Krepchin: I want to acknowledge that there's no perfect solution here. I appreciate Ms. Barish highlighting Ms. Pitone's point about Winter Hill the larger school could actually support its programming. Regarding the \$55–\$65 million, even if the city could guarantee that, I'm not sure that would be the best use of funds for the district as a whole. The key is recognizing that no perfect solution exists.

**Ms. Pitone:** I want to acknowledge Dr. Phillips' point: we're not combining two schools; we're building one new school. I also want to recognize the CAG's hard work they carefully weighed trade-offs, and their recommendations should be respected. A moment with a Brown School parent really struck me: they said they'd send their child with special needs to Brown because there are fewer students with special needs there. That highlights a systemic inequity we've sustained a school that isn't accessible to all learners. Choosing not to build a larger school limits flexibility and perpetuates inequities. A vote against the CAG recommendation risks disregarding their work and the broader needs of our students.

**Ms. Barish:** I hear President Davis calling for a better plan, and while that would be ideal, we don't have the time to create one. Delaying this process isn't a viable option.

**Mr. Davis:** I agree we've missed the chance to create a better plan, but I don't see this vote as automatically requiring the Brown School to close that's still unknown. The current Brown School isn't sustainable. My proposal remains: rebuild Winter Hill first, then address Brown whether that's a rebuild, a new facility, or using a plan like the Matt Rice concept with expanded, ADA-compliant spaces. We can't just let Brown continue as-is, but closing it without a plan isn't the solution either.

**Mr. Biton:** Thank you, Chair. I want to respond to Ms. Pitone's points. She said that voting against the CAG majority recommendation would disregard their hard work and support systemic inequities. I struggle with that. The CAG's work includes the full report the majority recommendations and dissenting views. The majority recommendation is just one part; the hard work of the CAG is reflected in the entire document, not only in the majority position.

**Mr. Davis:** Did I misunderstand do we have a final recommendation or tally? I thought we didn't.

**Chair Krepchin:** No, we do not. There is only a draft recommendation.

**Mr. Biton:** My understanding is that the last meeting included only a straw poll on school size, not a final recommendation. The majority recommendation represents the strongest signal, but endorsing it doesn't diminish the CAG's full work or disregard systemic inequities in our district. We can't solve everything with one vote. I also note the future renovation costs for the Brown School—\$55–\$60 million haven't been fully presented here. Building a larger school now will cost more than a smaller one. There are trade-offs either way. This vote is simple in form, but complex in impact.

**Chair Krepchin:** This ties to my earlier point there's no perfect solution at this time.

**Ms. Pitone:** Through you, Chair, thank you, Mr. Biton, for sharing your perspective on this complex situation. I also want to clarify some cost information: the difference between maintaining two schools versus building one larger school is estimated at \$57–\$67 million, according to a city presentation. While money isn't the only factor, it's important context—survey responses didn't include cost data. If the funds were available, there might be other priorities for that money, and sustaining two schools on a small Brown School site would limit playground and outdoor space, which affects gross motor and nature access. I just wanted to provide that additional context while acknowledging your points.

**Roll Call Vote:** Ms. Pitone – Yes, Dr. Ackman – Yes, Mr. Green – Yes, Mr. Biton – No, Mr. Davis – No, Mayor Ballentyne – Absent, Ms. Barish – Yes, Dr. Phillips – Yes, Chair Krepchin – Yes

**Result:** 6 Yes, 2 No – Motion carries.

#### **E. Somerville Public Schools Policy Manual- Table**

The following policy is being presented the evening for the first reading

- Policy Manual Section A, B, and C

#### **F. Field Trips:** (Recommended action: Approval)

**MOTION:** There was a motion by Dr. Ackman, seconded by Mr. Biton, to approved out of state field trip for January 4, 2026 of 25 students from 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade Chorus will travel to Dunkin Donuts Center in Providence Rhode Island to perform at the Providence Bruin's game. Travel via bus, student cost \$25

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

#### **G. Acceptance of FY26 Grants Fund: (Recommended action: approval)**

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

##### **State**

**Mass Clean Energy HVAC- Electrical & HVAC Training Program for CTE & SCALE** -\$789,870.90  
**Partnership for Reading Success Part2-District Wide for Professional Development-**  
\$166,500.00  
**MyCap- CTE for Professional Development** -\$ 7,000.00

##### **Federal**

**Adult Education & Family Literacy- Grant Increase for SCALE Dept.-\$ 36, 626.00**

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

#### **H. DONATION: (Recommended action: approval)**

**Motion:** There was a motion by Ms. Pitone, seconded by Dr. Ackman, to accept with gratitude of the following donations

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Program
Equipment	Alice Grossman	Somerville, MA	\$2,520	Art Department

##### **Mr. Biton:**

Thank you, Chair. I want to acknowledge how wonderful this donated equipment is and appreciate the district sharing the details. It's an extraordinary list mostly photography items like 35mm cameras, lenses, and darkroom equipment. We're very grateful to the donor for thinking of our students.

**Ms. Barish:** I just wanted to add that the document from the administration clearly outlines the donation, which is helpful thank you.

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

## **VIII. ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

**Mr. Biton:** I want to share an opportunity for the community to help shape the Kennedy School Playground Renovations Project. Thanks to Community Preservation Act funding, the City is reimagining the schoolyard. This is a chance to create an inclusive, welcoming space for all K-8 students. The first public meeting is tomorrow, Tuesday, December 2nd, at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom. City staff will present preliminary designs and gather community input.

**Chair Krepchin:** A quick note I'll be interviewed tomorrow for the library's strategic plan. If you have school-related input for the library, please email me by 1 p.m. tomorrow.

## **IX. CONDOLENCES**

No condolences

## **X. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:12 p.m.

### **Related documents:**

Agenda

[SCALE Department Presentation](#)

[Communication Department Presentation](#)

Submitted by: E Garcia

**Attach Documents Starting on the next page**

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – CITY HALL**  
**REGULAR MEETING – DECEMBER 01, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.**

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2025, this meeting of the School Committee will be conducted via hybrid participation.

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[https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_u8AwY93fR6OhvC37Xib1zg](https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_u8AwY93fR6OhvC37Xib1zg)

Meeting ID: 810 5048 0087

Password: SPSSC25

**Somerville Public Schools - School Committee Goals 2023 - 2025**

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

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

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

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

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

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

**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT – In person**

To participate in Public Comment remotely please use the following Zoom link:

[https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_u8AwY93fR6OhvC37Xib1zg](https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_u8AwY93fR6OhvC37Xib1zg)

Meeting ID: 810 5048 0087

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**SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
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**ORDER OF BUSINESS**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

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

**II. SCHOOL COMMITTEE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES**

**III. PUBLIC COMMENT – In person**

To participate in Public Comment remotely please use the following Zoom link:

[https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_u8AwY93fR6OhvC37Xib1zg](https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_u8AwY93fR6OhvC37Xib1zg)

Meeting ID: 810 5048 0087

Password: SPSSC25

**IV. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT****A. District Report**

- SCALE Department Presentation
- Communication Department Presentation
- 2026-2027 School Calendar -First Draft

**V. REPORT OF SUBCOMMITTEES****A. School Committee Meeting for the Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting: November 20, 2025 (Ms. Barish)**

**MOTION:** To accept the report of the Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting for November 20, 2025

**VI. UNFINISHED BUSINESS****A. MSBA Update****VII. NEW BUSINESS****A. SCALE Unit D- ratify MOA Evaluation Tool**

**MOTION:** To authorize the chair and the Superintendent to sign the SCALE Unit D ratify MOA Evaluation Tool

**B. AFSCME Cafeteria Employees Union Evaluation Side Letter**

**MOTION:** to Authorize the Chair and the Superintendent to sign the Evaluation Side Letter with the AFSCME Cafeteria Employees Union

**C. November Bill Rolls****D. CAG recommendations (review and vote)****E. Somerville Public Schools Policy Manual**

The following policy is being presented the evening for the **first** reading

- Policy Manual Section A, B, and C

**F. Field Trips: (Recommended action: Approval)**

January 4, 2026

25 students from 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> grade Chorus  
will travel to Dunkin Donuts Center in providence  
Rhode Island to perform at the Providence  
Bruin's game. Travel via bus, student cost \$25

**G. Acceptance of FY26 Grants Fund: (Recommended action: approval)**

State

Mass Clean Energy HVAC- Electrical & HVAC Training Program for CTE & SCALE -\$789,870.90  
Partnership for Reading Success Part2-District Wide for Professional Development- \$166,500.00  
MyCap- CTE for Professional Development -\$ 7,000.00

Federal

Adult Education & Family Literacy- Grant Increase for SCALE Dept.-\$ 36, 626.00

**H. DONATION: (Recommended action: approval)**

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Program
Equipment	Alice Grossman	Somerville, MA	\$2,520	Art Department

**VIII. ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS****IX. CONDOLENCE****X. ADJOURNMENT**

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

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

**Español - Para Interpretación**

Para ver la reunión regular del Comité Escolar el 01 de diciembre a las 7:00pm, en vivo desde su casa, visite el siguiente Enlace y seleccione GovTV:  
<https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/communications-and-community-engagement/somerville-city-tv>

Para poder escuchar en vivo la interpretación en simultaneo de esta reunión en español, portugués o criollo haitiano, debe registrarse y solicitar el servicio con 48 horas de anticipación e indicar su idioma de preferencia. Para registrarse haga clic en el enlace a continuación

[https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_u8AwY93fR6OhvC37Xib1zg](https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_u8AwY93fR6OhvC37Xib1zg)

ID de la reunion: 810 5048 0087

Contraseña: SPSSC25

**Português - Para Interpretacão**

Para assistir à Reunião Regular do Comitê Escolar 01 de Dezembro às 19h, ao vivo de casa, visite o seguinte link e seleccione GovTV:

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

Para ouvir ao vivo a interpretação simultânea da Reunião Regular em espanhol, português ou crioulo haitiano, é necessário fazer sua inscrição com 48 horas de antecedência e indicar o idioma de sua preferência. Para se inscrever, clique no link abaixo:

[https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_u8AwY93fR6OhvC37Xib1zg](https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_u8AwY93fR6OhvC37Xib1zg)

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**Kreyòl ayisyen - Pou entèpretasyon**

Pou gade reyinyon regilye Komite Lekòl la, 01 Desanm a 7:00PM an dirèk lakay ou, vizite lyen sa a epi chwazi GovTV: <https://www.somervillema.gov/departments/communications-and-community-engagement/somerville-city-tv>

Pou w tande entèpretasyon similtane Reyinyon Regilye a an panyòl, pòtigè oswa kreyòl ayisyen, ou dwe enskri 48 èdtan davans epi endike lanq ou prefere a. Pou enskri, klike sou lyen ki anba a:

[https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_u8AwY93fR6OhvC37Xib1zg](https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_u8AwY93fR6OhvC37Xib1zg)

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