

School Improvement Plan Update

Somerville High School

February 2026



Where are we at with our School Improvement Plan?

- Highlights
- Next Steps
- Additional Data

Somerville High School Mission and Vision

Somerville High School is a place where we value educating the whole student. **We aspire to help each student find and explore their passions.** We have high expectations and provide individualized support for all students. Our vision of the high school graduate is one where students have developed not only content knowledge, but life skills - what we call the Highlander Habits - that will help them succeed on whatever path they choose.

SHS's Guiding Principles

- Keep Equity at the Forefront
- Community and Connection
- Communication and Support
- Authentic and Equitable Learning Experiences and High Expectations for All
- Explore Passions

Theory of Action behind Improvement Plan

The main theory of action behind our School Improvement Plan is that our key performance metrics (failure rates, standardized test scores, drop out rate) will improve if we focus on improving attendance by...

- *providing more student-centered, engaging curriculum and instruction,*
- *refining our systems of support and intervention,*
- *strengthening our partnership with families and caregivers, and*
- *creating more student ownership in and out of the classroom.*

School Improvement Plan Goals - Summary

Academic Excellence: Goal 1 is around *engaging students in rigorous, grade-level and above, student-centered learning*; Goal 2 is around *improving our use of data and systems*

Equity and Access: *Removing barriers* to extracurriculars and higher level courses for demographics with historically less access

Wellness and Joy: Increasing student leadership and sense of belonging

Family and Community Engagement: Goal 1 is *providing every student with at least one post-secondary level course and one real world project before they graduate*; Goal 2 is *improving communication with families*, including providing opportunities for engagement

Highlight #1: Attendance is improving!

	SY22	SY23	SY24	SY25
Attendance Rate	88.0%	90.9%	90.4%	91.3%

SY24 Chronic Absenteeism Rate	SY25 Chronic Absenteeism Rate
31.9%	25.2%

Highlight #2: School Climate is improving!

	SY23	SY24	SY25
Fights that resulted in out of school suspension	22	18	11

	SY24	SY25	SY26
“Disruptive” Conduct Referrals as of Start of school-February 6	444	347	294

Highlight #3: Instruction is improving (Academic Excellence)

- Focus on “Tier 1 Moves” that help all students
- Each department focused on content-specific professional development around raising expectations, increasing rigor, and “shifting the heavy lifting” to the students
- New peer walkthroughs are collecting data - to what extent are students doing the heavy lifting and what type of thinking are we asking students to do?
 - December data: 78% of walkthroughs showed students actively working
 - 67% were doing thinking deeper than recall

Highlight #4: Significant increase in access to college credit and beyond the classroom learning

- SY26 40 students taking a course at Bunker Hill Community College, up from 18 in SY25
- Every student in a senior English class has an opportunity to earn college credit: 130 students earning BHCC credit, 70 students earning Syracuse credit, 67 students in AP English
- ECHO project pilot - 140 students applied!
- This year 52 students in co-op education - 35% of the seniors in CTE

Highlight #5: Increase in student leadership

- Schoolwide focus on “Letting Students Take the Lead”
- Added a 9th grade mentor program
- Strengthened Class Officer/PTSA partnership
- Added Captains’ Council sessions, Ambassador Opportunities
- Added opportunities for student voice in designing a Mascot

Highlight #6: Systems and Access to Data improving

- **Streamlined referral system** improved speed of connecting students to supports and accuracy of data collection
- Build out of **Open Architects** allowing us to look at individual student and aggregate data - grades, attendance, staff notes, conduct data, MCAS and ACCESS scores....

Highlight(?) #7: Key data staying relatively steady

- Composite MCAS scores down a little (impact of test not counting for graduation)
- Slight improvement in % of students meeting progress goals on ACCESS (28% this year)
- Failure rates not getting worse, and showing improvement in grade 10
- Demographics of students taking at least one AP test - staying the same, with some groups with historically less access rebounding to pre-Covid levels

An architectural rendering of a modern, multi-story building with a prominent glass and metal facade. The building features a large, open-air atrium with a high ceiling and a central column. The foreground shows a paved plaza with people walking, bicycles, and a small tree. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent green filter.

Next Steps: Areas of Need

Next Steps

- Continue building on the work we've been doing to: improve *instruction*, increase *rigor* and *engagement*, improve our systems and collection/use of *data*, provide *beyond the classroom learning experiences* to students, increasing *student leadership* and sense of belonging, and improving *communication with families*
- In addition, we have identified three priority areas of need: new measures of academic progress, removing barriers for LTELs, strengthen student voice

Next Steps Priority Area #1: Track Students' Academic Achievement (Academic Excellence)

- MCAS data flawed - increase in students leaving open responses blank, or self-reporting choosing all Cs, etc.
- Looking at using I-ready for math and ELA in 9th and 10th grade
- Developing systems to track progress on course-specific benchmark assessments (aligned with new Competency Determination guidelines)

Next Steps Priority Area #2: Improve Access to support and opportunity for Long Term English Learners (LTEL) (*Access and Equity*)

	SY22	SY23	SY24	SY25	SY26
# of MLs served outside ESL 1 - 4 (ELA + EL Elective)	58	58	65	131	100
LTELS (5+ years)	52	55	76	69	72
Total	110	113	141	200	172

Current system requires students who have not passed ACCESS to take an additional EL course, which prevents them from accessing other supports and opportunities. Next steps are to continue improving targeted language instruction across the curriculum, embed EL support via team teaching, dually licensed teachers etc, look into other models of EL support.

Next Steps Priority Area #3: Strengthen Student Voice (*Wellness and Joy*)

- Student voice missing in our data - classroom teachers do regular surveys but we need more regular information on student experience
- Regular student surveys with key questions about their experience to be included in Open Architects for information on individuals' experiences as well as aggregate data
- More systematic collection of data around student experience in academic classes, interventions, school climate, and extracurriculars



Additional Data

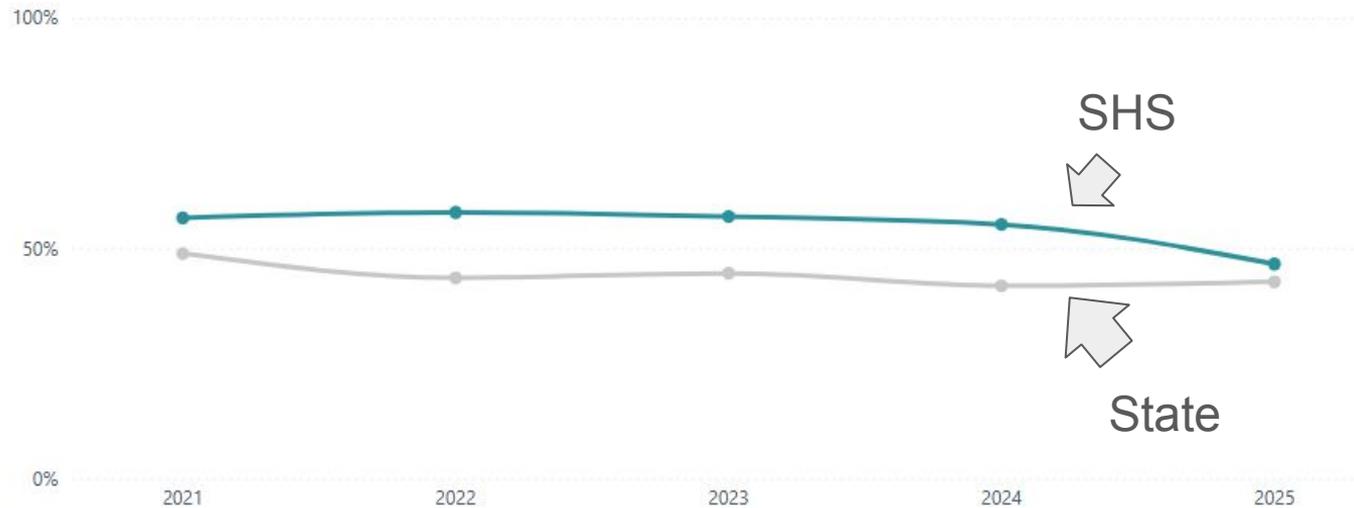
Failure Rates

*9th Grade Course Failures (Percents)				
	0	1-2	3-4	5+
SY22	80%	13%	5%	2%
SY23	83%	11%	2%	3%
SY24	81%	10%	3%	6%
SY25	80%	10%	4%	5%

10th Grade Course Failures (Percents)				
	0	1-2	3-4	5+
SY22	76%	15%	5%	4%
SY23	77%	14%	5%	4%
SY24	75%	16%	4%	4%
SY25	80%	12%	4%	4%

*This data includes 10-20 repeat 9th graders each year

Composite MCAS Data SY21-SY25



School Year	State	Somerville	# District Students
2021	49%	57%	251
2022	44%	58%	289
2023	45%	57%	341
2024	42%	55%	310
2025	43%	47%	322

AP Test Takers

Unique students who took at least one AP exam in 2021-2025 by Race - Percent of Total Test Takers

<i>Exam Year</i>	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Black or African American	Hispanic/Latino	White	White and Asian	White and Black or African American	Total
2021		9%	7%	29%	52%	2%	2%	100%
2022		10%	5%	28%	55%	1%	1%	100%
2023	0%	11%	6%	21%	58%	3%	1%	100%
2024	1%	11%	6%	25%	54%	3%	0%	100%
2025	1%	11%	6%	28%	50%	3%	1%	100%

AP Test Takers - Income and Gender

Unique students who took at least one AP exam in 2021-2025 by Economically Disadvantaged Category in Aspen - Percentage of Total Test Takers

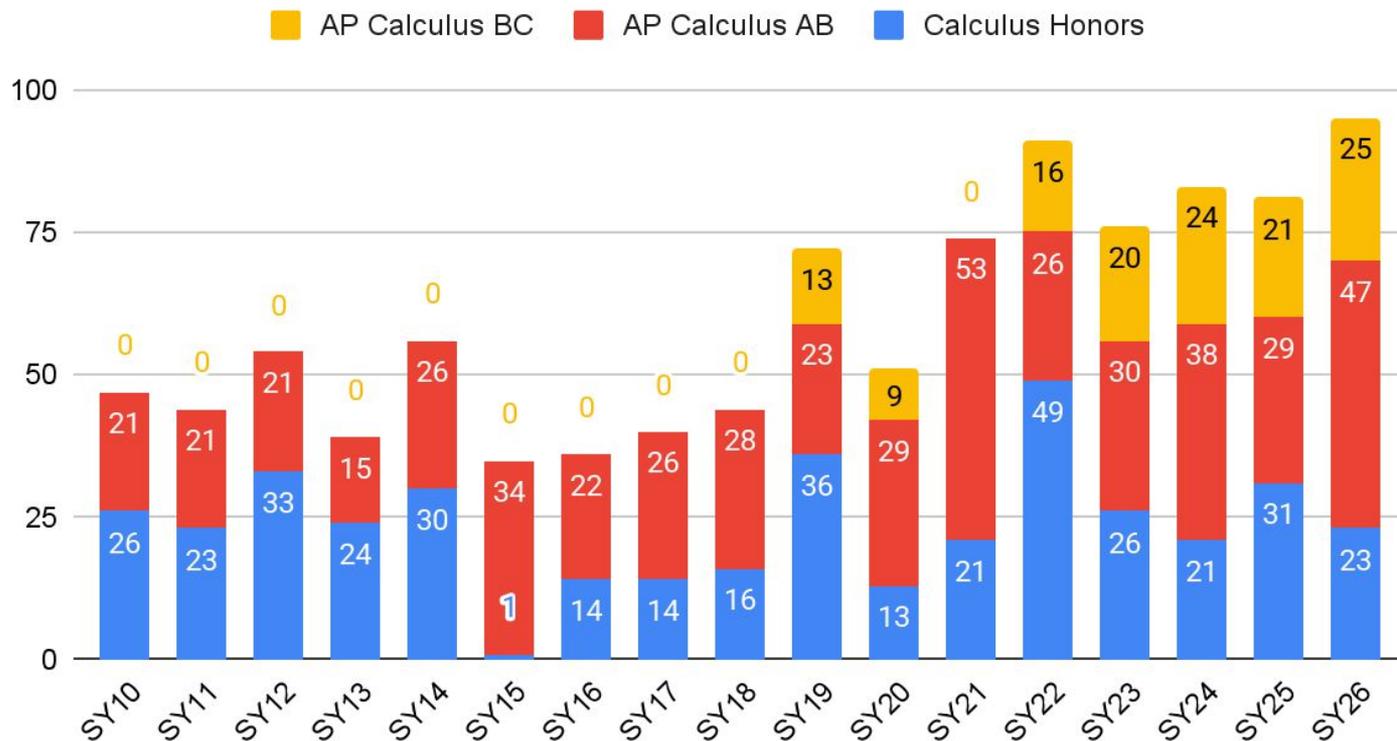
<i>Exam Year</i>	Not ED	ED	Total # Students
2021	70%	30%	261
2022	74%	26%	288
2023	78%	22%	315
2024	72%	28%	320
2025	71%	29%	308
Overall %	73%	27%	1492

Unique students who took at least one AP exam in 2021-2025 by gender in Aspen - Percent of Total Test Takers

<i>Exam Year</i>	Female	Male	Non-binary
2021	53%	45%	2%
2022	55%	43%	2%
2023	55%	42%	3%
2024	52%	45%	3%
2025	49%	49%	2%
Overall %	53%	45%	2%

Students taking Calculus

Number of Students Enrolled in Calculus SY10-SY26



ACCESS Testing

