

**CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

Monday, June 8, 2026 - Regular Meeting

7:00 p.m. – City Hall Chambers

Members present: President Davis, Member. Pitone, Member. Lippens, Member. Eldgridge, Member Green, Dr. Stellman, Mayor Wilson, Member Biton, and Chair Ackman. Members Absent:

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:02 with a moment of silence, followed by a salute to the flag of the United States of America. Chair **Ackman** asked Superintendent Carmona to call the roll, **the** results of which were as follows:

PRESENT – 9 – President Davis, Member. Pitone, Member. Lippens, Member. Eldgridge, Member Green, Dr. Stellman, Mayor Wilson, Member Biton, and Chair Ackman. ABSENT

II. AWARDS AND CITATIONS

A. Massachusetts Association of Schools Superintendent Award

- **Valedictorian- Tommy Vandewege**
- **Salutatorian- Lucas Oliver**

III. SCHOOL COMMITTEE STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

X-Block Initiatives

- Recent X-Block activities have focused on increasing student participation, school spirit, and community-building.
- Students were given the option to participate in outdoor sports or Maker Space activities.
- A freshman field day is planned for the last day of school, with options including games and art projects.
- The initiative was organized by Somerville Positive Forces to encourage students to participate in technology-free and cell phone-free activities.
- Activities included board games, Maker Space projects, keychain-making in the Fab Lab, and an outdoor soccer game.
- More than 30 students participated in the soccer game, creating opportunities for students from different groups to interact and build connections.

Honor Societies

- End-of-year honor society inductions are taking place, recognizing students for their academic and extracurricular accomplishments.
- Honor societies mentioned included National Art Honor Society, Tri-M Music Honor Society, Computer Science Honor Society, Math Honor Society, and National Honor Society.

Class Elections and Student Leadership

- Students are currently campaigning for class president, vice president, secretary, and treasurer.
- Students are also running for five student representative positions on the School Committee and three positions on the School Improvement Council.
- Strong student participation in this year's elections was noted.
- Class advisers are encouraging students to take on leadership roles and bring forward issues and ideas.
- Voting will take place during the school day on Wednesday, June 10.

- Marley Thrasher and Bhavika Kalia are also running for re-election as School Committee student representatives.

Climate Action Club Summit

- A Climate Action Club Summit will take place Wednesday, June 10, from 4:00–6:00 p.m. at Somerville High School.
- The event is open to parents, educators, community members, and students.
- Students from Climate Action Clubs at the five Somerville middle schools will showcase projects developed throughout the year.
- The summit will provide opportunities for students from different schools to collaborate, develop leadership skills, and share their work with the community.

School Resource Officer (SRO) Concerns

- Student representatives reported that several Somerville High School students have expressed concerns about the possibility of having an SRO at the high school.
- Some teachers have also expressed interest in receiving additional information about the proposal.
- The student representatives emphasized the importance of bringing forward the concerns and questions they have heard from students and staff.

Comments/ Questions

Member Pitone: thanked the student representatives for their participation and wished them well in their upcoming election campaigns. She expressed enthusiasm about the Climate Action Club and asked about student perspectives on the ECHO and Capstone projects. She noted that these programs are intended to provide students with real-world experiences beyond the traditional classroom, with the ECHO Project taking place outside of Somerville High School and the Capstone Project taking place within the high school. She invited the student representatives to share feedback on how students are responding to these opportunities, acknowledging that they may not have been prepared to address the question and could provide feedback at a future meeting.

Bhavika Kalia: shared that she and Marley have heard positive feedback about the ECHO Project. She noted that many students appreciated the opportunity to pursue projects connected to their interests, jobs, internships, and passions, including climate-related work. She acknowledged that some students were initially hesitant because they felt they had not received enough information when the program was first introduced. Bhavika suggested that future students could benefit from a clearer introduction to the program and expressed interest in seeing how the projects continue to evolve.

Marlee Thrasher: said it was helpful for younger students to attend the ECHO Project showcase and see examples of the projects firsthand. She noted the wide range of projects, which students had the freedom to choose based on their individual interests, including baking and climate initiatives. She said the experience will be valuable for students and shared that she and many of her fellow juniors are looking forward to participating next year.

Member Pitone thanked her for sharing.

Member Lippens asked the student representatives what inspired them to run for their positions and attend School Committee meetings, noting the time commitment involved. She also asked how the district could encourage more students to become involved in leadership opportunities.

Marlee Thrasher said she was interested in learning more about how the School Committee operates and viewed the position as a valuable experience and an opportunity to contribute to the community through leadership. She suggested

that making the process more accessible, including inviting more students to attend School Committee meetings, could help encourage greater student participation.

Bhavika Kalia shared that she was drawn to the student representative position because it provided a different and meaningful way to participate in leadership and serve as a voice for fellow students. She emphasized that student leaders should empower others to share their own perspectives rather than speak for them.

Bhavika also noted that some students may feel that leadership positions are limited to a particular group or that elections are based on popularity. She stressed the importance of ensuring that students from diverse backgrounds and with different experiences see themselves represented in leadership roles. She encouraged students to take the opportunity to run and share their unique perspectives, interests, and ideas.

Member Lippens: Thank you both.

Chair Dr. Ackman thanked the student representatives and commended their discussion as a strong example of civic engagement and democracy.

Member Green discussed opportunities to further engage student representatives in the work of the School Committee. She noted that state law does not allow student representatives to vote as full members or receive compensation, but suggested that they could potentially participate in subcommittees or working groups. She acknowledged that previous student representatives had expressed concerns about the additional time commitment but suggested that the Student Advisory Committee consider whether this would be of interest given the level of student engagement this year.

Marlee Thrasher expressed strong support for the idea, noting that student representatives sometimes attend meetings with information to share but have limited insight into the broader work of the School Committee. She said greater participation in committees or working groups would provide a valuable opportunity for student representatives to become more involved and could help increase student engagement with the School Committee overall.

Bhavika Kalia: expressed strong support for student representatives participating in subcommittees and other School Committee activities. She acknowledged that time commitment is an important consideration but suggested that students who seek these positions should be prepared to devote the necessary time and effort. She emphasized the importance of having committed student representatives and expressed hope that future representatives will have opportunities to take on additional roles and become more involved in the work of the School Committee.

Member Pitone asked when the School Climate and Safety presentation would appear on the agenda and whether the student representatives could stay to hear the discussion and participate in the conversation. She emphasized the value of having student perspectives included in discussions about school safety.

Chair Dr. Ackman stated that the presentation was scheduled after public comment and approval of the minutes, although a specific time was not available.

Member Pitone suggested moving the presentation earlier in the agenda, potentially as the first item under the Superintendent's Report, to allow the student representatives to remain and participate in the discussion.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

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

Mark Fickett: Hello, my name is Mark Fickett. I'm at 67 Church Street. I have a daughter in first grade at the Argenziano. I'm here to strongly oppose having the SRO in the high school. You've heard from a lot of people about data that shows that having police in schools harms feelings of belonging and safety among students. And that in cases where there are physical threats of violence, like a school shooting, SRO's very rarely step in to actually stop that. You've probably seen in the news that the New York Times recently ran an article about Texas schools having SRO. If you've looked at the beginning of that article, it has a series of videos that are pretty graphic, showing police arming students, but I also want to say we're not here just we're saying no to one specific thing, but you also have a big engaged community. And I personally would love to help in other ways if there's, it sounds like teachers like the superintendent are facing issues of safety in school and there are a lot of other options people have suggested and a lot of people including myself willing to step up and help out. Thanks.

Vika Zaffron: Hello, Vika Zaffron, 16 Prospect Hill Avenue. I'm here as a parent of a rising high schooler here to address the possible return of SRO to our schools.

I'll skip all the actual arguments to not let any police, let alone armed police, back into our schools as a constant presence. You're hearing all of that from many others, I'm sure. So, I'll focus on my astonishment that we're discussing this again now as if we just didn't traumatically go through this. From what I understand in published reporting, the initiative to bring SRO's back has to do with the recent hoax incident and other instances in which police our two high school principals felt the need to call in police. I have some thoughts on that for the SHS principal that I'll share with her directly. to you. I will say until you train the Somerville police to deescalate to the point where they don't need to carry weapons to deal with children or anybody else, hire more social workers. Hire more social workers. Keep weapons and force and the carceral state away from our children. I've read that Mr. Carmona indicated the possibility of having an officer in the school quote whether or not they're in uniform. This is terrifying in the age of ICE abductions and municipal complicity with them. As someone who works to bail out incarcerated folks locally, I can tell you that sanctuary city is a meaningless designation. Sheriffs all around us are proactively contacting ICE and facilitating abductions. To have an armed agent of the police in my child's school terrifies me. Start acting like a sanctuary city. Bring in more social workers. That same publication referred to Mr. Carmona bringing the SRO question to the school committee not for approval but for thought partnership. I encourage the committee to in fact direct him and his actions and ensure he complies with that direction. Thank you.

Kyle Serena: Hello. My name is Kyle Serena. I live at 174 Morrison A. I'm a Somerville community member and a proud member of the Party for Socialism and Liberation. I'm here tonight to oppose the return of SRO's or school resource officers to Somerville schools. Police in our schools do not make students safer. What exactly do cops in our schools accomplish that cannot be accomplished by education professionals. It cannot be the best use of our money. This comes up at a time when Somerville just laid off several city workers. This community has already fought this before and now the city is trying to roll back those gains. Let's move forward and be leaders by pursuing non-carceral models that support our students and leave this policy of over policing behind. Thank you.

Claire Valentin: Good evening. I'm Claire Valentin, 68 Hooker Avenue. I'm the parent of two children, one who is a third grader at West. I'm also an immigration attorney at the Children's Law Center of Massachusetts where we represent children on education, immigration, delinquency, and foster care matters. I'm here to urge this committee not to return SRO's to Somerville schools. I wish for my own children and all children in Somerville a safe and supportive learning environment, an environment that is known to be undermined by the presence of SRO's. In my role as an immigration attorney, I have personally seen the SRO's seemingly benign notes about typical teenage behavior introduced into evidence in immigration court and leveraged by the federal government to achieve the deportation of young asylum seekers. In my line of work, SRO's introduce into the school setting events occurring in the community, ignoring the presumption of innocence and ensuring that for some students, schools are no longer a neutral place of learning, but one where they're subject to heightened scrutiny and surveillance. These negative impacts are not born from bad intentions. They are born from bad design. SRO's trained as police officers naturally see the behavior through the lens of law enforcement training. And so, a school fight or an angry outburst becomes an assault with a dangerous weapon. An arrest leads to fingerprints which are uploaded to a database which triggers notification to ICE automatically. And so, we

have seen ICE show up at police stations to detain immigrant youth. Those ICE arrests are the natural outcome of building a system that links schools to law enforcement and then to ICE. As a parent and as someone who works with youth throughout the Commonwealth, I was immensely proud in 2023 when Somerville envisioned a different system, one that did not link schools to the criminal legal system when premised on the idea that kids are kids and kids make mistakes through that they need to learn from. I believe Somerville can build a system that does not bring down the entire weight of the criminal legal system on our students and one that allows them to make mistakes from which they can recover. I sincerely hope this committee will continue to lead the work of building that better system and not default to the SRO. Thank you.

Jessica Perez-Adams: Good evening. Just Perez Adams, Porter Street, mom of three kids in Somerville Public Schools. Recently at a school committee meeting, it was joked that district leaders and school committee members need to wear a lot of hats. I thought about it, and realized I should bring mine. I have my mom's hat. I have my PTA officer hat, obviously not explicitly labeled, my CPAC officer hat, my volunteer hat, my advocate hat, my FERPA records requestor hat, my care coordinator and educational team coordinator hat, and Tails. You guys might know Tails. He's the guy who fixes everything as everyone else runs to the end to win and everything's left in their wake. So, Tails is the one who just cleans everything up. You know, the truth is not many parents of students with disabilities wear all of these hats. And if parents are expected to wear all of these hats for free, parents deserve to know their rights. Parents have the right to inspect, review their children's educational records and have them corrected. They can request evaluations, IEP team meetings. They have the right to meaningful participation. Parents can file complaints with the problem resolution system. PRS reach out to the Somerville CPAC if you guys need a hand with that. Parents can ask teachers, service providers, and anyone who knows their child to participate meaningfully in IEP meetings for the duration of that meeting. and they can raise child concerns when disabilities are suspected. Parents should know that last year in AG AJT versus AIO area schools, the United States Supreme Court unanimously reminded school districts that students with disabilities do not receive lesser civil rights protections simply because they are in school. The court rejected the idea that schools be held to a different standard than other public institutions with discrimination. I'm going to take just another second. Tonight, we'll hear about the climate. We'll hear about school resource officers. But before we discuss public law enforcement in schools, we should discuss child finds. Before we discuss discipline, we should discuss evaluations. Before we discuss policing, we should discuss access to services. Thank you so much. Have a great night.

Alexandra Thorne: My name is Alexandra Thorne, 173 Hudson Street. I'm at resident board 5. My daughter is completing fifth grade at Winter Hill Community Innovation School. So, she'll be attending Somerville High School in just a few years. I'm testifying against putting police officers in Somerville schools. There's no evidence that police in schools make schools safer or improve outcomes for anyone. Instead, it breaks down trust between students and staff. It increases surveillance and criminalization of children. I don't want any of this for my daughter or her classmates. In addition to these obvious problems, as representative Hovind noted at the last meeting, we need to consider the relationship between Somerville police and the wider system of law enforcement. Somerville participates in the Boston Regional Intelligence Center, commonly called brick. Through brick, our police share data with other departments, including state police and both directly and through the state police, with federal agencies, including ICE. Information is entered into brick databases through opaque processes with no way for a person to know when or why they were added, nor recourse to remove themselves if they were added in error. Something as simple as wearing a bandana can result in someone being added to a gang database resulting in systemic profiling that will follow them through life. This magnifies the role of SRO in the school to prison pipeline and is unacceptable. Children need to know that school is a safe place to develop their identities without worrying that a fashion statement or minor social misstep will follow them through life. All of this is bad under normal circumstances and worse with brick data being shared with a federal administration working to criminalize immigrants and equate dissent with terrorism. Please keep the police out of our schools.

Jessica Wagota: Hi, my name is Jess Wagota, 26 Grand View, and I'll be reading a statement prepared by a friend. Hello, my name is Jamal Halawa. I have taught English and ESL at Somerville High School for the past 14 years. We students and educators at SHS understand that there's a proposal to bring an SRO into the school. Since the focus groups have been paused, I asked my students who are all either immigrants or first generation 14, 15, 16, and 17 year olds for

their opinions around this proposal. I copied down students' questions and statements verbatim. This is what they said. What's the point of bringing a cop in when we have Umima and Jet Edson and Jules and Mario, community engagement specialists? What if they only target the bad kids? What if you're around one of the bad kids and they think you're one of them? There are no bad kids, just young people trying things. If there's a cop around, you can't learn from your mistakes because they would just arrest you. The most suspicious people under suspicion will be the immigrants. What if the police officer is having a bad day that day? It feels intimidating. Invasion of privacy. Will the police be in the bathroom? Security comes in and it's already uncomfortable. Racism. What if the police officer is racist? The school is a place for education, not law enforcement. This might affect students' mental health. Kids might not want to come to school. Wouldn't they make a big deal out of something small? Like the problem could just be solved by a teacher, but the police will make it a bigger deal. If a kid does something minor, the police would charge him, but the kid doesn't know what he's doing and this would affect his future. In Philly, my old city, there's a police officer in schools and there's always kids getting handcuffed and dragged out of school. What if the cops are working with ICE? You never know. No police in schools because if you end up fighting someone, you could end up with a record. They will target people in school the way they target people outside of school. The police should not carry a gun in school. I would get arrested. This could bring so much injustice to school. As of yet, I have not heard a student express a positive response to the proposal to bring a police officer into the school. Thanks for your time, Jamal Halawa.

Laura Curiel: My name is Laura Curiel. I live at 31 Dartmouth St Apt 3. As an SPS parent, the message that I am getting from school and city leadership is that instead of making the tough decisions necessary to fully fund our special education and youth mental health services, you are instead putting forth reintroducing a method of punishment that fuels the school to prison pipeline with no data to back up its benefits. Many of our most vulnerable students, those with disabilities, students already dealing with the constant threat of ICE tearing apart their families and students of color will be the most negatively impacted by this rushed and ill thought out decision that our community has expressed they do not support. Let's use data to find the most effective ways to respond to our children's needs. You can be sure, reintroducing SROs is not the solution our children deserve.

Molly Frost Wiley: My name is Molly Frost Wiley, and I'm the parent of an incoming eighth grader and an incoming fourth grader. I first want to respond to comments that were made at the last school committee meeting suggesting that students and families most affected by the issue of school resource officers have not been engaged in these conversations. My child's dear friend had the police called on him in first grade. I'm not sure what would make anyone believe that an experience like that impacts only one family or one child. In my community and in my belief system, the children belong to all of us. When one child is harmed, the effects ripple through classrooms, friendships, families, and the broader community. We want to work with you to create schools that are more supportive, less surveillance, and the kinds of learning environments where students feel valued, respected, and safe. And when I say safe, I mean safe for all students, not just some students who look like who you think should be safe. We also want transparency and good faith efforts made. As a parent and a community organizer who spent years working on issues related to school policing, it was deeply troubling to learn that through informal channels the possibility of bringing school resource officers were considered being brought back to our schools. An extraordinary amount of time, effort, community engagement, and public participation went into working to remove police from our schools because the evidence showed the harms far outweighed the benefits. That's not simply a matter of opinion. The research and the data plus the community impact with dialogue showed that this was not what was right for our schools and our children. This is work that Somerville should be proud of. Many of the people who helped make this happen are in this room right now. We engaged with meaningful civic progress and we explored alternatives. Yet much of that work has gone unacknowledged and the recent discussions. Instead, we watch surveys, web pages, focus groups, engagement opportunities appear publicly, become private, disappear altogether. Information has become available to some people but not to others. I also want to urge everyone to not confuse that relationship building with accountability. Police officers in schools are not bound by the same confidentiality standards as counselors, social workers, or educators. They have no legal obligation to protect student privacy in the way that helping professionals do. And information shared with them can become part of law enforcement processes and follow children well beyond the classroom. If our goal is truly to support students, then we should invest in people and systems designed to help children thrive. Thank you.

Ellie Hajen: Hi there. My name is Ellie Hanjen. I live at 230 Broadway here in Somerville. I'm speaking today as a career-long youth development worker and a substitute teacher in Somerville public schools. I'm speaking in support of the Safe School Somerville group and against reinstitution of police in Somerville public schools. I'm also here to voice my support of local democratic and civic action which the city of Somerville seems to be disregarding. First, we need to face the facts about SRO's. According to Rand, SRO's can contribute to a greater number of disciplinary actions being taken against students, particularly students of color. And this is evidenced by a number of peer-reviewed research articles. Perhaps an SRO presence can create a perception of safety. But perception is not reality. Evidence suggests that SR presence does not reduce violence in schools. If there is a reality that summer Somerville public schools has a problem with violence or crime, then perceptions of safety will not address that reality. Only solutions that address the root causes of violence and crime will do that. Like youth mental health counselors and family liaison and community engagement specialists, as previous speakers have mentioned. Secondly, I am disappointed to hear that the city of Somerville is disregarding the voices of its community members. In 2023, the Somerville community made their voices heard when we agreed to remove SRO's from our schools. More transparency is needed from the city as to why this action to reinstate SRO is being taken and why the city is ignoring the will of the Somerville community. As an educator, I'm always talking to my students about the importance of civic action and engagement. Safe Schools Somerville did the democratic community work to make our schools safer by removing SRO's. And it seems that the city is uninterested in that democratic will of the Somerville community and the safety of their own students and educators. It is time for the city to fund the flourishing and well-being of our young people, not their criminalization. Thank you.

Maryanne McFerson: Good evening. My name is Maryanne McFerson. I live at 10 Grand View A and I'm the parent of SPS students finishing 8th and 11th grade. I'm one of the community members and parents who participated in the 2023 in the process that produced the 2023 recommendations on removing police from our schools. Those recommendations came from years of community voice, student surveys, and a very clear evidence base. Police in schools cause harm, disproportionately so, to students of color, students with disabilities, and immigrant students. And police do not prevent the harms that we fear most in schools. The school committee heard that, acted on it, and unanimously directed the superintendent accordingly. That commitment deserves to be honored, not quietly reversed. So, I'm asking two things tonight. First, please be transparent. engage families and students before taking action. SHS teaches our kids the Highlander habits, which include communication, collaboration, and culturally competent citizenship. If we're asking our youth to live those values, leadership must model them. My high schooler, who has those values memorized, hasn't once been asked her opinion on a change that directly affects her, if that's unacceptable. Second, I ask you to learn from what we've built before abandoning it. What's working with the CES program? Where might the 2023 recommendations need further development? I'm a program evaluation professional and I'd be glad to help structure that learning or support in any other way I can. We have guidance. We have a community voice. We have data. We have a framework that this body created and committed to. Now, I urge you to follow through. Somerville. We can do better and this is one way to start. Thank you.

Anna Fine Goldward: Good evening, Anna Fine Goldward one 95 Franklin Street. I have a child at East in the neighborhood school. First thank you to the school committee members who supported funding for six additional staff positions for next year. With whatever happens I see and truly appreciate your leadership. I want to talk about having a police officer at the high school. I oppose law enforcement in schools. It makes school less safe, not more safe. As noted earlier tonight, the law enforcement system is a penal system. It's our penal system. It is punitive. It's a system of force. It's not compatible with our schools. My opposition is not a statement about the character of any given officer. But any given officer has been trained to use the strategies and accomplish the objectives of a system that is the antithesis of the system we want our schools to be. That is not a resource for our schools. Please stop using the euphemism SRO. It is misleading and we need to be honest and clear in the language we use. Please do not ignore the two years' worth of in-depth quality work that's been invested in this issue already. If you are going to ignore it, say you're ignoring it. Take responsibility for that choice and explain to us why you think it's a good idea. Explain to us why in a tight budget year it makes sense to spend money for a police officer for our schools rather than more interventionists like the one that my son needed in order to learn how to read. I care about our high school administrators. I care about them getting the

support that they need. My understanding is they've told us what they need and that is for it not to be a different officer that shows up every time the police are called. I have a lot as a postconviction lawyer. I have a lot of questions about how often we're calling the police and why. However, the need for consistency that's been expressed, you should be able to meet that need without installing a full-time officer at the high school. And I echo the prior commenter and volunteering to help find solutions. Putting a full-time officer on site might be easier than finding a more nuanced solution, but with an issue this serious, making a decision based on administrative ease would be a criminal misuse of authority.

Oscar Strata: Oscar Strata, 38 Gorm Street. Good evening. I am a resident of the city here of Somerville and a member of the Somerville Municipal Employees Union. I'm making a statement today because I believe the city's decision to reinstate an SRO in our schools is not one that would benefit the safety of the students or the community. I grew up in Chelsea where SRO's have been around for a long time. So, I know what dealing with an officer at a school is like, and it is not good. Bringing police into our schools does more harm than good and only puts our students in more dire circumstances. For example, this past March in South Carolina, school resource officers were caught on tape assaulting a student. And there was another similar instance in California where it involved another school resource officer assaulting a student on the ground. A school resource officer is not a solution to the problem. They are a liability. As a resident and city employee, I see every day that the city of Somerville and its residents care about building a community that is safe for everyone and SRO's would make our schools less safe, especially for our students of color. I hope the city makes the right decision and listens to their constituents. Thank you.

Kevin Foster: Hey folks, uh Kevin Foster, 34 Platinum Street. At the April 27th meeting of this school committee, the SRO memo was introduced. When members of this committee asked questions about the need for a police officer, the district's answer was the principles were having issues that required uh SPD and that a direct link with SPD through an SRO would increase trust in community safety. But this indicates the actual role of police in society, the protection of private property in some people's lives. To attempt to add additional roles onto the police, such as having them be a pseudo member of the school as a blend of an admin, mentor, and social worker not only takes scarce money away from jobs of social workers and educators, but also attempts to rehabilitate the image of policing as a community-based venture instead of its true nature of the profession, which is violence work. The attempt at rehabilitation continues despite data from the SCLU that shows that schools with SRO's have 3 times as many arrests as schools without them. SRO's unlike educators or social workers are not beholden to the same ethics around trans around um keeping information confidential. This is also paired with the continued discrimination within the district around discipline. The latest student discipline report from 2024 to 2025 showed that 195 students were disciplined. 89% were high needs. 83% were low-income, 53% were Hispanic or Latino, 39% were students with disabilities. How would adding an SRO to this discipline pattern help create a safer environment for our most vulnerable students? To think that simply a nicer cop or different heads of SPD in the district will fundamentally change the character of the role of police in our society ignores the fundamental violence work. It ignores the 2019 copyright at Straight Pride, which SPD was a part of with no accountability to this day. It ignores justice for Flavia. It ignores the uprisings of 2020 after the murder of George Floyd across this country. It ignores the murder of site murder of Sedisel by CPD in January 2023 just down the street from here which has also no accountability to this day. It ignores the cracking down of pro Palestinian student encampments two years ago by police across this country. Ignores the ongoing ways that SPD is intertwined technologically and operationally with ICE abducting people despite the fact we claim to be a sanctuary city. Thank you.

Jesse Ray: My name is Jesse Ray. I live at 47 Church Street. I'm the parent of two children at the Argenziano School. I join you tonight again to speak out against bringing back a school resource officer into our district. As the old song goes, second verse, same as the first. So, tonight I have a please and a thank you. Please pursue the alternative path for school safety and coordination that was recommended several years ago after a thorough community process. And thank you in advance for listening to our voices and for committing to do your due diligence as the leadership of our schools. Thank you.

Erik Ledwig: My name is Erich Ludwig, I live on Berkeley St, in Ward 3

First, based on some comments in earlier meetings, I want to reassure the Superintendent and School Committee that our most affected students and families and staff HAVE spoken out about SROs and do NOT want one.

While I personally may not “fit” into that definition as a white guy with children in elementary & middle school - I am using my privilege to show up to remind ya’ll of what WE as a full community believe, and have articulated over and over in the past 7 years.

We had an inclusive and transparent process from 2019 - 2023 which actively solicited input & opinion from all corners. This process was open, public, and included professional surveys designed by Harvard researchers. Students surveyed themselves and shared these surveys with School Committee.

It seems especially important to highlight this past process because we continue to see material from the previous process being removed from district websites - in what might be seen as attempts to erase those voices, or might just be messy maintenance.

I find these deletions and erasures to be especially problematic (even if non-intentional) when put in concert with the efforts to reintroduce the SRO while not publicly discussing the historical process.

I know the Mayor wants a transparent government. The work of the administration on this issue over the last 2 months have represented the OPPOSITE of a transparent government.

Second, I want to be clear that in **fact** many other cities in MA do NOT have SROs.

Brookline (removed in 2021)

Worcester (has SLOs, not SROs - changed in 2021)

Northampton (removed in 2020)

Amherst-Pelham Regional Schools (removed in 2020)

Boston, Cambridge, Concord, Newton, & Watertown all also do NOT have SROs, though they do have other models of police interactions in schools.

Some of these places have different reasons to not have SROs, and may have done this because they HAD to - not because they wanted to. In Worcester, the police dept was investigated by the Federal government, and the consent decree removed SROs. Boston had an illegal police dept in their schools, so had to make radical changes in 2021 (more on this below).

AND yet - my teacher friends in Boston report to me that the unarmed staff they have are serving the students well. Students carrying drugs & weapons are largely diverted to in-school discipline and counseling - they are not arrested. We also know teachers there organized to keep these staff unarmed - even organizing against them carrying pepper spray.

If these places can manage without an SRO - then our community can certainly do it.

Third - I would like to discuss data around police:student interactions. When we have asked for that data in Somerville, it has not been forthcoming. And if patterns across the state are to be believed - that data may not be accurate and routinely and significantly undercounts student:police interactions.

In other cities in MA, we've seen things like Springfield reporting zero arrests in their self-reporting, and yet CjFF (Citizens for Juvenile Justice) & WBUR found 41 school based arrests.

Boston reported 4 arrests, the Globe found 114 arrests.

Worcester reported zero, CfJJ found at least 4.

Finally - we hear that our SHS / NWFC principals say that when they have to call police, it sucks to get a different cop every time.

The 2023 recommendations say that they get to call police the same officer - an SLO - when 3 specific things happen.

The principals are pissed because the 2023 recommendations have NOT been implemented! The 2023 Recommendations would give them that consistency they are asking for, and keep armed police out of our schools.

None of the things the HS Principals are asking for are things that cannot be solved with an offsite SLO rather than an SRO.

Parents & children do NOT want the schools facilitating police <-> child relationship building - this was very clear in 2023, and continues to be very clear today.

For more coverage on missing data, please see Sarah Betancourt, "[Districts Coming up Short on Reporting School-Based Arrests.](#)" Commonwealth Magazine (Sept. 18, 2020).

Milton Valencia & Meghan Irons, "[Amid Nationwide Movement to Reform Policing, Some Call on Boston to Remove Officers from Schools.](#)" Boston Globe (Jun. 16, 2020).

Dooling, Shannon. "[Mass. Has Been Tracking Impact Of Police In Schools For A Year, But Reporting Has Been Spotty.](#)" WBUR(Sept. 18, 2020).

And the Juvenile Justice Policy and Data Board (part of the Office of the Child Advocate) just said that such the poor reporting ""prevents meaningful analysis of juvenile justice system involvement at the city, town, and school district level and limits the Board's ability to tailor targeted policy and practice recommendations" about juvenile justice.

Juvenile Justice Policy and Data Board, *Massachusetts Juvenile Justice System 2025 Annual Report* 37, at <https://www.mass.gov/doc/jjpad-2025-annual-report/download>.

For more on police in Boston Public Schools -

"Police officers were phased out of BPS in 2021 in response to the state's Police Reform Law, passed in December 2020.

The law required all specialty law enforcement workers, including school police, to obtain roughly 350 additional training hours by July 2021 to keep their positions. Rather than retain a school police force, Superintendent Brenda Cassellius elected to replace officers with school safety specialists, who don't carry handcuffs or have the power to arrest students."

Thank you.

Derek Rice: My name is Derek Rice. I reside at 49 Craig Street. I use He/him pronouns. I'm here to give a comment in opposition to returning police into our schools. I've noticed in these discussions that the issue of trust comes up frequently. I'd like to direct my comments to the issue of rebuilding trust. Trust is very hard-earned and very easily lost. This community and school committee labored to develop a plan for when and how to involve the police in the school. That plan was ignored. Trust has been lost. It seems to me that the best way to regain trust would be to follow through on the school committee's recommendation from 2023 to develop a MOU for the police department that does not include SRO's and to do so quickly. I think that would mean a lot to very many people. Anything else will only reinforce the lost trust. Thank you.

Jen Lernno: Hi, my name is Jen Lernno. I live at 405 Washington Street. I am the parent of a rising eighth grader at the Argenziano School. I want to thank you all for taking the time to hear our public comments tonight. So many people have shared better than I possibly could. I want to just state that I am against having SRO's added to the high school and that I believe the February 2023 recommendation should be revisited and implemented in full. I work in the public process on a regular basis, 23 years in counting. I run public meetings. I have never in my 23 years of working have I've always asked the question, what would it take for me to attend a public meeting? Well, here I am for the first time showing up because this is so important and this is a critical point in Somerville's history to make sure that we follow through on a fully transparent public process and we hear what your residents are saying and you do not put an SRO in the high school. You go back to the fully transparent memo from February 2023 and you implement the plan. Thank you.

Julia Dahlin: Julia Dahlin. I'm a resident and a teacher at Next Wave Full Circle. I'm speaking today honestly in a state of a little bit of confusion. It seems we have started the process of creating a new relationship between schools and the police with no staff focus groups and no input and no visible attempt to implement the recommendations of the 2023 subcommittee. I agree that the current relationship is not working and that changes and more cooperation would help our students and staff, but I struggle to understand why it's been three years and one of the solutions we've tried has not been from the extensive community-based work of the 2023 subcommittee. If you did hold the focus groups this year as the as were announced, I think it's likely you'll find that many of us are open and enthusiastic about the creation of an SLO or school liaison officer. I even think that folks would be willing to revisit our over time depending on the success of the SLO program. But as of now, a lot of work with stakeholders at all levels seems like it's being ignored in a literal example of we tried nothing and we're all out of ideas. Please work with the city to at least pilot the 2023 recommendations before throwing them away and returning to the way things were, which I'll remind you was not working. Thanks very much.

Vincent Timmins: My name is Vincent Timmins, and I'm an educator at Somerville High School. I live at 558 Main Street in Medford. Um and uh I feel that placing people with guns in schools would not make the school safer for students who are already the most marginalized and vulnerable to police violence. Right, are immigrant students, students of color, and neuro divergent students in particular, and so if it's the safety of marginalized students that we care about, we should invest in resources that address the causes of violence in schools, as others have said, right, counseling staff, education, initiatives to build community, to understand the origins, nature, and ways to resolve conflict, and to build understanding and empathy between the students. Frankly, I think banning phones would do more to accomplish this than bringing in police with guns, and furthermore, why isn't the community invited to weigh in on this outside of this meeting? We received communications from school that said that staff would have a listening session on yesterday or rather today, June 8th. We even got a link to register, students would have time on Tuesday, that families would have time on Wednesday, June 10th. And I just copied that over from the memo, right? It's still there. Um, and so I'm wondering what happened, what happened to the MOU from 2023 cited by previous speakers. I have no choice but to think that the overwhelming opposition to this move voiced by the community tonight gives us a hint as to why these meetings were cancelled. The move to cancel these meetings shows a lack of interest or respect for student, family, and staff voices.

And these groups are the ones who will be the most impacted by the presence of this officer. And if tonight's comments are any indication, it sounds like we say no. So, thank you.

Melissa Duarte: Melissa Duarte, Florence Terrace, AIM parent. For months, I have been trying to get clarification on what is happening with the Winter Hill transition and why these changes are being made. My child's a fifth grade AIM student who has already endured more disruption than any student should have to COVID, remote learning, Winter Hill closing, moving to the Edgerly, summer programming ending because of building issues, summer school relocated, and now this. I have worked very hard to be patient and understanding through this process, but the translation is, I'm tired. My child is tired, and I'm done being told that everything is okay when it clearly isn't. I finally asked my son a question that I have been avoiding because I was trying to prevent him from having anxiety surrounding this. How would you feel if you were to move schools? His answer is not fair and I can already see the anxiety starting. We are told the children are doing well. No, they're surviving. There's a difference. The children are carrying years of instability and uncertainty. Their parents are too. We are not raising concerns because we enjoy conflict. We are raising concerns because our children are the ones living with the consequences. We are not trying to be difficult. But if being difficult is what it takes to keep my child safe, supported, and happy, then I will gladly be the most difficult person in the room. Thank you.

V. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- **April 6 2026 and May 4, 2026**

MOTION: there was a motion by Member Lippens, seconded by Member Eldridge to approved the April 6, 2026 and May 4, 2026 regular School Committee meeting minutes.

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

VI. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

Notes- Superintendent Update: School Committee Meeting- Monday, June 08, 2026

Superintendent Carmona: I want to thank the student representatives for their feedback and thoughtful ideas about how we can continue to improve the environment at the high school. I also appreciate the feedback we have received from the community, as it is an important part of our work to continue building and improving our practices.

I want to begin with a celebration. Last week, we visited Next Full Circle High School and Somerville High School, and it was very encouraging to see that most of our students had identified a pathway after graduation, whether through college, a career, military service, or technical training. It was exciting to see that so many students have a plan for life after high school. We are confident that, whatever path they choose, they will continue to learn, grow, and make meaningful contributions to their communities. I want to congratulate the Class of 2026, including our SCALE graduates later this week, and we look forward to celebrating their successes in the years ahead.

I also want to turn our attention to the middle grades experience. Over the past several months, we have taken a close look at how students in grades 6–8 learn, grow, and develop socially and emotionally. We have used data, research, and conversations with students and staff to better understand how our structures can support students during this important stage of development.

Before we begin the presentation, I believe it is important to hear directly from our students. Joining us tonight are Rowan Adam, Sabrina Karan, and Joy Tippens, eighth-grade students from the Healey School and members of the school's Student Equity Action Team. This year, they conducted participatory action research alongside Harvard graduate students to identify challenges, collect data, and develop recommendations for change. Their work was thoughtful and closely aligned with our district's middle grades review, so we invited them to share their findings with us this evening. I am pleased to turn the floor over to our middle school students.

A. District Report

- **Middle Grade Experience Working Group Update**

Rowan Adam introduced the Healey School eighth-grade Student Equity Action Team/CPAR team and explained that their research focused on how school policies affect respect, inclusivity, and student well-being throughout middle school. The team collected information through surveys, interviews, and observations. Regarding inclusivity, Rowan shared that many students felt somewhere between being included and excluded. While a smaller percentage of students reported feeling left out or lonely, the team emphasized that these experiences are important to address in creating healthy, supportive, and safe school communities. Student survey responses also highlighted concerns that teachers may not always understand students' experiences and may not recognize bullying when it occurs.

Sabrina reported that approximately half of Healey students surveyed said they felt respected at school, while others did not share that experience. She noted that students viewed respect as something that should be mutual between students and teachers. The team also found that friendships and students' sense of inclusion or exclusion strongly influenced how respected they felt at school. Students also identified increased access to mental health support as an important factor in feeling respected and supported.

Zoe reported that the team's final area of focus was student well-being. Survey results showed that nearly one-third of students reported feeling only somewhat comfortable at school. Students identified friendships as an important source of safety and support, while interactions with some students and teachers could have the opposite effect. The team also found that breaks, including recess and lunch, support student well-being. Students expressed concerns about school and safety policies and the fear of being judged.

Sabrina presented the team's recommendations for improving the school environment. These included providing teachers with additional training to better recognize and address bullying, encouraging stronger relationships between students and teachers outside of the classroom, and creating more opportunities for students to share their ideas and perspectives through discussions such as Socratic seminars. She emphasized the importance of ensuring that student voices are heard and considered in school policies.

Zoe shared her experience transitioning from a traditional middle school in Portland, Oregon, to Healey School. She noted that her previous school provided students with more freedom and responsibility, while she felt that Healey was more restrictive. She gave the example of students being required to walk in lines throughout the school and said that many middle school students would like to be treated with greater trust and given more age-appropriate responsibility.

Rowan Adam summarized the team's findings and recommendations. He said students should be given more choice and responsibility as they progress toward adulthood. He recommended regular teacher check-ins, stronger personal connections between students and teachers, and more opportunities for student-centered, Socratic discussions and community building. Rowan noted that while Healey School has a strong community, there are still areas where not all students feel they are able to thrive. He said the team's goal was to bring attention to the challenges middle school students experience and share their recommendations with the School Committee and community.

Comments/Questions

Chair Dr. Ackman thanked the students for their work, time, and commitment to their school community.

Member Green asked the students to provide specific examples of how the district could give middle school students more choice and responsibility, particularly to help ease the transition from eighth grade to high school.

Zoe suggested expanding students' choices in elective or enrichment classes. She explained that her previous middle school offered students dedicated time to choose classes based on their interests, which gave them something to look forward to each day. She suggested providing more choice within Healey's daily enrichment period so students could have greater ownership over their schedules and interests.

Bhavika Kali thanked the students for their presentation and expressed excitement about welcoming them to the high school next year. She highlighted their recommendation for more Socratic seminars and suggested expanding the use of restorative justice circles to the middle schools. She explained that these circles are already used at the high school to bring students together regularly to discuss various topics and build stronger relationships with peers and teachers.

Bhavika said she would like to see the practice expanded throughout the district and expressed interest in collaborating with the students on this initiative.

Member Biton: thanked the presenters and expressed appreciation for the thoughtful work that went into the middle grades review. She asked to what extent family and parent input had influenced the direction of the work, in addition to feedback from students and educators.

Amara Anosike noted that a parent participated as a member of the working group but acknowledged that there is more work to be done to gather broader feedback from families. She emphasized that the current work is only the beginning and that family input will be an important part of the process moving forward.

Member Pitone encouraged the team to consider a broad range of perspectives within families, noting that feedback from students at different grade levels may differ from the perspectives of parents and caregivers. She encouraged the team to seek diverse and comprehensive family input as the work continues.

Mayor Wilson thanked the presenters and student participants for their work and emphasized the importance of supporting middle school students as they develop greater independence and prepare for high school. She asked about differences among the district's K–8 schools and middle grades programs, including practices that have been successful at one school and could potentially be replicated elsewhere.

Principal Wahl explained that the team reviewed structures and programming across the district's K–8 schools, including schedules, special offerings, leadership opportunities, and X-Block implementation. She noted several differences among schools, including how Spanish is offered and how electives are structured. Winter Hill currently offers electives across its special-area courses, and Healey plans to explore a similar model for the upcoming school year.

Principal Wahl also highlighted differences in opportunities for student independence and leadership. She noted that at some schools, eighth-grade students are given more independence to move through the building, while at others students continue to line up and be escorted to class. She questioned whether these practices are developmentally appropriate for eighth-grade students and emphasized the need to consider ways to gradually increase student independence. She also noted that a middle school advising meeting would be held with parents and teachers to gather input on potential changes.

Mayor Wilson commended the presenters for making a meaningful effort to listen to students and incorporate their perspectives into decisions that directly affect them.

Dr. Stellman praised both the students and the presentation team, noting that the students were articulate and clearly wanted to be heard. She appreciated the team's approach of building on existing structures and infrastructure rather than creating entirely new systems, particularly when the district is seeking to make changes efficiently. She noted that this approach also helps the School Committee better understand the underlying structures that influence policy. Dr. Stellman then asked the presenters to identify their top two or three priorities from the many recommendations presented.

Jack Haverty: suggested that vertically aligning the curriculum across grade levels would be beneficial. Drawing on his experience working with students across schools, he noted that middle school teachers often express concerns about whether students will receive sufficient support when they transition to high school. He said that having a clearer understanding of the curriculum and expectations at the high school could help alleviate some of those concerns.

Superintendent Carmona emphasized that the discussion about the middle grades should be part of the district's larger conversation about the type of learner it wants to develop in Somerville. He noted that traditional structures and practices from the early grades can carry into middle school and may limit student independence. He emphasized the importance of considering both immediate priorities, such as increasing student independence, and the broader question of what the district wants its middle school experience and student outcomes to look like as part of the larger profile of a Somerville learner.

Member Green: congratulated Jack Haverty on his recently announced interim promotion. She then reflected on the students' concerns about the limited availability of electives in the middle grades, noting that the size of some K–8 schools can make it difficult to offer a wide range of options. She suggested that, as a longer-term consideration, the district may need to examine whether the K–8 model best serves middle-grade students.

Member Green also asked about the students' request for increased mental health supports. She acknowledged that the district has expanded mental health resources in the middle grades in recent years and asked what additional interventions could be considered in future budgets to further support students' mental health and well-being.

Chair Dr. Ackman noted that the district had recently increased funding for WOW services in the middle grades.

Principal Wahl said she wanted to give more thought to specific recommendations for expanding mental health supports. She welcomed the increased support for WOW and noted that school social workers and counselors have also been providing additional groups for girls and non-binary students.

Principal Wahl said that student feedback indicated a need for greater awareness and education about the mental health resources available to students. She emphasized the importance of helping students understand what supports are available in school, when and how to seek help, and how to advocate for their own needs. She noted that Healey and the district have strong mental health teams, which provide individual and group supports as well as classroom-based services. She suggested that increasing student awareness and education about these resources could be an important area of focus, while also emphasizing the continued need for adequate mental health funding.

Member Eldridge thanked the presenters for their work and expressed enthusiasm about the focus on executive functioning skills, noting their importance as students take on greater responsibilities from middle school through high school. She asked whether the district currently has staff dedicated to supporting students with executive functioning skills and what additional strategies or resources could be considered to strengthen this support.

Jack Haverty: I'm just the only special ed person up here. So, I figure I should answer that at least that the liaison and special educators at the high school and at next wave full circle and at the middle schools can provide those, see either be or SEEK executive functioning services as special educators. They can all do that and they do currently.

Member Eldridge clarified that she was asking whether the district currently has staff or specialists, beyond special education staff, who provide district-wide support for students' executive functioning skills.

Jack Haverty acknowledged that he had misunderstood the question and clarified his response.

Lindsay Weaver shared that at Winter Hill, advisory time is used to teach students executive functioning skills, including how to use an agenda, set goals, organize tasks, and follow through on responsibilities. She noted that educators developed a curriculum focused on these skills in collaboration with counselor educators and used existing resources to support the work. She also shared that counselor educators incorporate executive functioning skills into eighth-grade transition activities to help students prepare for course selection and the transition to ninth grade.

Member Eldridge asked whether the goal would be to expand the practices currently in place at Winter Hill and share them with other schools.

Lindsay Weaver noted that similar practices may already be taking place at other schools but did not want to speak for them.

Principal Wahl: noted that one of the recommendations was to pilot promising practices and build upon successful approaches already taking place within the district. She said the executive functioning work described by Lindsay Weaver at Winter Hill is a good example of an existing practice that could be shared and expanded by learning from one another.

Jaimie Ballerini: the second step curriculum that has been implemented throughout the whole K to 8 model does touch upon some executive functioning but I think one of the things that we talked about was an area of growth is that there needs to be consistency.

Member Lippens: thanked the presenters for the comprehensive presentation and expressed appreciation for the CPAR work. She said she was looking forward to the next steps, particularly the recommendation to expand mentorship opportunities. She noted that the high school student representatives have previously shared thoughtful ideas about improving the transition from middle school to ninth grade and suggested inviting them to share their perspectives.

Chair Dr. Ackman invited the student representatives to share any ideas they had regarding the transition to high school.

Member Lippens reiterated that the student representatives have offered valuable suggestions on this topic during previous School Committee meetings.

Bhavika Kali: shared that she and Marley have been discussing the transition from eighth to ninth grade and are interested in strengthening connections between the middle schools and high school. She noted that they both serve as peer mentors and lead restorative justice circles for freshmen, giving them direct experience supporting students during the transition.

Bhavika said they would like to see a more comprehensive and consistent transition program across the district, as they have observed differences among schools. She suggested expanding the current model by having high school peer mentors visit middle schools to support students with course selection and other questions about transitioning to high school. She noted that having older students who have recently experienced the transition could provide valuable guidance and reassurance, particularly for students who may not already know someone at the high school. She emphasized the importance of students supporting and mentoring one another.

Marlee Thrasher: supported Bhavika's suggestions and emphasized the importance of student involvement in the transition from middle school to high school. She said that having high school students visit middle schools would allow incoming students to become familiar with older students before arriving at the high school and provide a perspective that is different from that of educators. She suggested incorporating high school students into existing orientation and transition efforts to make the process less intimidating and help students feel more prepared. Marlee also connected this to the earlier discussion about giving middle school students greater independence and treating them in an age-appropriate manner.

Member Pitone thanked the presenters and acknowledged the challenges and opportunities associated with the district's K-8 model. She asked about the sustainability of the middle grades work, including whether the working group would continue, how leadership would be structured, and whether membership would rotate. She emphasized that the work should extend beyond the next year or two and asked what support the School Committee could provide to ensure its continued progress.

Amara Anosike: confirmed that the middle grades work will continue and is intended to be an ongoing process. She explained that educators, staff, and district leaders from across the district will be invited to participate. A member of the Central Office executive team is expected to facilitate the work, and stipends will be available to support educator participation.

Superintendent Carmona emphasized that developing the district's profile of a middle school learner will be a long-term process, similar to the multi-year work completed on the high school learner profile. He noted that while the work will take time, there are also immediate steps that can be taken to address students' needs as the broader conversation continues.

Member Pitone expressed appreciation that the work will continue as an ongoing process.

Principal Wahl: suggested that high school students, particularly peer mentors, be included in the ongoing middle grades work. She noted that involving high school students could provide valuable perspective and would be relatively easy to facilitate.

Member Green asked how the district could further elevate middle school and elementary students' voices in decision-making, similar to the role of high school student representatives. She referenced previous discussions about increasing student voice in policy development and encouraged the team to consider additional ways to engage younger students in decisions that affect them.

Lindsay Weaver noted that six of the district's nine schools currently have student councils and suggested creating a more consistent student council structure across the middle schools. She explained that student councils provide opportunities for students to have a voice and take ownership of school activities, such as dances and eighth-grade

moving-on ceremonies. She added that the district could continue developing these opportunities based on what students identify as important to them.

Member Green emphasized that while student councils provide valuable opportunities for students to develop project management skills through activities such as planning dances and events, the district should also create meaningful opportunities for students to influence how their schools operate.

Lindsay Weaver identified the Student Equity Action Team (SEAT) as another avenue for student voice. She noted that SEAT is currently offered at all but one school through a partnership with Harvard. Students select topics that are important to them and participate in the process of researching issues, collecting data, and developing recommendations. Examples included Healey students' research presented earlier and Winter Hill students' work on making school lunches more inclusive of different cultures. She also noted that previous SEAT work at Winter Hill contributed to the elimination of the school's dress code based on student and family data.

Member Green asked whether the SEAT work would be sustained beyond the current grant or program period.

Amara Anosike confirmed that student voice is specifically identified in the district's Strategic Plan and remains an ongoing priority and commitment for the district.

Member Eldridge: highlighted the presentation's emphasis on rigorous instruction paired with responsive intervention. She asked for more information about the district's current middle school intervention supports, noting the addition of reading specialists in recent years and previous discussions about expanding intervention services.

Principal Wahl explained that the district is focusing on strengthening X-Block, the middle school intervention period, by ensuring teachers have the resources and professional learning needed to make the most of that time and involve as many educators as possible. She also highlighted Winter Hill's implementation of Read 180, which includes training middle school educators to provide reading interventions to students who need additional support. Healey is exploring ways to expand similar training so more educators can provide targeted interventions. Principal Wahl emphasized that strong relationships between students and educators are especially important in middle school and that students benefit from receiving interventions from adults they already know and trust. She noted that this work is still in its early stages.

• **School Climate and Safety Presentation (Out-of-Order)**

Superintendent Carmona: **Superintendent Carmona** adjusted the agenda to continue the discussion on school climate and safety. He invited Principal Kersten and Principal DePasquale to provide additional context regarding the challenges currently facing the high school.

Superintendent Carmona acknowledged the ongoing concerns raised by the community and recognized that the issue is complex. He stated that maintaining the status quo would not adequately address the district's needs and emphasized the importance of responding thoughtfully to the concerns while also recognizing the history and context surrounding the issue. He clarified that any changes being considered are not intended to disregard or minimize past practices or the community's experiences. He then invited the principals to share the challenges they are seeing and discuss potential actions moving forward

Principal Kersten and Principal DePasquale shared their presentation

Comments/ Questions

Member Biton: thanked the team and emphasized the importance of approaching the school climate and safety discussion with mutual respect, recognizing the different experiences and concerns shared by the community and school staff. She asked whether the previously approved SLO model would meet the needs identified by the high school leadership and whether the distinction between an SRO and SLO was contributing to the ongoing discussion.

Principal Kersten: explained that she was involved in the development of the 2023 SLO model and believes some aspects of it remain useful. However, she noted that the model did not provide for an officer to be stationed at or immediately near the school, which she views as necessary for an effective emergency response. She also emphasized the importance of having an officer who is regularly present and able to build relationships with students, staff, and the school community outside of crisis situations. Principal Kersten said that, in her view, the district is seeking a form of community policing that combines a strong school presence, rapid response capability, and meaningful relationships with the school community.

Member Green: provided historical context on the district's previous SLO discussions and noted that the proposed model was based on community policing, with an officer assigned to the schools as part of their regular beat rather than stationed inside the building. She acknowledged the concerns raised by school leadership and the need for a stronger partnership with the Police Department while also recognizing concerns about police presence in schools, particularly for students of color.

Member Green suggested revisiting the previous SLO proposal with the new police leadership rather than returning to the traditional SRO model. She recommended developing an updated agreement, implementing it for a year, and evaluating whether further adjustments are needed.

Marley Thrasher: speaking as a Somerville High School student, acknowledged the school leadership's efforts to address potentially dangerous and unpredictable situations. She emphasized the importance of providing students with complete and accurate information before any decisions are made regarding a police presence at the high school.

Marley recommended meaningful student involvement in the process, including opportunities for students to meet and provide feedback on any designated officer. She also suggested revisiting the 2023 proposal and exploring alternatives that could provide the necessary training and authority to respond to emergencies while addressing students' concerns about police presence, particularly among students of color.

Member Pitone thanked the student representatives and acknowledged the difficulty of speaking publicly about such a sensitive issue. She noted that while the process appears to be slowing down, that timeline has not been clearly communicated to the community. She said clearer communication about the timeline would help address concerns and provide greater understanding of the process.

Principal Kersten explained that the district's original plan was to present the proposal to students and the community and hold listening sessions, but the process has been delayed by several factors. He emphasized that the need to address school safety remains urgent and said he would like to have an appropriate plan in place to prevent serious incidents. He expressed hope that listening sessions with students and the community could begin as soon as possible in the fall, although a specific timeline has not yet been established.

Superintendent Carmona: Could you just say something about the timeline, So even assuming a best case scenario we're not talking about next year in terms of any solution whether it's an SLO or whatever solution that we're talking about 27/28 school year. That doesn't mean that some of the questions and concerns around the MOU and that relationship is something that might require a lighter lift than having anything in place. So, it is our understanding that we're talking about a year from now in terms of any tangible decisions.

Dr. Stellman: acknowledged the complexity of the discussion and emphasized the importance of addressing legitimate school safety concerns while supporting educators and protecting students. She encouraged the School Committee to review the 2023 process, maintain transparency, and consider issues such as student records and confidentiality when exploring potential partnerships with the Police Department. She also stressed the importance of continuing to hear from students, families, and school leaders to identify appropriate safety supports

Jack Haverty: shared concerns about increasing student mental health crises, hospitalizations, and access to weapons. He described the trauma experienced by students and staff during a past swatting incident and noted that having an officer familiar with the school community might have helped manage the situation and protect students.

Mayor Wilson expressed support for revisiting the 2023 SLO proposal, stating that he believes it could address many of the school's safety concerns while avoiding some of the challenges associated with a traditional SRO model. He committed to working with the district to explore implementing the 2023 approach.

Member Eldridge: **Member Eldridge** requested a clearer overview of the safety and support recommendations developed in 2020 and 2023, including which recommendations were implemented, what the district has learned from them, and where investments were increased or reduced. She emphasized the importance of using available data to understand what has been effective and where adjustments may be needed, particularly to provide context for newer School Committee members and the community.

Superintendent Carmona: acknowledged the community's request for more information about the district's safety and support initiatives and said he would share available data. He noted that outcomes are difficult to attribute to any single program because multiple interventions work together, including BAM, WOW, and student engagement efforts. He emphasized that while overall incidents such as fights have declined over the past three years, there remain complex concerns involving a small number of students that may require additional supports beyond traditional social work interventions. He also stressed the importance of not creating the perception that Somerville High School is generally unsafe, while still addressing legitimate safety concerns.

Chair Dr. Ackman: stated that a second round of questions and comments would follow, noting that the process is still in its early stages and there were additional agenda items to address. She suggested concluding the discussion with the educators after the second round, unless the Committee wished to continue.

Member Pitone: thanked the team and administration and clarified that the recommendation came from the Superintendent's office, not the high school team. She expressed support for exploring a different approach to school safety and encouraged the administration to more seriously consider the 2023 SLO model and review approaches used in other districts, including Worcester and Boston.

She emphasized the importance of a broad, thoughtful, and inclusive process that considers community policing, student and family perspectives, and diverse viewpoints. She also encouraged the district to ensure that future focus groups and discussions remain open-ended and do not assume that an SRO is the only solution.

Member Green: acknowledged the significant burden placed on school administrators to address complex safety issues and expressed appreciation for their concerns and leadership. He noted that the 2023 proposal was modeled on Worcester's approach and encouraged the district to learn from Worcester's ongoing adjustments to the model.

He clarified that Boston's approach differs significantly from what he believes Somerville should pursue and emphasized the importance of developing a solution that reflects Somerville's community and values. He also acknowledged that the recent communication around the issue could have been clearer, noting that it created the perception that the district had already decided to bring back SROs. He encouraged a solutions-oriented process that identifies the problems that need to be addressed without prematurely committing to a specific solution.

Member Biton: thanked Mayor Wilson for his support of revisiting the 2023 proposal and for his commitment to providing the necessary resources. He emphasized that the district is beginning a new process and that no vote was being taken at this meeting. He encouraged district leadership to approach the issue through a risk-management lens, carefully weighing both the safety risks the district is seeking to address and the potential risks

associated with any proposed solution. He noted that community opinions on SROs have historically been strongly divided and encouraged the district to consider both the risks of action and inaction when developing a solution.

- **Out of School Time (OST) Presentation**

Superintendent Carmona: Right now we're going to have our director of Out of School Time, Rosanna Paribello, who's going to walk us through some of the opportunities that we have engaging in terms of improvements that we have in our program. We know that this is um the place where a lot of enrichment happens for students. And we know that as well not only academic growth but social emotional development and so we continue to increase the capacity of our programs and we continue to enhance the offerings that we have. So. With that I'm going to have the director out of school share some of the progress that we have made.

Rosanna Paribello, Director of Out of School time shared her presentation

Questions/Comments

Member Lippens: asked how the district's out-of-school programs can better support and provide access for students with more complex behavioral, social-emotional, or other needs. She acknowledged the challenges related to staffing and ongoing professional development and encouraged brainstorming ways the School Committee and Out-of-School Time team could work together to expand opportunities and support for families.

Director Paribello: shared that the Out-of-School Time team has been exploring strategies to better support students and plans to implement some of these ideas over the summer and into the next school year. She noted that while some approaches have worked well in the past, ongoing staff and administrative changes require continued professional development and adjustments to meet students' evolving needs.

Member Biton: Member Biton expressed appreciation for the work of the Out-of-School Time Department and requested additional information on the cost per student for each program. She noted that understanding the district's investment in each program compared with the number of students served would be helpful, particularly for programs not primarily funded through family fees.

Director Paribello: stated that the department has collected data and developed cost projections that can be shared with the Committee.

Chair Dr. Ackman asked about communication with prospective families compared with current families, noting that while current families have reported improvements, prospective families continue to experience challenges accessing information.

Director Paribello explained that the department is working to improve communication for both current and prospective families. She acknowledged that the work is ongoing and said the department is collaborating with the Communications Department to ensure that accurate and consistent information is available through the district website and other communication channels.

Member Pitone asked how the Somerville Hub fits into the district's Out-of-School Time communication strategy and whether the strategic planning process addresses the long-term sustainability of funding for these programs.

Director Paribello explained that the Somerville Hub continues to be used as a resource for families seeking after-school and summer programming. She noted that the district is working to ensure consistent and updated information across the Hub, district website, and other communication channels. She also confirmed that financial sustainability is part of the department's goals, including efforts to expand financial assistance while maintaining high-quality programming.

Member Eldridge highlighted that students with disabilities have the right to access after-school activities and asked who families should contact if their child needs additional support to participate.

Director Paribello explained that families should work directly with the Out-of-School Time Department. For full-time after-school programs, the department has a Student Services Director and clinical consultant who work with families and school-day staff to determine appropriate supports and placement. She noted that the department reviews IEPs and 504 plans and works to include students whenever possible, while recognizing that after-school programs have fewer resources than the school day.

Member Green: I saw the comments about improving accessibility for immigrant families, and I appreciate the work that has been done to improve these services. Are we seeing increased participation from immigrant families in out-of-school-time activities? Do we have quantitative data showing whether more immigrant families are accessing these services?

Director Paribello: Yes, we can put that data together.

Member Green: Fantastic. Thank you.

Chair Dr. Ackman: Thanked Director Parabiello for her time

- **Homeless and Basic Needs Presentation**

Superintendent Carmona: Our next presentation will focus on the work being done around homelessness and basic needs. Many of you know Regina and the important work she has been leading in this area for many years. I'll turn it over to Regina to walk us through the work, and then we'll move on to the conclusion of this portion of the agenda.

Regina Bertholdo, Director of Basic Needs and Housing Support Services and Jenn Ochoa, Social Worker of the Office of Basic Needs and Housing Support Services both share their presentation

Director Bertholdo announced at the end of her presentation that she will be retiring at the end of this the school

Comments/Questions

Member Pitone: Thank you both for being here. I'm incredibly proud of this work, particularly the focus not only on supporting families experiencing homelessness, but also on preventing homelessness. This is another great example of what can happen when talented staff are given the support and flexibility to develop innovative programs. I want to applaud the team and recognize the school committees and superintendents who have continued to invest in our most vulnerable students and families. I'm especially grateful to Regina and Jen for their dedication and partnership. We are very fortunate to have this program in our community.

Member Lippens: I feel incredibly proud to live in a city where this work is being done. As someone who values data, I'm reminded that behind every number are real people and families whose lives have been changed. I'm deeply grateful for all the work that has been done, and I look forward to continuing this partnership and supporting you in any way I can. Thank you.

Member Green: I'll save most of my more personal remarks for Thursday, but I want to recognize the incredible work of this office. As Member Pitone noted, Regina was given the opportunity and flexibility to shape this program, with the trust that she would figure out what was needed. That approach has resulted in a program that is now a model for others. What makes this work so unique is the commitment to supporting students with significant needs rather than pushing those needs aside because they require additional resources. The results speak for themselves,

including students experiencing housing instability graduating at a 92% rate. This is Somerville at its finest. We should be incredibly proud of this work and committed to continuing it. I want to thank Regina and recognize the work Ms. Ochoa will carry forward.

Chair Dr. Ackman: I'll make a quick comment as well. Regina, while I can't be as eloquent as Member Green, you are truly my North Star. I often think of you when we are making complex decisions. You are a role model, and we are deeply grateful for your commitment and dedication. In the spirit of this presentation, one of my personal goals is to continue reducing the number of students in foster placements outside of the city. I will continue advocating for more foster families because I know how difficult, meaningful, and rewarding that work can be. Thank you.

Superintendent Carmona: Regina, I've seen the numbers, and the 92% graduation rate for our seniors is real. We also hear stories from educators who remember how challenging things were for some of these students when they were younger, only to learn later about the trauma and experiences they had faced, including foster care. Behind the scenes, Regina has carried these students and their stories for years, often without recognition. She has touched countless lives and helped create real change over nearly three decades. Thank you for your perseverance, resilience, and the many gifts you have given to our district. We are deeply grateful for your contributions.

Regina Bertholdo: Thank you so much. I don't have a prepared speech, but the work has always been incredibly rewarding. I've been fortunate to work in a community that recognizes the importance of this work and has trusted me to identify needs and find ways to break down barriers so that students can fully access their education.

Throughout my years with Somerville Public Schools, my focus has always been on ensuring that vulnerable and underserved students and families have the same opportunities as their peers whether through housing, interpretation and translation, enrollment, or providing early childhood education in different languages.

As someone who was once a new immigrant navigating these systems, I've always thought about what might make the process easier for someone else and how we can help families succeed.

The work is meaningful because we see the impact: families remaining housed in Somerville, students staying connected to their schools and peers, and families continuing to contribute to and feel a sense of belonging in our community. Thank you.

B. Personnel Report

- **May 2026**

Dr. Camona announced the following retirees and thanked them for their years of services

VII. REPORTS FROM SUBCOMMITTEES

C. *School Committee Meeting for the Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee:*

April 2, 2026 (Member Pitone)

Motion: There was a motion by Member Pitone seconded by Member Lippens , *to accept the report of the Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee for April 2, 2026*

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

D. *School Committee Meeting for the Rules Management Subcommittee meeting: May 18, 2026 (Member Biton)*

Motion: There was a motion by Member Pitone seconded by Member Lippens, *to accept the report of the Rules Management Subcommittee meeting of May 18, 2026*

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

VIII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

C. MSBA

Dr. Carmona announced that MSBA will be issuing a report outlining the corrections needed for the second round. The report is expected before the end of August, but has not yet been received.

Chair Ackman announced that the School Committee will likely need to hold two meetings in August, most likely in mid-August. She asked members who are unable to attend to notify her.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. SEU- Unit A- Accretion(recommended action: approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Member Pitone seconded by Member Lippes to authorize the chair to sign the 25-26 Accretion - OTs and PTs MOA

Member Green: Just a reminder that these matters were discussed in executive session. We are not voting on them at this time.

Chair Dr. Ackman: Yes, thank you. The SEU Unit A accretion and the SEU letters were discussed in detail during executive session and were approved to move forward. We are now voting on them in public session, along with Item F.

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

B. SEU- Unit A - Appendix B & D (recommended action: approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Member Pitone seconded by Member Green, to authorize the chair to sign the 2025-2026 - Appendix B & D MOA

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

C. SEU Unit A- Side Letter (Recommended action: approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Member Pitone seconded by Member Green ,to authorize the chair to sign the SEU Unit A side letter 2025-2026 - SEL Specialist Stipend MOA

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

D. Non-Union COLA Increase (Recommended action: approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Member Pitone seconded by Member Green, to authorize the superintendent to apply a 3.00% increase over base salary for the non-union personnel and to authorize the superintendent to review and adjust salaries for select positions to address compression, equity, and market issues within the FY27 proposed budget.

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

Council President Davis recuse himself

X. REPORTS FROM SUBCOMMITTEES- *Out of Order*

C. School Committee Meeting for the A. the Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole: May 20, 2026 (Member Green) Out of order

Motion: There was a motion by Member Pitone seconded by Member Green, to accept the report of the the Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole of May 20, 2026

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

XI. NEW BUSINESS-*out of order*

E. FY27 Budget (Recommended action: approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Member Biton, seconded by Member Green, to approved the FY27 budget for the amount of *One hundred twenty-three million one hundred one thousand three hundred eighty-four dollars* \$123,101,384.00

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

Member Biton: I'd like to provide some context around this number. It reflects an increase of six full-time equivalent educator positions, reflecting the School Committee's consensus to invest further in the successful special education co-teaching pilot, as well as additional math and reading interventionists for students with the highest needs. This is higher than the number proposed by the Mayor in his budget presentation to the City Council, which is currently under consideration. I'm proud of the budget we have put forward. It addresses the needs we've discussed over the past several months and represents a pragmatic, measured increase in support based on student needs and data presented by the district. I'm proud to support this budget.

Member Green: I want to echo my colleague's comments. Throughout this budget process, I've emphasized that there is nowhere the city can invest that will have a greater impact on Somerville's most vulnerable residents than our schools. We've spent months listening to families about the need for greater investment in special education. As I mentioned earlier, this is the first year in a decade that we have not increased investments in student mental health positions. While we all recognize there is more work to do, we also understand that in a tight budget year, difficult choices have to be made. The community's priorities were clear: greater investment in special education and student supports. I know some members wish we could have done more, but I believe this budget strikes a reasonable balance between advocating for our students and families and recognizing the financial realities we face. I believe this budget reflects our values and, hopefully, the values of Somerville.

Member Lippens: I'm very proud of the budget we've put forward. When you invest in schools and students, you invest in the entire community. I look forward to reviewing the data more closely and continuing to make investments that move us in the right direction. Thank you.

Member Pitone: I want to acknowledge that I supported this budget, and I also want to recognize the Mayor's strong partnership with the district in putting forward a strong budget. I don't want this to be viewed only negatively, because we started from a strong position. Personally, I'm disappointed that we couldn't continue expanding the inclusion pilot. Co-teaching is something many districts are implementing successfully, and I'm thrilled that we are continuing to move forward with it, even if I wish we could have invested more. Thank you to the Mayor, Superintendent, district team, and CFO for all of your work.

Member Eldridge: I want to echo my colleagues. I'm very proud of this budget and of this body. The additional interventionists and expansion of the co-teaching pilot directly support our students who are struggling the most, particularly historically marginalized students. By providing support early, we can close intervention gaps and improve outcomes. Addressing these challenges early can significantly change a student's trajectory, and I'm proud to support a budget that prioritizes our students with the greatest needs.

Member Biton: I appreciate the opportunity to revisit this. I want to share with the public and my colleagues that I consulted with our district counsel regarding the budget provisions in our new charter. This is our first budget

cycle navigating the charter's specific requirements, and I want to ensure we are on firmer ground next year. Section 64 requires the School Committee to submit its adopted school budget to the Mayor on or about May 15, so it can be included in the Mayor's proposed operating budget. We missed that deadline by approximately three weeks. I believe we have a strong budget that supports our students, and I think many of us believe the budget presented by the Mayor should have reflected the budget before us tonight.

As Chair of Rules, in coordination with the Chair of Finance, Member Green, I would like to develop a policy to ensure we submit the School Committee's budget on time and follow the process outlined in our new charter. I'm committed to that effort and hope my colleagues will support it.

Mayor Wilson: I appreciate Member Biton raising the timing issue. I want to clarify that although the budget had not yet been formally approved by the School Committee, we had sufficient information from the vote and subcommittee process to include it in the city's budget submission. ID 260975 essentially reflected the same budget approved by the School Committee tonight.

Member Biton: Just quickly, and this is something we can continue to discuss, but the proposed operating budget does not include the School Committee's adopted budget. I believe the language is clear, and I hope we can work together next year to find a path forward.

Mayor Wilson: On that point, I agree that the language is clear. It states that the School Committee's budget is to be included, along with other requirements, such as an explanation of how the budget differs substantially from previous years. However, "included" does not mean that the operating budget must consist entirely of the School Committee's adopted budget.

Member Green: I want to thank the Mayor for his transparency and for clarifying the legal interpretation of the charter. I also appreciate the acknowledgment that, although we had not yet taken the formal vote, it has long been the practice of this body for the final Committee of the Whole vote to be considered binding. We took that vote on May 20, which I believe is close enough to the spirit of the May 15 deadline. I'm happy to work with the Rules Committee to strengthen our process for future years, including working with our City Council colleagues to consider the 1985 override provision, which gives the City Council the final decision in the event of a budget dispute.

Member Pitone: Are members required to vote the same way they voted during the Finance Committee process, or are they free to vote differently?

Chair Dr. Ackman: No. No one is required to vote the same way they voted previously. I just wanted to make sure everyone was aware.

Member Pitone: I just wanted to make sure all members knew.

Chair Dr. Ackman: Thank you. No one is required to vote the way they voted previously. With that, that is the motion. Superintendent, will you call the roll?

Superintendent Carmona: President Davis — excused. Member Pitone — yes. Member Lippens — yes. Member Eldridge — yes. Member Green — yes. Dr. Stellman — yes. Mayor Wilson — no. Member Biton — yes. Dr. Ackman — yes.

The motion passes with seven votes in favor.

Chair Dr. Ackman: All right, thank you. And President Davis, if you're still here, you're welcome to return.

F. Somerville Public Schools Policy Manual

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

- **File- JICJ-A Interim District Cell Phone Policy**

Member Biton: There is a memo in your email regarding the interim district cell phone policy. It's 11:07, so I won't say much more other than to encourage everyone to review the memo. In short, this policy will help us prepare for an upcoming state requirement and ensure we are in the best position to comply without having to call an emergency session. It also provides the support our educators are seeking across all grade levels.

Member Green: Two quick questions. First, does the interim policy simply codify the current practices in our schools? It doesn't make any changes, correct?

Member Biton: Correct.

Member Green: Okay. Second, I don't need an answer right now, but I will need one both before we vote and, more importantly, when we develop a permanent policy. These policies include exceptions for IEPs, 504 plans, and other individual needs. How do we implement those exceptions while protecting students' privacy and confidentiality?

Chair Dr. Ackman: All right. So, what I hear is that you are asking the district to address that question before the second reading. Is that correct?

Member Green: Yes.

Chair Dr. Ackman: Okay. I'll note that question for follow-up.

- **SHS Student Handbook**

Member Biton: We reviewed the proposed changes to the Student Handbook in the subcommittee and approved them to move forward. We felt the changes were appropriate. They are also included in the meeting packet, along with a description of the proposed changes, so I encourage everyone to review them.

Chair Dr. Ackman: Just to clarify, are these both policies? I want to make sure everyone understands that we are having the first reading tonight, with the second reading scheduled for our meeting next week. The goal is to have the policies approved next week so that Principal Kersten and her staff have the summer to prepare for implementation in the fall. I just want to make sure the committee is clear on that timeline and expectations.

G. Acceptance of FY26 Grants Funds: (recommended action: approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Member Lippens, seconded by Member Pitone, To accept all federal entitlement and continuation grants and all state continuation grants awarded to the Somerville Public Schools listed below:

Private

BU Consortium- SHS- Think, Pair, Share Enhancing Engagement & learning through Students Collaboration in Physics - \$1,782.20

BU Consortium-Raising Awareness: Dyslexia Identification & Intervention- \$1, 990.10

BU Consortium- WHCIS- Affirming Identities & Expanding Futures- \$2,000.00

BU Consortium- WSNS/Music- World Percussion in the Classroom-\$2,000.00

Springboard Tutoring Partnership- District Wide- DESE Tutoring Partnership - \$18,480.00

Dorothy Lally Estate- SHS – Estate Trust - \$32,400.00
Philanthropic Support- District Wide- Professional Development -\$13,700.00

H. Donation: (Recommended action: approval)

MOTION: There was a motion by Member Lippens, seconded by Member Pitone, acceptance, with gratitude, of the following donations recommended by the Superintendent.

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Program
Monetary	Joanne Cassell	Somerville, MA	\$9,552.31	CTE- SHS Automotive

The motion was approved unanimously via roll call vote.

Member Green: I just want to thank the administration for including why we had such a specific number in the grant because it just makes it easier not saves a question. So more of that please. Thank you.

XII. UPCOMING MEETING TOPICS

- **June**
 - **Admin Retirements, SPS Strategic Plan Update**

Member Pitone: Regarding long-range planning, a draft proposal was emailed to all members. I've already received some feedback and am working with the Superintendent's Office to ensure this process complements, rather than duplicates, the district's strategic planning process. The proposal was developed with input from Member Eldridge and the Chair. I encourage everyone to review the email and document and share your feedback at our next meeting. We hope to begin this work over the summer so that we can establish our goals in the fall.

Chair Dr. Ackman: To be clear, the work will not be completed in time to launch in the fall, but we will begin more intensive work in the fall.

Member Stelman: I'll defer to Dr. Carmona regarding the draft of the superintendent's goals.

Superintendent Carmona: For the 15th.

Chair Dr. Ackman: Yes. We'll note that there will be a discussion of goals at the next meeting, along with a draft.

Member Pitone: So, I didn't know where we were on the superintendent goal. So, this kind of puts us in a weird position. So, which is probably part of why your email came out that it did. So, clearly there was a communication channel that wasn't going. And it's not a judgment because my communication channel wasn't going either. So, I had delayed the long-range planning because of all the things we already had on our agenda and wanting to let the new members kind of get their feet wet and be ready to do the long-range planning. So, we really should the three of us figure out with the chair figure out the timing of how this all can loop together because obviously the strategic plan, the long range goals and the superintendent goals should all be a marriage of some sort and I know we can get there.

Member Green: Just a parliamentary thing. Can we make sure that email from Miss Pitone enters the packet so the public can access it?

Chair Dr. Ackman: Yes, I can confirm that.

Superintendent Carmona: Just briefly, I know there are questions about the long-range planning process. I want to note that the strategic plan is also a form of long-range planning, with significant overlap between the two. As you move forward with this work, I encourage you to consider the strategic plan as part of the three- to five-year planning process.

XIII.COMMUNITY OR CALENDAR ITEMS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Mayor Wilson: Thank you, Chair. As mentioned earlier this evening, I'm really looking forward to the SCALE graduation on Wednesday, June 10, at 6:00 p.m. in the auditorium. It is truly a joyous event.

XIV. CONDOLENCES

The Somerville School Committee extends its deepest condolences to the families of

No Condolences.

XV. ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 11:16 p.m.

Related documents:

Agenda

[Middle Grade Experience Working Group Update](#)

[Out of School Time \(OST\) Presentation](#)

[Homeless and Basic Needs Presentation](#)

[School Climate and Safety Presentation](#)

Submitted by: G. Silveira/E Garcia

Attach Documents Starting on the next page

CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
SCHOOL COMMITTEE
City Council Chambers – City Hall
REGULAR MEETING – June 8, 2026 – 7:00 P.M.

AMENDED AGENDA 6-8-26

Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2026, this meeting of the School Committee will be conducted via hybrid participation.

We will post an audio recording, audio-video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of these proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting on the City of Somerville website and local cable access government channels.

To **watch this Regular School Committee meeting live from home** please visit the following link:
somervillema.gov/GovTVLive

Somerville Public Schools provides **simultaneous interpretation** of this meeting in Spanish, Portuguese, or Haitian Creole. **You must register 48 hours in advance and indicate your preferred language:**
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

Meeting ID: 810 5048 0087
Password: SPSSC25

ORDER OF BUSINESS

June 8, 2026

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- April 27, 2026
- May 4, 2026

V. REPORT OF SUPERINTENDENT

A. District Report

- Middle Grade Experience Working Group Update
- Out of School Time (OST) Presentation
- Homeless and Basic Needs Presentation
- School Climate and Safety Presentation

B. Personnel Report

- May Report

VI. REPORTS FROM SUBCOMMITTEES

A. School Committee Meeting for the Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee: April 2, 2026 (Member Pitone)

Motion: to accept the report of the Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee of April 2, 2026

B. School Committee Meeting for the Rules Management Subcommittee meeting: May 18, 2026 (Member Biton)

Motion: to accept the report of the Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting for May 18, 2026

C. School Committee Meeting for the Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole: May 20, 2026 (Member Green)

Motion: to accept the report for the Finance and Facilities Meeting of the Whole of May 20, 2026

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A. MSBA

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

A. SEU-Unit A – Accretion (recommended action: approval)

Motion: to authorize the chair to sign the 25-26 Accretion - OTs and PTs MOA

B. SEU- Unit A – Appendix B & D (recommended action: approval)

MOTION: to authorize the chair to sign the 2025-2026 - Appendix B & D MOA

C. SEU Unit A- Side Letter (recommended action: approval)

MOTION: to authorize the chair to sign the SEU Unit A side letter 2025-2026 - SEL Specialist Stipend MOA

D. Director of Special Education Contract Agreement (recommended action: approval)

MOTION: to authorize the chair and the Superintendent to sign the contract agreement with the Director of Special Education.

E. FY27 Budget (recommended action: approval)

Motion: to approved the FY27 budget for the amount of *One hundred twenty-three million one hundred one thousand three hundred eighty-four dollars \$123,101,384.00*

F. Non- Union COLA Increase (recommended action: approval)

Motion: to authorize the superintendent to apply a 3.00% increase over base salary for the non-union personnel and to authorize the superintendent to review and adjust salaries for select positions to address compression, equity, and market issues within the FY27 proposed budget.

G. Somerville Public Schools Policy Manual

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

- File- JICJ-A Interim District Cell Phone Policy
- SHS Student Handbook

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

H. Acceptance of FY26 Grants Funds: (recommended action: approval)

MOTION: To accept all federal entitlement and continuation grants and all state continuation grants awarded to the Somerville Public Schools listed below:

Private

BU Consortium- SHS- Think, Pair, Share Enhancing Engagement & learning through Students Collaboration in Physics - \$1,782.20

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Philanthropic Support- District Wide- Professional Development -\$13,700.00

I. Donation: (Recommended action: approval)

The Superintendent recommends acceptance, with gratitude, of the following

Donation	Donor	City, State	Value	Program
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IX. UPCOMING MEETING TOPICS**• June**

- Admin Retirements, SPS Strategic Plan Update

X. COMMUNITY OR CALENDAR ITEMS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**XI. CONDOLENCE****XII. ADJOURNMENT**

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

Español - Para Interpretación

Para **ver** la reunión regular del Comité Escolar el 8 de junio 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 simultáneo 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

ID de la reunion: 810 5048 0087

Contraseña: SP5SC25

Português - Para Interpretação

Para **assistir** à Reunião Regular do Comitê Escolar 18 de Junho 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

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

ORDER OF BUSINESS

June 8, 2026

Meeting ID: 810 5048 0087

Password: SPSSC25

Kreyòl ayisyen - Pou entèpretasyon

Pou **gade** reyinyon regilye Komite Lekòl la, 18 Jen 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 lang ou prefere a. Pou enskri, klike sou lyen ki anba a:

https://k12somerville.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_u8Awy93fR6OhvC37Xib1zg

Meeting ID: 810 5048 0087

Password: SPSSC25

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.