SOMERVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

167 Holland Street • Somerville, MA 02144
T 617-629-5200 • F 617-629-5661
www.somerville.k12.ma.us

MEMORANDUM

To: Somerville School Committee
From: Danielle Barry, Facilities, Safety and Transportation Coordinator
Date: October 7, 2026
Re: Annual School Building Walkthroughs – September 2026

Annual School Building Walkthroughs

Over the month of September, members of the City's Department of Public Works (DPW), Capital Projects, and Inspectional Services joined me and school leadership in conducting our annual school building walkthroughs across the district.

These walkthroughs provide an opportunity for school and City staff to work collaboratively to review the condition and operation of each school facility, identify areas requiring attention, and establish follow-up plans for concerns identified. The walkthroughs also allow us to address routine maintenance needs while distinguishing those items that may require longer-term planning, capital investment, or coordination across City departments.

During each walkthrough, we reviewed a variety of areas, including:

- General building and grounds conditions
- Custodial and routine maintenance needs
- Safety and security concerns
- Accessibility
- HVAC and indoor environmental conditions
- Plumbing and electrical concerns
- Exterior conditions, including sidewalks, entrances, and parking areas
- Capital project needs and ongoing projects
- Other facility-specific concerns identified by school leadership

Key Findings and Areas for Follow-Up

Several facility needs were identified during this year's walkthroughs that will require continued coordination and follow-up:

Playground Surfaces: The rubber playground surfaces at AFA, Capuano, and ESCS are in need of replacement. These surfaces will need to be evaluated and prioritized based on condition, safety, and available funding.

Rodent Activity: While we are seeing an overall decline in reported rodent activity across the district, we are continuing to work closely with DPW and its pest-control vendor to heighten monitoring and mitigation efforts at ESCS and WSNS.

Bicycle Racks: Additional bicycle racks have been identified as a requested improvement at Brown and a current need at Somerville High School. We will continue to work with DPW and the appropriate City departments to assess locations and installation needs.

Bleachers and Gymnasium Flooring: In coordination with DPW, we will be addressing the bleachers at ESCS, including necessary repairs, as well as the replacement of the bleachers at AFA. The AFA gymnasium floor has also been identified as needing refinishing.

Roofing and HVAC: In conjunction with Capital Projects, we have identified several larger capital needs that will require longer-term planning. The roofs at both Kennedy and Healey are anticipated to require replacement within the next five years. In addition, upgraded HVAC systems have been identified as a need at WSNS and Healey.

Electrical Infrastructure: The need for an electrical transformer at WH @ Edgerly has been identified and requested for inclusion in the City's five-year Capital Improvement Plan. This project will require longer-term capital planning and coordination with Capital Projects and the appropriate City departments.

Completed and Nearing Completion

We are also happy to report several positive updates resulting from ongoing facilities work.

At the Healey School, the **reconfiguration of Classroom 208 is in its final stages** and is anticipated to be ready for student learning by the end of October. This work will provide the school with an additional instructional space to better support its programming needs.

Additionally, the **acoustic upgrades in the Healey cafetorium have begun and will also be completed by the end of the month**. These improvements will help enhance the learning and event environment within this shared-use space.

At AFA, the **boiler replacement project, which included three new boilers, is nearing completion**. Two of the three boilers have been fully tested and are currently online and ready to support the building through the colder months ahead. The third boiler is pending final programming and inspection, which we anticipate will be completed in early November. This project represents an important investment in the reliability of the building’s heating system and the comfort of students and staff.

At WSNS, the **roof replacement project is well underway and is anticipated to be completed in mid November**. We recognize that the timing of this project was not ideal and that construction during the school year can create challenges for students, staff, and school operations. Capital Projects has been extremely responsive and flexible in shifting gears and adjusting the work plan to minimize disruption to student learning and the day-to-day operations of the school. This project represents an important investment in the long-term condition and protection of the WSNS building.

Ongoing Daily Maintenance

During our annual walkthroughs it was recognized that DPW continues to provide essential daily maintenance and operational support across all school buildings. This includes responding to 311 work orders and addressing routine needs such as plumbing, electrical, HVAC and heating systems, doors and locks, lighting, carpentry, painting, flooring, windows, grounds maintenance, snow and ice removal, and water leaks.

This ongoing partnership is critical to keeping our schools safe, functional, and welcoming for students and staff while allowing larger facility needs to be identified and addressed through longer-term planning.

Continued Collaboration

The annual walkthroughs continue to be an important component of our facilities management process. They provide a structured opportunity to bring the people who use, maintain, and oversee our school buildings together to identify concerns early, establish clear ownership, and develop a plan for addressing both immediate needs and longer-term facility investments.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to **Ralph Henry, Director of Capital Projects; Mike Bowler, Facilities Supervisor with DPW; Gabe Rodriguez, Environmental Health Coordinator with ISD; and all of our School Principals** for their continued partnership, collaboration, and commitment to maintaining safe, functional, and supportive learning environments for our students and staff. Their time and expertise throughout the annual walkthrough process are greatly appreciated.

Danielle Barry
Facilities, Safety and Transportation Coordinator
Somerville Public Schools

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