



# Somerville Public Schools

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## SOMERVILLE HIGH SCHOOL TO LAUNCH ENROOT PARTNERSHIP IN FALL OF 2016

*Up to 30 SHS students will benefit from Enroot program with targeted programming that extends the day by 50%*

Somerville, MA – A new partnership with Enroot (formerly Cambridge Community Services' City Links program) starting in the fall of 2016 will offer a group of Somerville High School English Language Learner (ELL) students a chance to build leadership skills and gain critical life skills through participation in a program designed to “empower immigrant youth to achieve academic, career and personal success through out-of-school experiences.” An estimated 20-30 SHS students will comprise the first cohort of Somerville High students to participate in the multi-year program, which offers students 1-to-1 mentoring and academic tutoring, internship opportunities, and weekly leadership seminars. With much of the programming offered during out-of-school-time hours, Enroot extends the learning day by as much as 50%, helping students strengthen their academic skills, gain critical leadership skills, and receive individual support and case management.

“Enroot has earned an impressive record of success working with students in Cambridge using a relational model of support that places the student and his/her unique needs front and center,” said Superintendent of Schools Mary Skipper. “Our students will benefit greatly from this new partnership and from Enroot’s demonstrated commitment to helping students gain the leadership skills that will help them achieve and succeed throughout their lives. We look forward to launching this partnership at Somerville High, and expanding on the great work that Enroot is already doing in Cambridge.”

"Our organization could not be more thrilled to partner with a visionary educator like Superintendent Skipper and the truly dedicated teachers and administrators of Somerville Public Schools," stated Ben Clark, Executive Director of Enroot. "We feel privileged to join such an inspired and talented team of educators to extend the learning day for immigrant students at Somerville High and look forward to years of close collaboration."

Enroot is organized around the following four core values that serve as the foundation for the program:

- **Students First** – ensuring that the dreams and needs of students are at the forefront of every action and decision
- **Sense of Possibility** – a belief that every student has unique strengths, the ability to overcome obstacles, and the potential to achieve lifelong success
- **Authentic Relationships** – a recognition that deep connections with every student, volunteer, and partner support learning and growth
- **Constant Improvement** – an understanding that continuous evaluation of the program’s impact ensures the best outcome for students

Building upon the academic foundation laid during the school day, during the academic year of the program Enroot helps students strengthen skills by matching them 1-to-1 with an adult mentor and by providing 1-to-1 tutoring support based on the students’ needs. Enroot draws on a strong volunteer base, many of whom live in Somerville, to provide mentorship and tutoring support. Students develop real-world professional skills in weekly leadership workshops covering topics ranging from civic engagement to interviewing skills,



and in an internship with a local agency, organization, or business. Students also participate in community service projects, college prep workshops, and career exploration panels.

The program will formally kick off in September of 2016. Enroot and a team of SHS and Somerville Public Schools staff members have been setting up program elements this summer, including establishing a diverse base of internship partnerships and recruiting adult volunteers. Student recruitment for the program will take place in September. Eligible students go through a formal application process that includes a written essay, in-person interview, and two references.

The Enroot program has enjoyed nearly a quarter of a century of programmatic success serving students at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School- Cambridge's only public high school. That success includes an alumni college graduation rate nearly double that of their non-Enroot peers (41% to 21%). Data collected from program alumni suggests Enroot is having its intended impact, helping students strengthen academic, leadership, and 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills that will prepare them for success beyond high school. Along with the data points noted below, program participants also report having gained improved language skills, concrete professional skills, a greater understanding of how to navigate and thrive in their community, and academic excellence.

- 41% of Enroot alumni have completed their Bachelor's degree, compared to 21% of peers
- 28% of Enroot alumni are currently enrolled in a four-year degree program
- 10% more Enroot alumni are enrolled in a two-year program
- 96% of Enroot students report increased professional skills
- 100% of worksite supervisors would rehire their Enroot intern
- 88% of Enroot students report increases in self-confidence
- 87% of Enroot students report discovering unique skills and talents

“Over the last 24 years, we have developed a program that meaningfully impacts students arriving from all over the world. Up until now, the program has only been available to Cambridge students,” commented Jonathan Steiman, Chair of Enroot's Board of Directors. “Today marks our expansion. We are excited and honored to partner with Somerville Public Schools and the Somerville community. Together, we'll be able to meet the needs of this important student population.”

“We are thrilled to be partnering with Enroot starting in the fall, and to be able to offer students who have had to face more challenges than most, with the individualized support that can help them achieve success throughout their lifetimes,” added Somerville High School Headmaster, John Oteri. “Every student has the right to dream big and the potential to fulfill their dreams given the opportunity and the tools. Enroot provides that opportunity. We're thankful and excited that they have decided to expand to Somerville, and very much look forward to working with them.”

Cambridge Community Services and the City Links program have a proud history of success serving Cambridge residents. As part of the expansion into Somerville, they have re-branded as Enroot. To learn more, visit [www.enrooteducation.org/news/brandnewday](http://www.enrooteducation.org/news/brandnewday).

Enroot and the Somerville Public Schools would like to thank the visionary Cummings Foundation for their multi-year support of Enroot's expansion to Somerville High School through the \$100K for 100 grant program. Enroot is one of 100 local nonprofits to receive grants of \$100,000 each through Cummings Foundation's \$100K for 100 program.

Learn more about Enroot at [www.enrooteducation.org](http://www.enrooteducation.org).

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