

# CONNECTIONS

A Newsletter from the Somerville Public Schools – September 6, 2019

## News & Notes

### Kicking Off the New School Year with Renovated Turf Fields at ESCS and Capuano



On Tuesday morning, August 27, the renovated turf field at East Somerville Community School (ESCS) formally reopened, just in time for the first day of school. As 6th grade ESCS teacher Julie Allen, who was on-hand for the ribbon-cutting ceremony said, “I’m so happy for my students to be able to use the new soccer field. So many of them love soccer and it’s the best part of recess or afterschool for them.”

City and school officials, representatives who oversaw the project, and neighborhood and community members young and old attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony. But having the gates open in preparation for the ceremony was invitation enough for more than a dozen kids to begin a pickup soccer game while the adults talked along the crisply painted sidelines. The celebration at ESCS was the second of two field

renovation projects completed this summer. The field alongside the Capuano Early Childhood Center was reopened and held its ribbon-cutting ceremony on Friday, August 9.

The improvements at both ESCS and Capuano were needed to address drainage problems, natural wear-and-tear from regular use, and safety concerns. Of note is the use of sand and plant-based infill material on the fields. One important improvement that couldn’t be featured under the sunny blue skies at ESCS was the installation of athletic field LED lighting. This new field lighting will allow play to continue into the evenings even as natural light fades as the fall progresses. As ESCS Principal Obed Morales explains, “The new turf will provide the entire community a durable surface to utilize for many years. For the school, this surface promotes a healthy and safe space for students to use during the academic day. We are fortunate to have this facility available for our students.”

### Chad Mazza takes on New Role in District as Interim Assistant Superintendent

Chad Mazza, a familiar face in our district after seven years as Principal of the Winter Hill Community Innovation School, is taking on a new role as the Interim Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment. He stepped into his new position in the district this summer. Mr. Mazza is a champion of inclusive educational and student-centered learning practices that ensure we are meeting the needs of every student and engaging students in mapping their own journeys to success. Learn more in [this recent press release](#) announcing his new role.





## Somerville Public Schools Welcomes District's first Director for Equity and Excellence

Somerville Public Schools has added a new member to the district team, the Director for Equity and Excellence. We welcomed Dr. Jessica Boston Davis to the role this summer. Dr. Boston Davis works closely with school leaders and instructional leadership teams to identify strengths and areas of growth through a lens of equity, and to jointly develop improvement strategies that will best serve each school community.

Read more about Dr. Boston Davis in our recent blog post: <http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/blog/meet-dr-jessica-boston-davis>.

## Backpack Donations Help Students Start off the School Year Ready to Learn

Many Somerville students from across the district started off the school year with brand new backpacks filled with school supplies, thanks to the generous support of Cradles to Crayons, the Somerville Kiwanis Club, and The Row Hotel at Assembly Row. Combined, the donations are providing support to more than two thousand students in our district. Thanks to our many partners in education for helping SPS students start the school year off with the materials and support they need to succeed.

## Summer Programs Keep Students Active and Learning

More than 1,500 students participated in a variety of programs this summer. Thanks to the commitment of numerous community partners, students had many program options available to support their summer learning. Among the programs offered this summer was SPELL (Summer Program for English Language Learners). K-12 students in the SPELL program had opportunities to learn real-world vocabulary and build English language skills before the start of the school year. K-8 students enhanced their learning through visits from Cataldo Ambulance and the Somerville Fire Department. High school students used conversation and games to develop vocabulary.

Summer programming helps students keep their minds and bodies active and ready for a successful school year. Among the many partners that ensure Somerville students have a wide range of summer program options to keep them engaged in their learning are the Somerville Education Foundation and the Somerville Chamber of Commerce, who last year raised more than \$28,000 to provide scholarships and expand access to high-quality summer programs in the city. Stay tuned for more information about SEF and their annual campaign to support Out-of-School-Time learning.



# What's Happening

## 2019-2020 School Year Calendar

Wondering what the rest of the school year schedule will be? Download the 2019-2020 SPS School Year Calendar from [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/district-calendar](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/district-calendar) for the complete school-year calendar and a list of important dates throughout the school year. The first half day Wednesday for students in PK-8 will be September 18. **Please note that an earlier version of the PK-8 lunch menu posted on our Food & Nutrition Services website incorrectly listed September 11<sup>th</sup> as a PK-8 half-day. That menu has been corrected and re-uploaded. **The first PK-8 half day Wednesday of the year is September 18 as noted on our 2019-2020 School Year Calendar.****

## District-wide Instrument Rental and Loaner Program

Somerville Public Schools offers FREE instrument instruction in applicable grades. Visit the [Instrument Instruction page](#) to learn about the programs. Students participating in the free instrument instruction who need to rent an instrument may do so during our annual rental event. If students miss this opportunity, they may also rent on-line. Students whose families meet income requirements may rent an instrument owned by the school district at reduced cost. Rent an Instrument (for families who do not qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch) on **September 10, 2019 from 3-8pm** at Somerville High School. Borrow an Instrument (for families who qualify for Free or Reduced Lunch) on **September 12, 2019 from 3-8pm** at Somerville High School.

## Mayor's Parks Pass Challenge

The parks pass is now year round! The Mayor's Parks Pass Challenge encourages Somerville residents of all ages to visit our city's beautiful parks. From active playgrounds to grassy lawns perfect for quiet reading, Somerville has more than 60 parks to experience—and nearly 100% of Somerville residents live within walking distance of one of those parks. You can pick up your parks pass at the Shape Up Somerville office in the City Hall Annex, download and print it from the Parks Challenge website ([www.somervillema.gov/parkspass](http://www.somervillema.gov/parkspass)), or ask your local library to print you a copy. Every time you visit a Somerville park, write the park name on the back of your pass. Be sure to include your name and contact information at the top! Once your pass is filled out completely, submit it to Shape Up Somerville via email ([sus@somervillema.gov](mailto:sus@somervillema.gov)), mail, or in-person drop-off. Your pass will be entered into a quarterly raffle for a chance to win Somerville memorabilia.

## Upcoming School & District Events:

Visit [www.somerville.k12.ma.us](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us) and click on the "calendar" link at the top of the page for a list of upcoming activities in our schools and in our District this month.

- Tuesday, September 10, 3:00-8:00pm: District-wide Instrument Rental Night** at the Somerville High School Auditorium and Cafeteria (81 Highland Ave.)
- Tuesday, September 10, 5:00-10:00pm: Healey Flatbread Fundraiser** at Flatbread Pizza in Davis Square. Kick off the new school year with a fun night out at Flatbread in Davis Square. From 5:00pm to close a portion of all pizza sales (including take-out) will go to benefit the Healey School. There will also be a raffle and bake sale.
- Wednesday, September 11, 5:30-8:00pm: Next Wave/Full Circle Back to School Night** (8 Bonair St.)
- Thursday, September 12, 3:00-8:00pm: District-wide Instrument Loaner Night** at the Somerville High School Auditorium and Cafeteria (81 Highland Ave.)
- Thursday, September 12, 6:00-8:30pm: Somerville High School Back-to-School Night** (81 Highland Ave.)
- Friday, September 13, 8:15-9:00am: WSNS PTA-Sponsored Parent/Guardian Coffee** at the West Somerville Neighborhood School Room 222 (177 Powder House Blvd.)

## Upcoming School Committee Meetings:

Find the complete School Committee schedule, agendas and meeting minutes (as approved) online at [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/school-committee](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/school-committee).

- Monday, September 9, 7:00-8:30pm: Regular School Committee Meeting** at the Central Office Main Conference Room (8 Bonair St., 2<sup>nd</sup> floor)

**Thursday, September 19, 5:30-6:30pm: Educational Programs and Instruction Subcommittee Meeting** at the Central Office Main Conference Room (8 Bonair St., 2<sup>nd</sup> floor)

**Monday, September 23, 6:00-7:00pm: Finance and Facilities Subcommittee Meeting** at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Conference Room – City Hall (93 Highland Ave.)

**Monday, September 23, 6:00-7:00pm: Rules Management Subcommittee Meeting** at the City Council Chambers – City Hall (93 Highland Ave.)

**Monday, September 23, 7:00-8:30pm: Regular School Committee Meeting** at the City Council Chambers – City Hall (93 Highland Ave.)

**Wednesday, September 25, 7:00-8:00pm: School Committee Meeting for Long Range Planning** at the Central Office Main Conference Room (8 Bonair St., 2<sup>nd</sup> floor)

## Somerville Family Learning Collaborative Workshops, Events, and Resources:

Find a complete list of SFLC events and workshops at [www.somerville.k12.ma.us/families](http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/families).

The Somerville Family Learning Collaborative (SFLC) enhances the capacity of families and schools to support children's learning and well-being by collaborating with community partners and promoting welcoming, responsive schools and programs. Take a look at the work and impact of the SFLC "by the numbers" in this [2018-2019 report](#).

**SFLC Legal Services Clinic – Thursday, September 19, 5:00-7:00pm @ SFLC Center at the Cummings (42 Prescott St.)**  
Need legal consultation around immigration issues? Meet representatives from the SFLC, the City of Somerville's Health and Human Services Department and SomerViva for information and resources. Make an appointment for free legal consultation\* with representatives from Harvard Immigration and Refugee Clinical Program (HIRC) and Greater Boston Legal Service. \*For a legal consultation appointment, call 617-625-6600, x6994 or email [freyes@k12.somerville.ma.us](mailto:freyes@k12.somerville.ma.us).

**Serve and Inspire Volunteer Orientation – Thursday, September 19, 6:00-8:00pm @ the Cummings School Building (42 Prescott St.)** Volunteer Orientation for new and prospective volunteers wishing to serve regularly with Somerville Public Schools this school year. Contact SPS Volunteer Coordinator, Jen Capuano at [jcapuano@k12.somerville.ma.us](mailto:jcapuano@k12.somerville.ma.us) or call (617) 629-5475 for more information, accommodations needed to attend, and to RSVP.

## Looking Ahead:

**Wednesday, September 18: WSNS PTA-Sponsored Spirit Day @ the West Somerville Neighborhood School (177 Powder House Blvd.)**

**Wednesday, September 18: Half-Day Wednesday for PK-8** (PK students dismissed at 11:30am; K-8 students dismissed at noon)

**Thursday, September 19, 5:00-7:30pm: Back-to-School Night @ the East Somerville Community School (50 Cross Street) - rescheduled from 9/6**

**Thursday, September 19, 5:00-7:30pm: Back-to-School Night @ West Somerville Neighborhood School (177 Powder House Blvd.)**

**Thursday, September 19, 5:00-7:00pm: SFLC Legal Services Clinic @ the SFLC Center at the Cummings (42 Prescott St.)**

**Thursday, September 19, 6:00-8:00pm: Serve & Inspire Volunteer Orientation @ the SFLC Center at the Cummings (42 Prescott St.)**

**Thursday, September 19, 7:00-8:30pm: SHS Post-High School Planning Night @ the Somerville High School Auditorium (81 Highland Ave.)**

## Community News & Events

**Healey Flatbread Fundraiser.** Kick off the new school year with a fun night out at Flatbread in Davis Square, **Tuesday September 10th**. From 5 pm to close a portion of all pizza sales (including take-out) will go to benefit the Healey School. There will also be a raffle and bake sale.

**Animated Tales for All.** On Saturday, September 14, 2:00-4:00pm, the Peabody Museum of Archaeology & Ethnology presents Animated Tales for All. Watch a vibrant collection of short animations narrated in some of the 68 Indigenous languages of Mexico. Created by Mexican designer Gabriela Badillo and selected from her project, *68 Voices, 68 Hearts*, these films help foster pride, respect, and the use of Indigenous Mexican languages. The family-friendly stories have English subtitles and are based on legends and poems from native communities. The event

includes a Q&A with Badillo in English and Spanish, an authentic Mexican snack, and a chance to learn phrases in one of Mexico's Indigenous languages. Family Event: \$10 members/\$15 non-members. Adult fee includes up to three children (ages 3-18) and museum admission. Visit [www.peabody.harvard.edu](http://www.peabody.harvard.edu) for event details. Advance registration required by Friday, September 13 at: <https://reservations.hmsc.harvard.edu/Info.aspx?EventID=27>.

**SMC Youth Media Open House.** The greater Somerville community is invited to learn more about Somerville Media Center's robust and popular youth media education programs during their Youth Media Open House on **Thursday, September 19, 3:00-4:30pm** at the SMC Studios (90 Union Square). There will be various hands-on media production activities happening throughout the afternoon. Light refreshments will be provided. [RSVP here](#).

**Somerville Fluff Festival.** Join the celebration of the 102<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of Fluff, invented in Somerville's Union Square in 1917 by Archibald Query. The 14<sup>th</sup> annual What the Fluff Festival will feature musical performances, a cooking contest, Fluff-themed games, activities, antics and fun for every age, and Fluff treats of every sort. Festival takes place **Saturday, September 21, 3:00-7:00pm** at Somerville's Union Square. Rain date is Sunday, September 22. For more information, visit [www.flufffestival.com](http://www.flufffestival.com).

## City & District Employment Opportunities

Consider joining a winning team! Current city and district opportunities include:

- [Director of Finance Administration](#), Dept. of Public Works, City of Somerville
- [Operations Manager](#), Water and Sewer Dept., City of Somerville
- [Life Guards/Swim Instructor](#), Parks and Recreation Dept., City of Somerville
- [Somerville Promise Home Visitor](#), Somerville Promise, Health and Human Services Dept., City of Somerville

Visit <https://www.somervillema.gov/jobs> for a complete listing of current open positions in the City of Somerville.

- [Special Education ASD Paraprofessional](#), Somerville High School, Somerville Public Schools
- [Afterschool Site Coordinator](#), Benjamin G. Brown School, SPS Community Schools Afterschool Program
- [Human Resources Intern](#), Human Resources Department, Somerville Public Schools
- [Substitute Teachers – School Year/Per Diem](#), District-wide, Somerville Public Schools

Visit <https://www.schoolspring.com/jobs/?employer=16902> for a complete listing of current open positions in the Somerville Public Schools.

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### Our Commitment to the Whole Child

VISION: "We believe in developing the whole child — the intellectual, social, emotional, and physical potential of all students — by providing students with the skills, opportunities, and resources that will nurture innovative ideas, foster pride in diversity, inspire students to become lifelong learners and empower them to enrich their communities."