



SOMERVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

VOLUNTEERS

Serving and Inspiring



SPS Volunteers 42 Prescott St., Somerville, MA 02143
www.somerville.k12.ma.us/volunteer

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Dear Somerville Public Schools Volunteer,

Thank you for connecting with our school community! Somerville Public Schools' mission is to maximize the potential of each and every student. Volunteers support this mission best by making a firm commitment to serve students and support teaching staff. Somerville Public Schools offers many ways for you to engage with students, educators, and families, and to make deeper connections with your community.

Whether you are a longtime resident or newcomer to Somerville, your involvement with our youth helps expand their learning and broaden their world. Your weekly commitment as a volunteer can lead to increased student engagement and enthusiasm in a subject, improved social and emotional skills, better attendance, and improved academic performance. Your active involvement as a volunteer also serves to strengthen students' community ties and actively demonstrates to students and families the importance of meaningful civic engagement.

We encourage you to visit a classroom, meet one of our dedicated educators, come to a music or visual arts lesson, attend a school performance, or participate in a school-wide event. We welcome you to choose a volunteer role that best fits your interests and availability.

This guide outlines Somerville Public Schools' policies and practices for all Somerville Public School volunteers and the expectations we have of you as you serve in a Somerville school. It also provides a range of specific volunteer opportunities where volunteer support is welcomed—in classrooms and out—and where we believe volunteers can make a significant difference in student learning and enrichment.

On behalf of our students, families, and educators, thank you for your commitment to and care of Somerville's students. We look forward to learning and serving with you!

*Mary Skipper
Superintendent, Somerville Public Schools*

Goals of SPS Volunteers

Somerville Public Schools is a vibrant, diverse learning community serving nearly 5,000 students in 11 schools. Through hands-on, interactive core curriculum, including arts, music, health and physical education curriculum, and a variety of enrichment and extracurricular programs and activities, SPS aims to actively engage and educate the whole child.

SPS Volunteers is a program of the Somerville Public Schools. The primary goal of SPS Volunteers is to support student learning and enrichment through effective community collaboration and consistent and qualified volunteer engagement.

SPS Volunteers recruits, screens, trains, supports, coordinates, documents and promotes the service of volunteers serving in our public schools. Through individuals, and through ongoing partnerships with community groups, organizations, churches and businesses, volunteer service strengthens Somerville's schools and community. We welcome volunteers to explore their interests, develop new skills and gain new perspectives as they work and learn alongside our school community.

School Standards and Procedures for All SPS Volunteers

1. For the safety and security of all students, every volunteer must complete a **CORI** (Criminal Offender Record Information) or background check. The CORI must be approved before volunteering in any Somerville school. A CORI may be submitted through the main office of any Somerville Public School, or with appointment through the Volunteer Program Office. CORIs for SPS Volunteers are valid for one year with any Somerville Public School.
2. **Volunteers Matter!** Volunteers are valued and we want to know how you volunteer to better understand your impact and to match volunteers where they are most needed. **All weekly volunteers are required to self-register on the secure VolunteerMatters database: www.somerville.k12.ma.us/volunteer and see Apply Online to be a SPS Volunteer.**
3. Volunteers must follow all policies and practices of the Somerville Public Schools. For information about dress and conduct codes, fire drills, and other school conduct and practices, please see the *SPS Parent/Guardian Guide* (online at www.somerville.k12.ma.us and see Current Families).
4. Volunteers must **sign in** at the school's main office prior to every session, wear a **Volunteer tag** while in the school, **sign out**, and return Volunteer tag to the main office at the end of each session.
5. **Parking Passes** may be secured at the school's main office if you do not have a Somerville parking permit. Most Somerville streets are Somerville resident permit parking only, and school lots are

reserved for teacher and staff parking. Parking Passes should be displayed on your dashboard and returned after your volunteer session.

6. Volunteers working directly with students may become aware of confidential information about specific students. This information may include information such as students' academic performance, student records, behavior, disabilities, or related matters. Volunteers will not disclose such confidential information except to school employees who have a need to know.

7. Volunteers should not photograph students unless authorized by the building principal or designated staff. Volunteers should not share photographs of students. Volunteers should not use social media, 'friend' or text with students.

8. Volunteers should never assume responsibility for the supervision of a class in the absence of a certified teacher.

9. Volunteers should never assume responsibility for the discipline of a student.

10. Volunteers are not authorized to transport students.

11. Volunteers should use adult restrooms only.

12. Any volunteer **under the age of 18 years** must submit two letters of reference on professional letterhead from a teacher, counselor, principal, employment supervisor, or other individual who is qualified to comment on the character and work ethic of the applicant.

13. **Conflict of Interest Law** Anyone performing services for a city or town or holding a municipal position, whether paid or unpaid, including full- and part-time municipal employees, elected officials, volunteers, and consultants, is a municipal employee under the Conflict of Interest Law. Please review the following summary of the Conflict of Interest Law, MA General Laws, Chapter 268A:

<http://www.mass.gov/ethics/education-and-training-resources/implementation-procedures/municipal-employee-summary.html>.

14. **Liability and Photo Release** The City of Somerville and Somerville Public Schools requires volunteers to accept terms and conditions which release the City and Somerville Public Schools from liability in the event of volunteer injury, illness or property loss, and damages or costs associated with such. Somerville Public Schools requests volunteers' authorization to publish, print and post to its website photographs of volunteers and activities. Please review and sign the attached **Volunteer Release of Liability and Photo Release Form**.

15. SMILE and have FUN!

Weekly Volunteer Tutors and Academic Support Guidelines

Volunteers are most effective when placed with the same classroom, teacher or student, and serve for at least one hour per week for four months. As a SPS Volunteer Tutor, we ask that you:

- 1. Make a Firm Commitment.** Volunteer tutors and academic support volunteer are required to commit to **at least one hour per week for a minimum of four months**. As a weekly volunteer, students and teachers who come to rely on you will miss you when you are not there. Except in an emergency, last minute absences are disruptive. If you are casual about your absences, students will receive the wrong message, and it may cause teachers to be hesitant to work with volunteers in the future. Please contact your direct supervisor at least 24 hours prior to an absence, and if for any reason you are unable to complete your weekly service, please make sure to notify your supervisor immediately.
- 2. Define Your Role.** The teacher is your supervisor. Work with the teacher to clearly define your role. Your tutoring work will vary depending on the subject and program, but communicate with the teacher your expectations, and ask questions.
- 3. Understand Learning Goals.** Work with your supervisor to understand the learning goals for the student. Request progress information from your supervisor about the student.
- 4. Get Feedback.** Through your supervisor, get feedback on whether student performance is improving, and how performance will be measured, such as test scores, level of student engagement, behavior, or other areas of student assessment.
- 5. Be on Time.** Teachers and students have tight timelines. Please be on time so that teachers can adhere to a schedule. If you must miss a session, please let your supervisor know well ahead of time. If you cannot reach the supervisor, leave a message at the school's main office.
- 6. Reassignment or Dismissal from Service.** Somerville Public Schools (SPS) strives to match volunteers with placements that best serve students and staff. SPS understands that not every match is ideal and that there may be times when the teacher-volunteer relationship is not productive or beneficial to student learning. In these circumstances, the volunteer will need to be reassigned or in some cases, dismissed from service. The volunteer is provided the opportunity for an exit interview where their direct supervisor (Teacher) and/or School-Based Volunteer Coordinator outlining areas for improvement and why they are being reassigned or dismissed. It is the responsibility of the volunteer to inform their supervisor if they need to terminate their volunteer service altogether.
- 7. College or Community Service Credit** Let your supervisor know ahead of time if you will need a letter or other information from them. Keep a log of dates and hours worked, activities, and skills you gained through tutoring.
- 8. Exit Survey** In order to support volunteers and ensure that their time and service are most effective, we need to hear about your experience. Volunteers are requested to complete a Volunteer Survey upon completion of the school year or at the end their service.

9. VolunteersMatter! Help us demonstrate that volunteers' service matters, and that every hour counts! Make sure to keep track of your schedule so that your service hours may be logged into the VolunteerMatters database. In order to input your service hours, the following information is required:

Your Name	Start Date	Schedule (Day/Time)	Grade	Subject (Math/Literacy/ESL/etc.	Program and/or School
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Thank you for providing this information!

Volunteer Opportunities

Here are a few ways that volunteers bring their time and talents to our schools. Have an idea? Let us know!

Literacy Volunteers work one-on-one or in small groups to help students become independent, strategic readers and writers. Grades K-8. Required commitment of at least one hour a week for four months. **Balanced Literacy Training** required for weekly literacy tutors.

English Language Learning Support Volunteers work with students in a classroom or individually. Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian Creole or Indian language fluency preferred but not required. Grades K-12. Evening hours Tues and Thursdays 6:00pm-8:00p, Spanish fluency preferred.

Mathematics Support and Tutors Grades 3-12. Required commitment of at least one hour per week for four months. Available hours: 7:30am-5:30pm Grades 3-8 and 7:00am-7:55am for early risers at Somerville High School.

After School Provide academic support, tutoring, homework help and/or help with an enrichment activity. Grades Pre-K-12. Various subjects and according to your expertise. M-F, any time 2:30pm-5:30pm.

Before School Homework and Tutoring work with a student for a half hour before school starts, 7:30am-8:05am.

Musicians! Help in a weekly music class, provide string or wind lesson support, volunteer to perform at a school or district event, or tune a violin. All schools, grades 3-12.

Artists! Bring your fiber arts, printing, pottery, bookbinding, cartooning, illustration, nature journaling, and more. Support an art teacher by helping to set up and organize a project. Share a talent with a class, or make and hang student work. Various schools, flexible hours.

El Sistema Somerville! Volunteers provide music mentoring, homework and academic support, tutoring, may help with fundraising, special events and more. Contact Artistic Director David Palombo: DPalombo@k12.somerville.ma.us.

Jazz Musicians at SHS! Volunteer to help out with the SPS Jazz Band. Contact Charles McLaren at: fnkadelica@gmail.com.

Library and Computer Lab Aides Help a school librarian by sorting/organizing books; help students choose the right books; assist students in computer labs; all schools, flexible hours.

Computer Sciences: Help students learn to code by assisting with an after school computer sciences program!

Playgroup Facilitator! Meet Somerville families and engage young children by facilitating a Somerville Family Learning Collaborative (SFLC) playgroup. Background in Early Childhood Education and experience working with diverse populations preferred. Contact Michelle Laskey: sfn@k12.somerville.ma.us if interested. Playspace setup and organization:

School Events and Community Service Projects Are you a company, group of friends or organization looking for fun ways to work together and support our schools and families? Here are ways to serve your community while having fun: PTA Events, Math Nights, Game Nights, Athletic Events, Pi Night, Book Fairs, Coat or Food Drives, and Physical School Improvement projects. Let us know your group size and timing and we'll get you started!

Volunteer Forms

CORI for SPS Volunteers
Release of Liability and Photo Release for Volunteers
2016-2017 Somerville Public Schools Calendar
School Contacts
Exit Survey for Volunteers

Resources

Somerville Public Schools Grade Level Curriculum Guides, K-5

<http://www.somerville.k12.ma.us/education/dept/dept.php?sectionid=1224>

Literacy Support

www.readingrockets.org

Mathematics

Kahn Academy: <https://www.khanacademy.org> free videos walking through the steps of numerous math problems, from simple addition to calculus.

<http://www.internet4classrooms.com/> free Internet resources to use in instruction, developing project ideas, reinforcing specific subject matter areas both in the class and at home and even for online technology tutorials.

<http://www.nctm.org/> **National Council of Teachers of Mathematics** Specific tips for tutoring in mathematics.

<http://www.coolmath4kids.com/> Coolmath was designed for everyone from the frustrated, the confused, the bored students of the world who hate math to the math geeks of the world.

<http://www.mathplayground.com/> Math Playground –Create math worksheets, practice facts and play logic games.

<http://www.mathgoodies.com/> Math Goodies is a free math help site featuring interactive lessons.

<http://www.mathcats.com/> **Math Cats.** Enrich children's mathematical understanding with Math Cats, an interactive Web site that provides math explorations, trivia, and classroom activities for all ages.

<http://www.amathsdictionaryforkids.com/> **Math Dictionary.** This site explains 600 common mathematical terms in simple language using animation and other techniques.

<http://www.mortgagecalculator.net/math-calculators/> **Fun Math Calculators.** Provides math calculators for all sorts of things, from climate, to shopping, cooking, saving money, converting measurements, and plenty more.

<http://www.mathworksheetsland.com/> **Math Worksheets Land** – Over 6,000 printable pdf worksheets for K-12, organized by topic, core, or grade level.

More resources at: <http://www.schoolonwheels.org/tutor-center/tutoring-resources-materials>

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