Student Opportunity Act Plan

Somerville

# Commitment 1: Focusing on Student Subgroups

*Student subgroups requiring focused support to ensure all students achieve at high levels in school and are successfully prepared for life.*

* English learners and former English learners
* Students with disabilities
* Low income/economically disadvantaged students
* High Needs students (defined as any student who is economically disadvantaged, has a disability, or is an English learner/former English learner)
* African American/Black students
* Hispanic or Latinx students

*The rationale for selecting these student subgroups.*

Somerville Public Schools is committed to ensuring equitable access to opportunities and supports that will help every student build a strong foundation for current and future success. We also recognize that historically marginalized students have not been afforded the same opportunities and therefore face additional challenges in accessing programs and supports that will allow them to fully thrive. Many of the selected student subgroups are underrepresented in college-going data, with the percentage of Hispanic/Latin students and students who are English language learners or students with disabilities among the lowest. The financial burden and, for many low income/economically disadvantaged and current or former English learner students, the fact that they would be the first generation in their families to attend college can present significant challenges.

High Needs students, particularly students who are English language learners and students with special education needs, have been among the subgroup populations that has been most impacted by the Covid-19 related school closures and will require additional focused academic and social-emotional support. We plan to address these specific needs through targeted early college and dual enrollment efforts, as well as through a focus on summer and extended year programming.

**Commitment 2: Using Evidence-Based Programs to Close Gaps**

Over the last several years, Somerville Public Schools has been engaged in educational redesign and school improvement efforts focused on closing persistent opportunity gaps and laying a strong foundation for academic success through focused holistic support. The selected evidence-based programs will help us address the college-going opportunity gap through efforts to expand our existing early college and dual enrollment programs, and additional targeted academic and social- emotional supports to address gaps exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic.

***Focus Area 1:***  Early College programs focused primarily on students under-represented in higher education (I)

As part of our educational redesign efforts at the high school level, we have been working to make beyond-the-classroom- learning a core part of the learning experience for all students with the goal of ensuring that every student is prepared for post- secondary success. In FY20, we successfully piloted an early college program with Cambridge College in which the inaugural groups of students enrolling in and completing the program were first-generation college students. We also invested in a Beyond-the-Classroom Coordinator to support the early college/dual enrollment and other beyond-the-classroom work. In FY21, FY22 and FY23, we will expand our early college and dual enrollment programs with Cambridge College and Bunker Hill Community College, primarily targeting students who are current or former English language learners as well as students with special needs. This effort will serve students district-wide.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount: enter number, do not use the****$ character** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Contractual - Cambridge College and Bunker Hill Community College** | **35,000** | **Other Teaching Services** |
| **2** | **Personnel Stipends for Wraparound Supports** | **25,000** | **Other Teaching Services** |
| **3** | **Personnel Stipends for Professional Development** | **15,000** | **Professional Development** |

***Focus Area 2: Increased personnel and services to support holistic student needs (C and D)***

Somerville Public Schools is committed to supporting the holistic needs of students, helping to establish conditions for learning that will lead to academic and life success. As part of this commitment, our school improvement process includes not only a focus on academics, but also an emphasis on social-emotional supports and student wellness. Over the last several years, SPS has increasingly invested in programming to support students' mental and social-emotional wellbeing with a particular focus on expanding supports and services to marginalized student populations.

In FY21, FY22 and FY23, we will provide additional targeted academic and social-emotional support services, focusing on our highest-risk student subgroups who have been most impacted by the Covid-19 school closures, through targeted summer and extended year programming. This effort will serve students district-wide.

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|  | **FY21 budget item** | **Amount (enter number, do not use the $ character)** | **Foundation Category** |
| **1** | **Stipends for Personnel** | **73,520** | **Other** |
| **2** | **Instructional materials to support SEL** | **10,000** | **Instructional Materials, Equipment, and Technology** |

**Commitment 3: Monitoring Success with Outcome Metrics and Targets**

*Outcome metrics that will be used to measure progress in closing gaps for selected student groups.*

* Student Growth: ELA mean student growth percentile (SGP)
* Student Growth: Mathematics mean student growth percentile (SGP)
* Post-secondary Success: Enrolled in college during the first year after high school
* Post-secondary Success: Persisted in college into the second year
* Custom District Metric 1: Student engagement as measured by annual district survey

**Commitment 4: Engaging All Families**

*District plans for ensuring that all families, particularly those representing identified student subgroups most in need of support, have access to meaningful engagement regarding their students’ needs.*

Our family engagement efforts will include program-specific and district-wide annual surveying of families in our district's target languages, working with our family and community liaisons to establish targeted outreach and engagement efforts particularly to families representing student subgroups most in need of support, and through focus groups or town hall events. We will continue to work with various existing groups throughout the district including PTAs, School Improvement Teams, SEPAC, parent leader teams, and others to ensure that families are engaged in our efforts.

**Certifications**

*Certification that stakeholders were engaged in accordance with the Student Opportunity Act.*

As part of the high school educational redesign efforts, students, staff, families, and community members were engaged in helping to establish the vision and priorities for this work. In addition, SPS engaged the services of School & Main Institute to help lead a 10-year listening and visioning community process specifically focused on youth learning and to surface community priorities. Among the priorities that surfaced from that effort was social-emotional learning and supports for youth.

*Certification that School Committee has voted (or is expected to vote on the district’s Student Opportunity Act Plan.*

Date of Approval: Pending