

Mabelle B. Avery  
Middle School

2023 - 2024

Parent/Student Handbook

1 Vision Boulevard

Somers, CT 06071

860-749-2270

860-763-2073 (fax)

[www.somers.k12.ct.us](http://www.somers.k12.ct.us)

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

The Mabelle B. Avery Middle School Handbook is provided to help you and your child understand school procedures, policies, and rules. In order to prepare your child for a successful middle school experience, please review the contents of this handbook together. Check our website for monthly newsletters, email communications, and current school information.

**Please Note:**

***Please verify that you have read and discussed with your child the Mabelle B. Avery Middle School Handbook and agree to abide by the policies, rules and regulations of the school by signing off through the registration module in the PowerSchool Parent Portal.***

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## 2023 - 2024 MBA Staff Directory

Last Name	First Name	Position	Rm.	Email	Ext.
Archambault	Michael	Custodian		mike.archambault@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2133
Barile	Jordan	Special Education, Pathways	104	jordan.barile@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5104
Bell	Ana	Paraeducator	101	anna.bell@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5101
Bishop	John	Entrance Monitor		john.bishop@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2005
Bohan *	Jaime	School Counselor	121	jaime.bohan@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2604
Brown	Mark	Life Skills, Grade 6-8	305	mark.brown@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5305
Ciejek	Barbara	Academic Tutor	Lib Lab	barbara.ciejek@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5246
Cole *	Peg	Special Education, Grade 8	201	margaret.cole@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5201
Colton	Stacey	Paraeducator	101	stacey.colton@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5101
Cranna	Beth	Math Tutor	302	beth.cranna@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5302
Curtis	Sharon	Academic Tutor	Lib Lab	sharon.curtis@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5246
Daigle	Anne Marie	Speech & Language Pathologist	102	annemarie.daigle@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5102
Dill	Hannah	Assistant Principal	Office	hannah.dill@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2606
Dunlap	CJ	IT Specialist	LMC	chris.dunlap@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2022
Estes	Jason	Science, Grade 8	503	jason.estes@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5503
Estes	Pamela	World Language	204	pamela.estes@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5204
Foster-Kibbler	Timothy	Social Studies, Grade 8	404	timothy.foster-kibbler@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5404
Frijia	Jennifer	Paraeducator	104	jennifer.frijia@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5104
Fry	Cheryl	School Nurse	126	cheryl.fry@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2126
Gieras	John	Social Studies, Grade 6	306	john.gieras@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5306
Gioscia	Charlene	Paraeducator	LMC	charlene.gioscia@somers.k12.ct.us	X 5240
Grimaldi	Dianne	Language Arts, Grade 7	202	dianne.grimaldi@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5202
Guerra	Ashley	Entrance Monitor		ashley.guerra@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2005
Hailer	Gina	Paraeducator	309	gina.hailer@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5309
Harnett*	Noreen	World Language	203	noreen.harnett@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5203
Harrigan	Paul	Custodian		paul.harrigan@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2133
Humber	Carrie	Technology Education	134	carrie.humber@somers.k12.ct.us	x5135
Huss	Kevin	Paraeducator	104	kevin.huss@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5104
Kelly	Christine	Language Arts, Grade 7	207	christine.kelly@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5207
Kendig	Courtney	Language Arts, Grade 8	401	courtney.kendig@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5401
Koulisis	Sue	Art, Grades 6-8	500	susan.koulisis@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5500
Kraus	Marika	Chorus, Grades 6-8	114	marika.kraus@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5114
Lewis	Chuck	Science, Grade 6	501	chuck.lewis@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5501
Lipman*	Marybeth	Language Arts, Grade 8	402	marybeth.lipman@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5402
Lurate	Mike	Special Education, Grade 6	101	michael.lurate@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5101
Lyver	Stacy	Science, Grade 7	502	stacy.lyver@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5502
Martel	Kurtis	School Psychologist	120	kurtis.martel@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2120
Martello	Margot	Principal	Office	margot.martello@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2603
McCarthy	Ken	Physical Education	Gym	ken.mccarthy@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5131
Morrisino	Amanda	Math Interventionist	302	amanda.morrisino@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5302
Mroczko	Christopher	Physical Education	Gym	christopher.mroczko@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5132

Myers	Cassie	Math, Grade 8	403	cassandra.myers@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5403
Nevins	Kevin	Language Arts, Grade 6	307	kevin.nevins@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5307
Neyssen	Elizabeth	Paraeducator	201	elizabeth.neyssen@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5201
O'Konis	Angela	Reading Tutor	301	angela.okonis@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5301
Olden	Bryanna	School BCBA	102	bryanna.olden@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5102
Percoski	Tim	STEM Coach	247	timothy.percoski@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5247
Perella	Gianna	Math, Grade 7	206	gianna.perella@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5206
Pillion	Ashley	Special Education, Grade 7	309	ashley.pillion@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5309
Rafala	Colleen	Paraeducator	201	colleen.rafala@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5201
Remington	Sharon	Reading Intervention	301	sharon.remington@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5301
Reynolds	Tammany	Social Studies, Grade 7	205	tammany.reynolds@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5205
Rivard	Jackie	Library-Media Specialist	LMC	jackie.rivard@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5240
Sakos	Lynn	Success Skills Seminar	304	lynn.sakos@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5304
Sanford*	Laurina	Math, Grade 6	303	laurina.sanford@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5303
Stutz	Kathy	Paraeducator	104 / 248	katherine.stutz@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5104
Tomson	Cathy	Paraeducator	309	cathy.tomson@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5309
Truncellito	Megan	Language Arts, Grade 6	308	megan.truncellito@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5308
Walsh	Betsy	Admin. Asst. to AP	Office	elizabeth.walsh@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2602
Walsh	Sharon	School Social Worker	119	sharon.walsh@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2119
Wolf	Jessica	Band, Grades 6-8	115	jessica.wolf@somers.k12.ct.us	x 5115
Wolters	Michelle	Admin. Asst. to the Principal	Office	michelle.wolters@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2601
Zini	Dick	Head Custodian		dick.zini@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2133
Zuccalo	Josh	Custodian		josh.zuccalo@somers.k12.ct.us	x 2133

**\* Indicates Team Leader. Updated: 08/17/2023**

# **Somers Public Schools Vision and Mission Statements**

The Somers Public Schools strives to be an exceptional and innovative educational community. The mission of the Somers Public Schools is to prepare each student to contribute and succeed in an ever-changing global society. In pursuit of this Vision and Mission, we believe in the pursuit of excellence; life-long learning; an environment conducive to success; student, parent, and community partnerships; responsible citizenship; honoring equity, individuality, and diversity; and educating the whole child.

## **Mabelle B. Avery Middle School Vision Statement**

To prepare each student for their high school experience, MBA Middle School strives to provide a rigorous learning environment that inspires student engagement and motivation through a variety of curricular and extracurricular learning opportunities. Collaboratively, we work toward creating a safe, welcoming, respectful, inclusive, and balanced learning environment that meets each individual student's needs.

## **Mabelle B. Avery Middle School Mission Statement**

The mission of the Mabelle B. Avery Middle School is to place emphasis on the whole child in search of individual excellence, to provide instruction that matches the developmental needs of young adolescents in a mutually respectful environment, and to seek and encourage educational partnerships with the family and the community.

Students will learn to communicate effectively, problem solve, think critically, and practice personal responsibility.

Students will learn skills which will equip them to function effectively and to contribute positively in a technological society and global community.

Students will be provided with opportunities to grow academically, emotionally, socially, physically, and culturally. Students will learn to respect and understand individual differences and perspectives, thereby creating a supportive, safe environment.

## **Superintendent of Schools**

Dr. Sam Galloway

## **Members of the Somers Board of Education**

Anne Kirkpatrick, Chair  
Krista Cherry, Secretary  
Ed DePeau  
Jan Martin  
Carl Stebbins

Kim Radziewicz, Vice Chair  
Michael Briggs  
JT Galloway  
Shane Manning

# Welcome Students

The faculty and staff of Mabelle B. Avery Middle School are excited to welcome you to our school community. In the tradition of our namesake, Mabelle B. Avery, we are dedicated to serving the students and families of Somers.

We are committed to providing strong instructional programs that foster academic achievement while emphasizing each child's unique talents. Students are encouraged to be involved in our school community academically as well as through clubs, intramural sports, music, or other extra-curricular activities.

MBA is a learning community where each member is expected to maintain high standards of citizenship, cooperation, and responsibility. The students, faculty, and staff work together to create a positive school climate built on respect and consideration for others.

This handbook has been prepared to provide students and parents with a better understanding of the rules, policies, and procedures that are part of daily life at MBA during a typical year. In addition, the handbook contains information regarding our programs and activities, as well as our expectations for student achievement and conduct.

The Mabelle B. Avery Middle School maintains an "open door" policy encouraging parent participation in our school. We work to cultivate strong home-school partnerships as we believe a good education is a collaborative effort between home and school.

We are dedicated to providing you with a great middle school experience.

*Margot Martello, Principal*  
*Hannah Dill, Assistant Principal*

# Chapter 1 – Student Attendance

## **Attendance/Excuses/Truancy**

It has been well demonstrated that regular attendance is a key factor in the success a student achieves in school. Much of what a student learns and is graded on deals with facts, concepts, and theories which are presented and discussed in class. In addition, other learning processes take place in class which may not be measurable, but are most important to a student's overall growth and education. The Board of Education discourages students from missing school when school is in session. Upon return to school it will be the student's responsibility to complete any work missed due to absence. Students will be given one day for every day absent to make up and submit required assignments. Connecticut State law requires parents to cause their children to attend school regularly during the hours and terms the public school is in session. A student, therefore, should not be absent from school without a parent's knowledge and consent. The Board of Education requires that accurate records be kept of the attendance of each child. It also requires that parents and students are provided with policies on attendance, including tardiness, for each school building.

The school will engage in frequent communication with families regarding attendance to school when absences accrue. Parents/Guardians may receive a letter home each month and at the end of each trimester if their student's tardiness or absences are chronic (more than 10% of the school year). Additionally, parent/guardian meetings may be held with the Support Staff and Administration to ensure appropriate levels of support are in place to have the student regularly attend school.

A student is considered to be "in attendance" if present at his/her assigned school, or an activity sponsored by the school (e.g., field trip), for at least half of the regular school day. A student who is serving an out-of-school suspension or expulsion should always be considered absent. A student not meeting the definition of "in attendance" shall be considered absent.

## **Excused and Unexcused Absences**

For absences one through nine, a student's absences from school are considered "excused" when the student's parent/guardian approves such absence and submits appropriate documentation to school officials. Such documentation includes a signed note from the student's parent/guardian, a signed note from a school official that spoke in person with the parent/guardian regarding the absence, or a note confirming the absence by the school nurse or by a licensed medical professional, as appropriate. Documentation should explain the nature of and the reason for the absence as well as the length of the absence. Separate documentation must be submitted for each incidence of absenteeism.

For the tenth absence and all absences thereafter, a student's absences from school are considered excused for the following reasons:

1. Student illness (must be verified by a licensed medical professional to be deemed excused, regardless of the length of the absence);
2. Student's observance of a religious holiday;
3. Death in the student's family or other emergency beyond the control of the student's family;
4. Mandated court appearances (documentation required);
5. The lack of transportation that is normally provided by a district other than the one the student attends (no parental documentation required);
6. Extraordinary educational opportunities pre-approved by District administration and to be in accordance with Connecticut State Department of Education guidance.

A student's absence from school shall be considered unexcused unless:

1. The absence meets the definition of an excused absence and meets the documentation requirements; or
2. The absence meets the definition of a disciplinary absence, which is the result of school or District disciplinary action and is excluded from these State Board of Education approved definitions.

**Parents are asked to call the school in the morning prior to 8:00 AM to report student absence on our MBA absence line by calling 860-749-2270 - press 3 - press 1.**



## **Truancy/ Unexcused Absences**

**Unexcused absences are those, which do not come under any of the definitions of excused absences.** Somers **BOE Policy 5113.2** identifies a student as "truant" when he/she has four unexcused absences in any one month or ten unexcused absences from school in any school year. A student will be identified as a "habitual truant" when he/she has twenty unexcused absences within a school year. Any series of unexcused absences may require a conference with the Principal/Assistant Principal to discuss the details of the absence. **BOE Policy 5113.2** further states that the building administrator will be required to enact procedures to coordinate services through community agencies which provide family services for any student designated as "habitual truant."

## **Change of Address/Telephone/Email**

It is very important that you notify the school office if there is a change to a student address or telephone number or email. Connecticut law requires that schools have on file a daytime emergency phone number in case of an emergency.

## **Disposition of Educational Records**

The district adheres to the Connecticut State Library and the Department of Education records retention and disposition schedule. Per Section 7-109 of the Connecticut General Statutes, the district procures prior approval before destroying records and notifies the public of its intent. More information may be obtained by contacting the Office of Pupil Services at 860-749-2270 and at the following website: <http://www.cslib.org/retschedules.htm>

## **Early Dismissal**

Early dismissal requests should be made in writing giving a reason for the request. All excuses and requests are to be approved by the administration. Parents are required to provide photo identification to sign-out a student at the Entrance Monitor Station for an early dismissal. Parents must sign their student back in upon returning to school. Parents/guardians are requested to schedule outside appointments after school hours.

## **Family Vacations**

With the distribution of the school calendar several months before school begins, parents/guardians are expected to make every effort to plan family vacations during scheduled school recess periods. Student absences for family vacations during regular school sessions are classified as unexcused absences. Teachers are not required to prepare work in advance of student absences for family vacations. In addition, teachers are not required to re-teach work or tutor students when they return. Teachers will, however, provide opportunities for students to make up tests, homework or other assignments missed during the absence. Upon return to school it will be the student's responsibility to complete any work missed due to absence and students will be given one day for every day absent to make up and submit homework.

## **Tardy to School**

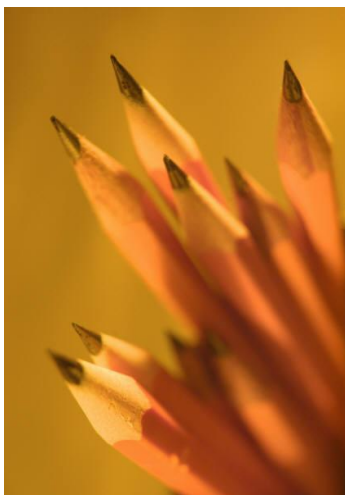
Tardiness to school is disruptive to the learning process for teachers and students. It is imperative that students arrive at school and report to homeroom on time. This allows students to prepare and organize for the day. If a child is tardy to school he/she must have a note from home stating the reason. The school office keeps a record of tardiness to school. Students are considered tardy if they do not report to homeroom prior to **7:35 a.m.**

## **Tardy to Class**

Tardiness to class is unacceptable. If you are late to class because you have been detained in the office, or by a teacher, ask for a pass from the person who detained you before going to your next class. Having a pass will nullify the tardiness. Tardiness to class may lead to detention or parent/guardian conference.

## **Transferring**

Parents/guardians must notify the office in advance when a child is transferring from Mabelle B. Avery Middle School to another school. This is necessary so appropriate paperwork can be completed and prepared for the new school. No child can be admitted to another school until they are completely withdrawn from MBA. The State Department of Education requires full compliance with this transfer procedure.



# **Chapter 2 – Academic**

## **Academic Eligibility**

Students are expected to keep up with their schoolwork. At various times throughout the school year, activities are organized to reward students who are diligent in doing so. The MBA administration has sole discretion in determining eligibility for these events. These events include, but are not limited to: reward day activities, assemblies, field trips, dances, and field days. Students who are deemed ineligible will be given supervised study time in lieu of the activities.

## **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty is defined as being truthful with personal integrity. Honesty is expected from all students. Academic dishonest behaviors include:

- Copying another student's homework.
- Having someone else (friend, sibling, parent, etc.) do homework for you.
- Talking during tests and quizzes.
- Receiving or giving answers on tests and quizzes.
- Having hidden notes (on paper, desktop, clothing, body parts, electronic devices, etc.) during assessments.
- Plagiarism -- copying from any source (including Artificial Intelligence apps) for homework, research reports, lab reports, and projects without properly quoting the source - spoken, written or electronic.

Consequences for acts of dishonest academic behavior will be:

- In cases of copying and knowingly receiving and providing homework or test answers, both parties will be equally guilty.
- No credit will be given.
- There will be no opportunity for full-credit make-up.
- Parents will be notified.
- Disciplinary referral will be filed in the student's disciplinary folder and shared with the Principal and student's Team of teachers.

## Extra Help

Students may seek extra help from their teachers at any time. Prior arrangements must be made in writing if the student is attending extra help before or after school hours. Student pick-up is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. A student may also request in-school extra help through Learning Centers on Day 2 of the schedule rotation.

## Field Trips

Per district policy, field trips are planned and conducted to support the academic program. The administration reserves the right to determine who is eligible to attend field trips based on an individual's discipline record, cooperation, and work completion. Students not permitted to attend a field trip will be provided with an alternative learning activity that will be supervised at the school. Students participating in school activities or trips that are non-academic must remain in good academic and disciplinary standing. Prior to participation, grade level teachers and school administration will review all students before making a determination of who can attend. The school administration reserves the right to determine who is eligible to attend field trips, as they are an **earned privilege**, based on an individual's academic eligibility, cooperation, and discipline record.

The end of the year 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip is a celebration of three years of hard work. Attending a trip to a place like the High Meadow Resort is an **earned privilege**. Students attending this trip must be passing all classes for the 3rd trimester. The school administration will work with the grade level teachers to evaluate a student's level of cooperation, attitude and disciplinary history before making a determination of who can attend. The school administration reserves the right to make final decisions on participation.

## Grade Point Average

Grade Point Average (GPA) is calculated by considering the average weighted grades earned by a student. Weight is distributed to classes based on the number of days a week they meet. The classes meeting the maximum number of times a week are assigned more credit than a class that meets fewer times a week. For example:

<b>Class</b>	<b>Meetings Per 6-Day Cycle</b>	<b>Credit</b>
Language Arts	8 periods/week	8 credits
Science	5 periods/week	5 credits
Physical Education	2 periods/week	2 credits

Each grade is assigned "Grade Points." These grade points in conjunction with the credit weight are used to calculate the overall GPA for a student. The Grade Points are as follows:

A+ = 12	B+ = 9	C+ = 6	D+ = 3	F = 0
A = 11	B = 8	C = 5	D = 2	
A- = 10	B- = 7	C- = 4	D- = 1	

The formula to calculate the GPA for a student is as follows:

$$\frac{\left( \begin{array}{c} \text{Grade Point Class A} \\ \times \\ \text{Credits for Class A} \end{array} \right) + \left( \begin{array}{c} \text{Grade Point Class B} \\ \times \\ \text{Credits for Class B} \end{array} \right) + \dots + \left( \begin{array}{c} \text{Grade Point Class H} \\ \times \\ \text{Credits for Class H} \end{array} \right)}{\text{Total Credits Earned}}$$

## Grade 7 & 8 Honor Roll

At the close of each marking period the honor roll is released. Grade six students are not eligible for honor roll. Students in grades 7 and 8 may achieve High Honors and Honors based on the criteria below.

High Honors: Student GPA must be 10 points or higher and there may be no grade on the report card below a B-.

Honors: Student GPA must be a score of 8 or higher and there may be no grade on the report card below a C.

## Grading System

The grading system for all students follows:

A+	97-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	0-59
A	93-96	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66		
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62		

## High School Credit

High school credit is awarded for successful completion of Algebra in 8th grade (1 credit), Spanish A and Spanish B in 7th and 8th grades (1 credit), and French A and French B in 7th and 8th grades (1 credit). To earn this credit, the requirements outlined in the syllabus for the course must be met including grade requirements and attendance. Students with more than 20 absences from the course in any given school year will not be eligible for high school credit. A loss of credit appeal meeting can be scheduled when mitigating circumstances are present.

## Homework

Homework can help you improve your ability to learn, work independently, develop study habits and expand your personal interests. It is the student's responsibility to do all work assigned on time and to the best of their ability. Homework will be assigned most days. Homework also includes studying for tests and quizzes. Homework assignments can be found on the grade level team's homework blog and/or teacher's Google Classroom or Showbie account.

## Homework Requests

We encourage students and parents to check the grade level team's homework blog or teacher's Google Classroom or Showbie account for current homework and assignments on a daily basis. **Students with excused absences from school 2 or more consecutive days are eligible for homework requests.** Parents/guardians can call the main office or email the team leader with the student name and dates requested. Parents/guardians are encouraged to make requests at least 24 hours in advance to allow teachers time to prepare assignments. Homework should be picked up in the main office after 2:30 p.m.

## Parents and Homework

The frequency and duration of homework increases with each grade. As the students progress through the grades, they are expected to assume more responsibility for homework. As with all school experiences, homework should help students gain maturity and independence. Homework can help develop the ability to learn, work independently, develop study habits, and expand personal interests.

### Parents/Guardians should:

1. Understand the importance of homework in the development of study skills and mastery of the general subject.
2. Help the student to develop a sense of responsibility about completing assignments and meeting deadlines.
3. Provide a place, a time, and an atmosphere conducive to studying at home.
4. Understand that there is always a need for the student to review, preview, or improve a pending assignment.
5. Refrain from giving so much help that the value of the assignment is compromised.

Parents/guardians should inform teachers of problems with homework or of any problem or obligation, which may prevent a child from performing to capacity. In addition, teachers will inform parents/guardians if a child does not do their homework on a regular basis.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

Formal parent/guardian-teacher conferences are held in November. Parents/guardians who wish to have additional information about their child's progress or arrange for a parent/guardian meeting may contact the school counselor, the team leader, or the individual teacher with whom they'd like to meet.

### Conferences scheduled for this year are:

Tuesday, November 7, 2023

Thursday, November 9, 2023

## Parent Portal/Teacher Grade Book

You will receive a letter home that has directions to set up your user account, as well as directions to access grades, attendance, and other important information. **It is important that you do not share your login information with others!** If at any time, you lose your login information, please contact the main office.

## Report Cards

At all times, it is important for parents/guardians to check PowerSchool to view their student's grades. At the midpoint and end of each trimester, an email will be sent home indicating that parents/guardians can view their student's detailed grades through the Parent Portal. Paper report cards will not be printed for distribution. While parents/guardians can check grades at any time, teachers will be in contact with parents/guardians throughout the year when there are concerns related to a child's progress. In addition to this communication, parents/guardians may register their email addresses in the PowerSchool Portal to have automated messages sent to their email with updated grades. If you have questions about your child's grade, please email or call the teacher directly.

### Trimester Dates (\*Dates may change during the year due to school cancellations):

T1: August 31 - November 22, 2023

T2: November 23 - February 29, 2024

T3: March 1 - June 6, 2024

## **Study Hall Expectations**

**So that study hall can be a productive time for all students, the following expectations apply to all study halls:**

- Come prepared with the materials required to do your work.
- Maintain a quiet work time to maximize work completion.
- Always have a book for independent reading.
- Passes must be issued by your classroom teacher (not the study hall teacher).
- Remain seated at all times. Request teacher permission to leave your seat.
- Bathroom use only with teacher's permission (one student at a time). Students must sign out on a sheet.
- With teacher's permission, Chromebooks may be used for school work only.

Suggestions for what to do in Study Hall:

- Complete class assignments and homework
- Organize your notebook and take notes.
- Review, rewrite, and study notes
- Study vocabulary/spelling words
- Read your independent reading book

# **Chapter 3 – Support Services**

## **Accidents and Insurance**

An economical student accident insurance policy is available at the beginning of each school year. Applications will be available in each school office. School athletic insurance is a secondary coverage. If a student is injured in a school sport, medical bills must be submitted to the parent's insurance company first. The bills showing any unpaid balance are to be brought to the school secretary to be sent to the school insurance company.

## **Crisis Intervention Team**

Our school has a Crisis Intervention Team that is part of a system-wide safety team. The team is responsible for dealing with the impact of any major crisis that could affect the climate of the school.

## **School Counselor**

The purpose of the school counselor is to help with social, educational, vocational and personal development. The school counselor offers individualized and group counseling to support students during the transition into adolescence in the areas of educational, personal, and social development. The school counselor can offer assistance in planning school programs, improving study habits, and developing good decision-making skills and peer relationships. The school counselor is available to talk during study hall or at any time necessary. Parents/guardians may reach the school counselor by calling the school office.

## **Health Information/Services**

The Connecticut State Education Law requires that all school children have an immunization update and physical examination in grade six, or seven. New students have to show written proof that they are in compliance with state immunization regulations. New students from out-of-state are required to have an exam within 30 days of entry if they have not had an exam within the past year.

Scoliosis screenings are completed for grade 7 girls in the spring. Vision and hearing screenings are

completed on a case-by-case basis for selected and/or referred students. The nurse reports any possible defects found in these screenings to the parent(s)/guardian(s).

It is recommended that if a child has a fever, before they return to school, they should be fever free without medication for 24 hours.

## Immunizations and Physical Exams

In accordance with Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S. Sec 10-204a and 10-206c) and the Somers Board of Education policy, **to enter Grade 7 all students are required to:**

- Have a completed physical exam within the last 13 months
- Show proof of the following:
  - Tdap booster
  - Meningococcal vaccine
  - Second measles containing vaccine
  - Hepatitis A vaccine
  - Hepatitis B series
  - Second varicella vaccine (chicken pox) or proof of disease

## Infectious/Communicable Disease

According to the **BOE Policy 5141.22** all children have the right to an education at public expense and that all programs be offered to students in the least restrictive environment. When determining the least restrictive environment, the school system must take into consideration the health and safety of all students and staff. The Somers Board of Education recognizes the existence of many illnesses and physical conditions which could be a potential danger to students and staff members. When, in the opinion of school health professionals, these conditions exist, each case will be reviewed on an individual basis with any decision being based upon the most recent medical and educational information.

## Prescribed Medications/Nurse

During the school year, many of our children become susceptible to a variety of childhood ailments. Some of these health problems require children to take medication during school hours, as prescribed by a physician. A registered nurse is available at all times in the building while school is in session. We are always willing to assist parents and children in the care of these types of health problems. Medication deemed necessary by a parent, but not prescribed by a physician, should be scheduled around school hours by the parent. If it is necessary for school personnel to administer medication during school hours, we must abide by the Connecticut State Law, Public Act 723, which reads as follows:

1. Medication can only be administered to children legally when there is a physician's written order and a written authorization of a parent or guardian on file in the child's health office.
2. Parents or a responsible adult must bring the labeled medication to the school health office.

The children are responsible for coming to the nurse's office to take the medicine at the proper time. This includes aspirin and all over-the-counter medication. *School personnel cannot assume any responsibility for adverse effects of medication they administer.* The forms for administration of medicine in school are available in your physician's office and in the school health office.

## School Psychologist and Social Worker

The school social worker and school psychologist provide individual and peer group programs for social and mental health services that support and enhance students' educational progress. To this end, the social worker and school psychologist work with parents/guardians, children, school staff, and community agencies

with the goal of promoting parent-child relationships and school-home communication. The school psychologist also conducts achievement and cognitive testing at the direction of the school team.

## Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Team

The Student Support Team is a designated and specially trained team of school staff members. The team acts to identify and support students with academic or emotional issues that adversely affect school performance. This team of staff members acts on referrals from teachers, parents, and the administration. You may call the school counseling office if you feel your child may be in need of specific intervention.

During MTSS meetings:

- Statement of concern is reviewed and clarified.
- Student performance including previous testing, grades and other information available in the cumulative file, is reviewed.
- Student strengths and needs are identified.
- The team generates ideas for possible assistance or problem resolution.
- An individualized support plan is developed and implemented.
- Student progress is monitored and the plan is modified as necessary.

# Chapter 4 – Student Life

## After School Student Activities

Interscholastic sports consist of Field Hockey and Cross Country running in the fall. Intramurals offer an array of activities each year including Fitness Club and Basketball.

The school offers a variety of clubs and organizations that meet outside of the regular school day, including:

Drama Club	Book Club
Fitness Club	GSA Club
Games Club	Yearbook
Homework Club	Ski Club
Student Government	Environmental Club
Junior Beta Club	Art Club
Intramural Basketball	Percussion Club

Each year a number of special events and activities including dances, assemblies, spirit days and interdisciplinary events are hosted at MBA.

**Student Government**--Students participating in ASD are role models for the school. Students use study hall, before school, and after school to support the events of the school. Students also help decorate the hallways to brighten the learning environment.

**Junior Beta Club**--MBA is proud to recognize students with outstanding academic records and who exhibit exemplary leadership qualities, citizenship and behavior. ***The Beta Club Pledge: "I hereby declare that I shall always strive to be honest, and truthful at all times, to maintain a creditable scholastic record, to be of service to my teachers and fellow men, to conduct myself in an ethical and moral manner, to reflect upon my school and community. Let us lead by serving others."*** Junior Beta Club is reserved for



eighth grade students who made high honors in all three trimesters of their seventh grade year, as well as high honors the first trimester of their eighth grade year. Furthermore, students must have 5 hours of community service. Students must notify the Junior Beta Club sponsor (Mrs. Gioscia) of their interest in the club in September, as well as obtain a service hour log. Working with teachers and support staff, administration will review discipline history, attitude and citizenship before a student is inducted into the Junior Beta Club at MBA. As long as all requirements are met, students will be officially invited to join Junior Beta Club at the end of trimester one. An induction ceremony for National Junior Beta Club will be held during the school year. Continued membership is contingent upon upholding the pillars of Junior Beta.

## **MBA Student Pick-up and Drop-off Procedures**

In the interest of safety and efficiency, the following guidelines must be followed for students arriving or departing school by car. Pick-ups and drop-offs are to be made in the lower circle by the flagpole. Please review these procedures with your child. As we all know, parking lots are the most dangerous places to drive, let alone walk! The Library parking lot is reserved for Library patrons and should not be used for drop off or pick up.

### **Morning Drop-offs**

Please pull all the way forward in the front circle. The first vehicle in the line should stop at the gym entrance and the last one discharging should be along the same curb. This allows for about 15 vehicles to unload simultaneously. Students should only get out on the curb side. **Please do not pass cars that are discharging students. Wait until the car ahead of you pulls away.** Once the last car pulls away, the next group may pull forward. **Please do not discharge students into the parking lot - wait for a spot along the curb.**

### **Dismissal Pick-ups**

Our system is designed to avoid having students walk through the parking lot when cars are moving. For pick-ups at the end of the school day, we ask that parents pull into the circle upon arrival (no earlier than 2:15). Students being picked up by car are brought out as a group a few minutes after 2:20 and are directed to vehicles. The Library parking lot is reserved for patrons of the Public Library. Please use the school driveway for pick-ups and not the Library parking lot.

### **Walkers**

Students who are crossing over to the library lot must use the crosswalk near the central office doors. This reduces the amount of foot traffic through the MBA parking lot.

### **Bullying**

#### **Bullying - BOE Policy 5131.911**

Bullying behavior by any student in the Somers Public Schools is strictly prohibited, and such conduct may result in disciplinary action, including suspension and/or expulsion from school. "Bullying" means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same school district or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:

- A. Causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property,
- B. Places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property,
- C. Creates a hostile environment at school for such student,
- D. Infringes on the rights of such student at school, or
- E. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or physical, mental, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Students who engage in any act of bullying may be disciplined should the behavior have occurred on school grounds, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds, at a school bus stop, on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board of Education, and outside of the school setting if such bullying:

- A. Creates a hostile environment at school for the victim,
- B. Infringes on the rights of the victim at school, or
- C. Substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.

Students and/or parents may file verbal or written complaints concerning suspected bullying behavior, and students shall be permitted to anonymously report acts of bullying to school employees. Any report of suspected bullying behavior will be promptly reviewed. If acts of bullying are verified, prompt disciplinary action may be taken against the perpetrator, consistent with his/her rights of due process. Board policy and regulation #5131.911 set forth this prohibition and the related procedures in detail, and are available to students and their parents/guardians upon request.

## **Cyberbullying**

The district's computer network and the internet, whether accessed on campus or off campus, during or after school hours, may not be used for the purpose of harassment. All forms of harassment over the internet, commonly referred to as cyberbullying, are unacceptable and viewed as a violation of this policy and the district's acceptable computer use policy and procedures. **BOE Policy 5131.913**

Malicious use of the district's computer system to develop programs or to institute practices that harass other users or gain unauthorized access to any entity on the system and/or damage the components of an entity on the network is prohibited. Users are responsible for the appropriateness of the material they transmit over the system. Hate mail, harassment, discriminatory remarks, or other antisocial behaviors are expressly prohibited.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, or terrorizing another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images, or Web site postings, including blogs. It is also recognized that the author (poster or sender) of the inappropriate material is often disguised (logged on) as someone else.

In situations in which the cyberbullying originated from a non-school computer, but brought to the attention of school officials, any disciplinary action shall be based upon whether the conduct is determined to be disruptive of the educational process so that it markedly interrupts or severely impedes the day-to-day operations of a school.

## **Bus Safety Rules**

For the safety and convenience of all, rules for continued bus use are enforced. Proper behavior on the bus is expected of all students, and it should be understood that this service could be terminated if the safety of other children is endangered. Activity on the bus may be video-recorded and reviewed by the administration.

The following is an explanation of rules and safety procedures for riding on buses. Also, an explanation of disciplinary procedures for violation of these rules is included. Please spend a few minutes with your parents/guardians and go over these procedures.

Students should follow these rules:

1. Observe classroom conduct.
2. Be courteous. Use no profane language or gestures.
3. Do not eat or drink on the bus.
4. Keep the bus clean.
5. Cooperate and do what the bus driver requests.
6. The bus driver is authorized to assign seats.
7. Do not smoke/vape.
8. Do not damage the bus or equipment.
9. Stay in your seat.
10. Keep head, hands and feet inside the bus.
11. Do not fight, push or shove.
12. Do not tamper with bus equipment.
13. Do not bring pets on the bus.
14. Do not bring flammable material on the bus.
15. Have a safe trip.

Procedures for transportation safety and emergencies are detailed in **BOE Policy 3541.35**.

### **Bus Warning Referral System**

1st Referral	Warning to Detention
2nd Referral	Detention to 3-Day Suspension from Riding
3rd Referral	3-Day Suspension from Riding to 1-Week Suspension from Riding
4th Referral	1 Week to Indefinite Suspension from Riding

In the case of an indefinite suspension, a hearing will be necessary in order to reinstate bus privilege.

If deemed necessary by the Superintendent of Schools and the bus company, riding privileges may be suspended without using the above system.

When a bus referral is received:

1. The Principal will review and discuss the referral with the student.
2. The student's parent/guardian will be informed of the referral and the resultant action.
3. The student will complete the restorative and consequential requirements due to the behavior.

### **Chromebooks and Computers**

During the school day, both students and staff use Chromebooks for both whole class instruction and independent work. Students will log on only with their personal identification codes. Students are not allowed to use any other identification code. Personal identification codes are to be kept confidential. Any misuse of a personal identification code is the responsibility of the assigned user. Students are to save their files in their personal folders or on the Internet as directed by their teachers. Failure to save work in the appropriate place may result in loss of this information. **BOE Policy 6141.321** Chromebooks are not permitted in the cafeteria during lunch.

Students are not to attempt installation of their personal software without the Computer and Technology

Operations Specialist's permission. Any form of unauthorized access, accessing inappropriate sites, tampering, theft or willful destruction of any part of the computer system is considered a serious offense resulting in suspension from school and retribution of damages. For information regarding insurance and costs of repair, please visit the [Chromebook Central website linked here](#).

## Chromebook Games

Generally, games are prohibited from being played on the school devices without permission from staff. Before you are allowed to play a game on your Chromebook, you must have completed your homework and gotten caught up with missing work, have completed at least 15 minutes of reading during that period, and have received permission from your Study Hall teacher. Games are prohibited during class time. Students are limited to playing games that are pre-approved by the school and listed on the [Approved Games Website](#). Chromebooks are not permitted in the cafeteria during lunch.

## Dances

Admission to dances is for Grade 7 and 8 students only. Rules governing dances are the same as those followed during the school day.

1. Students who have detention or are not in school on the day of the dance are not allowed to attend.
2. If your behavior is not acceptable at any time during the dance, your parents/guardians will be notified and you will be asked to leave.
3. Students with major disciplinary infractions prior to the dance may be prohibited from attending.
4. School dances are for MBA students only.
5. Students are not permitted to leave the building during the dance.

## Dress Code

Students are expected to dress neatly and appropriately for school. Clothing which distracts others is not appropriate for school as it interferes with the learning process. Student attire needs to meet high standards of health, safety, cleanliness, and decency.

While the type of clothing one decides upon wearing is often a matter of personal taste, certain standards with regard to attire should be followed while a person is in school. Students must realize that the appearance of individuals has ramifications for their personal well-being and safety, the health and safety of others, and the school's learning environment. At any time when a student's clothing is deemed inappropriate, the student will be directed to call home or return home to find more suitable school attire. Other disciplinary consequences may be assigned for repeated or willful violations of the dress code.

Dress Code Requirements:

- a. For health and safety reasons, anyone who enters any part of the school building must wear shoes. For safety purposes, footwear policies in labs, PE, and technology classes are at the teachers' discretion.
- b. Pants must be worn on hips at all times. The bottoms of pants must not be of a circumference or of a length that causes them to create a safety hazard to the wearer or to a passerby. The bottoms of pants that drag along the floor or that have a circumference large enough to impede the walking of a passerby will be deemed unsafe. Safe lengths of pants must be achieved without the pants being held up by a person's hands.
- c. The hems of shorts, skirts, and dresses should extend to the longer of the fingertips when arms and hands are at sides or the midpoint between the hip and the knee. A slit in a skirt or dress should not extend above the longest fingertip when arms and hands are at the student's side.

- d. A complete blouse, shirt, or top that covers the midriff and cleavage area must be worn during the school day. Tops of dresses must also comply with this requirement. Sleeveless tops should be modest in nature and completely cover undergarments. Shirt straps should be at least 1" wide. Backless garments, such as backless blouses, halter tops, halter dresses, see-through clothing, spaghetti strap garments, tube tops and strapless tops and dresses are prohibited.
- e. Any clothing with vulgar, profane, lewd, or disruptive language or clothing bearing illustrations that promote alcohol, tobacco, or any other forms of substance use is prohibited.
- f. The wearing of pajamas/nightwear in school is prohibited except when approved through administration.
- g. All outerwear, which includes jackets, coats, hats, and hoods must be stored in hall lockers until dismissal time. Students are not allowed to wear or carry outer garments in the building as they travel to and from classes or special activities, such as assemblies. The hoods of hooded sweatshirts or other forms of attire must not be worn on a person's head in the school building.
- h. Attire that exposes undergarments is prohibited.
- i. Sunglasses may not be worn anywhere in the school building unless required by a doctor's order.
- j. Spiked or studded rings, bracelets, belts, collars, or other articles of attire with spikes attached are prohibited.
- k. Chains, with the exception of wallet chains, are prohibited; however, wallet chains may not exceed twelve inches in length.
- l. The administration may prohibit any attire deemed:
  - unsafe either for the student or those around the student;
  - disruptive of school operations and the education process in general;
  - contrary to law.

**Exceptions:** Exceptions to respect religious/cultural customs can be made with prior administrative approval. In the event of a heating system failure, a staff member who has received administrative approval may allow students to wear coats and jackets in a cold classroom. The administration may, on a limited basis, allow the wearing of prohibited articles of clothing in the interest of school spirit in events such as pep rallies or as a part of charitable fund-raising activities.

## **Fire Drills**

Public Act 09-131, which took effect on October 1, 2009, requires that fire drills shall be held at least once a month during the school year, and no later than 30 days after the first day of each school year; however, a school district must substitute a crisis response drill for a fire drill once every 3 months. Crisis response drills or practice lock-downs may occur often and in the same month as a fire drill.

1. Proceed silently under the direction of your teacher, out the designated fire exit for your classroom. Fire exits are posted in each class. Make sure you know the correct exit.
2. Should the alarm sound between classes, please leave by the nearest exit. Once outside, quickly report to your homeroom teacher on the sports fields.
3. Outside, your teacher will take attendance to be sure the entire class is accounted for and no one is left in the building.
4. Remain standing quietly with your class until your teacher tells you it is okay to go back into the school.

### **Fire Drill Procedures for Evacuation When Students are Not in Class**

(between classes, before school, after school)

1. Everyone should evacuate the building through the nearest exit. Staff members should direct students to leave the building immediately.
2. Silence is required at all times.
3. Once outside, students should meet their homeroom teachers on the field below the school. Eighth grade will line up nearest the road, then 7th, then 6th.
4. Teachers collect homeroom lists and fire drill forms in folders handed out on the slope below the road between the school and the field.
5. All staff members who are not homeroom teachers should report to the Principal or Assistant Principal on the road between the school and the field.
6. Runners assigned by the Principal or Assistant Principal will collect completed lists.
7. Once the "All Clear" is given,
  - a. 8th grade returns to building via the stairwell by the central office
  - b. 7th grade returns to building via the door by the tech room
  - c. 6th grade returns to building via the door between the 6th grade wing and the LMC

## **Harassment**

### **BOE Policy 5145.52**

The Board strives to provide a safe, positive learning environment in the schools. Therefore, harassment, in any form will not be tolerated. This policy applies to all students, staff members, Board members, parents, vendors, contracted individuals, volunteers, other employees and other visitors – who are on District grounds or property or on property within the jurisdiction of the District; on buses operated by or for the District; while attending or engaged in District activities; and while away from District grounds if the misconduct directly affects the good order, efficient management, and welfare of the District.

Employees, students, and others are expected to adhere to a standard of conduct that is respectful and courteous to all. The principle of freedom of expression that might otherwise protect the most offensive public speech does not protect or encompass a right to threaten the dignity and privacy of an individual. Such personally directed behavior will not be tolerated. It is contrary to academic values, debilitates its victims, compromised the offenders, and undermines the District's fundamental commitment to individual freedom and respect for all its members. Furthermore, acts of intolerance may destroy the very atmosphere in which freedom of expression is otherwise tolerated and cherished.

For purposes of this policy, harassment consists of verbal, written, graphic, or physical conduct relating to an individual's race, color, religion, sex, (including sexual harassment and pregnancy) national origin/ethnicity, physical attributes or disability, (including, but not limited to, mental retardation, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), parental or marital status, sexual orientation, including gender identity/expression of age when such conduct/harassment:

1. is sufficiently severe, persistent or pervasive that it affects an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from an educational program or activity, creates an intimidating, threatening or abusive educational environment;
2. has the purpose or effect of substantially or unreasonably interfering with an individual's academic performance; and
3. otherwise adversely affects an individual's learning opportunities.

Harassment as set forth above may include, but is not limited to:

- verbal, physical, or written intimidation or abuse;
- repeated remarks of a demeaning or condescending nature;

- repeated demeaning jokes, stories, or activities directed at the individual

The Board strictly prohibits retaliation against any person for filing a complaint, for aiding or encouraging the filing of a report or complaint, or for cooperating in an investigation of discrimination or harassment. The Board considers/treats retaliation as a form of discrimination.

Any student who believes that he or she has been the victim of bullying, cyberbullying or retaliation should report it immediately to a member of the school staff. Students, parents and members of the school staff (including but not limited to educators, administrators, school nurse, cafeteria worker, custodian, bus driver, coach, advisor, advisor to an extracurricular activity, or paraprofessional), who witness or become aware of bullying, cyberbullying, or retaliation should immediately report it to the Principal or Principal designee, the Safe School Climate Specialist. Reports of bullying or cyberbullying will be promptly investigated.

## **How to Succeed in School**

### **Be responsible!**

- Respect the rights and personal property of others.
- Show respect to teachers and peers.

### **Pay attention!**

- Listen to announcements.
- Read all information from teachers.
- Bring home parent letters.

### **Be organized!**

- Use your handbook.
- Write down assignments.
- Complete all homework.

### **Get involved!**

- Join a committee or club.
- Play a sport.
- Volunteer for special events

### **Success in School**

1. Be on time to class.
2. As you enter the classroom, sit in your assigned seat.
3. Be prepared for class; have your notebook, Chromebook, textbook, and homework available.
4. Take direction from your teacher. Make sure you understand what is expected of you for each class.
5. Ask for additional help when you don't understand something.
6. Be cooperative and respectful and complete all class work.
7. Ask the teacher's permission if you need to leave the classroom for any reason.
8. Wait until the teacher dismisses you before leaving the room.

## **Library Media Center**

The library media center is open during school hours and includes quiet study space, a reading nook, and a makerspace. Library passes from study halls are issued by subject area teachers or by the school library media specialist. Study hall teachers do not issue passes. Library materials may be borrowed for two weeks and may be renewed. Although no fines are charged on overdue materials, other students and staff may be waiting to use the materials you have borrowed. Lost materials should be reported to the library media specialist immediately. You are responsible for replacing lost materials or paying the replacement cost set by the school. The media center staff welcomes your request for information or specific materials. Please ask for help if needed. You are encouraged to make use of our library media center for all academic needs.

## Locker Use

Students in all grades are assigned lockers. Students are responsible for keeping the locker closed and locked at all times. Students should not share locker combinations with friends. The lockers belong to the school; students have the privilege of using the lockers and the responsibility to take good care of them. Desks and school lockers are the property of the schools placed for the temporary use of students. The right to inspect desks and lockers assigned to students may be exercised by school officials without prior notice.

**BOE Policy 5145.12**

## Lunch Behavior Expectations

1. Proceed down to the cafeteria in an orderly way, being sensitive to the classes that are in session.
2. Stand in line in an orderly fashion without pushing or cutting.
3. Students are limited to two snacks per day. If more snacks are needed by an individual student, they must come with a note from a parent/guardian.
4. Seating arrangements will be at the discretion of the teachers on lunch duty and the administration.
5. All talk should be at a conversational level.
6. Students are expected to demonstrate common courtesy and good manners (picking up after themselves, eating properly, etc.).
7. No glass containers may be brought to school.
8. Sharing of food is prohibited (per the district food allergy policy).
9. Students may not borrow money from other students.
10. All students are responsible for wiping the table and leaving the table area clean.
11. All students should recycle as appropriate (plastic bottles, milk cartons, cans, yogurt containers).
12. Students must remain seated (in the same seat) during lunch except to purchase food and to clear and clean the table before dismissal.
13. Students must sign out to leave the cafeteria (lavatory, eat with a teacher, etc).
14. Students must quiet down immediately and give undivided attention to the lunch supervisors when announcements are being made. This is a safety issue - lunch supervisors need to be able to get everyone's attention immediately.
15. Teachers dismiss students by table in an orderly fashion.
16. No food or drink may be brought out of the cafeteria.
17. Upon dismissal, walk to class, maintain a noise level that is appropriate for a school setting, and respect that there may be classes going on.

**Students who do not follow these expectations of good behavior will be subject to disciplinary action and may lose the privilege to eat in the cafeteria.**

## Lunch Service Information

Somers Public Schools partners with Whitsons Culinary Group to manage their school food services and provide nutritious meals for the students. There is an [online portal](#) to service student's payment needs for school lunch. MyPaymentsPlus allows for parents to put money in their student's account, be aware of their balance, pay outstanding balances, see their payment history, and view cafeteria purchases. Any questions about the portal can be answered by going to [this site](#). If a parent would like to have a daily spending limit put on their student's account, they can send a written request to food services by emailing [cafeteria@somers.k12.ct.us](mailto:cafeteria@somers.k12.ct.us) and the cafeteria staff can enter a note on the student's account. Changes could take up to 2 business days to be in effect.



The cafeteria will always provide an entree for a student whether there is a positive or negative balance, but the account will still be charged. Main entrees are \$3.75 at MBA. If a student does have a negative balance, they cannot buy a snack or an a la cart item against their account.

Further, if your student's account carries a negative balance, the District will communicate home with the family. Somers School District's Business Office will send an email and text every Friday to alert those families whose student has a negative balance. Additionally, the Business Office will send a letter home once a month when students have a negative balance.

[The Food Services website](#) answers commonly asked questions and posts the application for Free and Reduced lunch.

## **Morning Arrival**

In the interest of safety, your cooperation is requested regarding arrival at the appropriate time. Without available supervision and the potential for liability, students are not permitted to be at school before 7:25 a.m. Parents/guardians are requested to use the designated drop-off area assigned by the Principal.

## **No-School Announcements and Emergency Notices**

During the school year, there may be days when school is closed or school opening delayed due to inclement weather or other emergency. This decision is made by the Superintendent of Schools and announced over radio stations WTIC, WRCH and television channels 3, 8, 22, 30 and 40 between 5:00 a.m. and 8:00 a.m. You may also get the information on the district web page at [www.somers.k12.ct.us](http://www.somers.k12.ct.us).

Emergency notices that affect the entire district are recorded on the school district voice mail system and appear on the school district website. When there are emergency notices, you will hear them when you call the main district phone number (860-749-2270). Emergency notices are also posted on the homepage of the school district web site (<http://www.somers.k12.ct.us>).

## **Personal Electronic Devices/Cell Phones**

BOE Policy 5131.81 states that, all cell phones, smart watches, and/or electronic devices not used for instructional purposes must be turned off during class time. The policy also allows for building administration to limit the use of cellphones and smart watches in the building as deemed appropriate. The school district provides each student with the technology necessary for academic success in school. Therefore, personal devices are not permitted to be used during the school day.

Teachers have the ability to monitor acceptable use through software that is installed on each of the student's school devices. This helps with monitoring academic task completion and ensuring students are focused on appropriate tasks during the school day. Students may bring their cellphones to school. Accordingly, the following regulations apply at the Mabelle B. Avery Middle School:

- Cell phones, smart watches, and other electronic devices shall be turned off during school hours and at any school sponsored events where there is a reasonable expectation of quiet attentiveness or where use of the device would cause any disruption unless there is a bona fide health or safety emergency or sanctioned educational purpose.
- Upon entering the room for each class, students will deposit their cell phones and smart watches in the caddy available at the front of the room. Students will be able to retrieve their phones and watches at the end of the class as they exit for their next class.

- Students found using any electronic communication device to in any way send or receive personal messages, data, or information that would contribute to or constitute cheating on tests or examinations shall be subject to discipline and the device shall be confiscated and returned to a parent/guardian. Students violating this rule may be disallowed from carrying any personal communication device following the incident unless a bona fide health emergency exists.
- Students may use their phones to communicate with a parent/guardian or listen to music through headphones during lunch. Phone use is not permitted at any other time during the school day without first reporting to the office for permission.
- “Walkie Talkies” or portable games or toys that transmit a communication signal are not allowed in the schools in any circumstances unless specific permission has been granted by the building Principal or the Superintendent.
- Electronic devices used without authorization will be confiscated by faculty members and given to the Principal or Assistant Principal. Repeat offenders will have the device returned only to their parents or guardians and other consequences may apply.

When a student is using a cell phone outside of the cafe and a teacher brings it to the office with a referral:

First referral to office	A warning and meeting with administrator; parent contact
Second referral to office	After school detention
Third and subsequent referrals to office	After school detention(s); Parent/guardian must pick up the phone

**If parents or guardians need to communicate a message to students during the school day, they may do so by contacting the school main office at 860-749-2270 ext. 2601.**

## Personal Property

The school does not assume responsibility for loss, damage, or theft of personal property i.e. video games, cell phones, computers, etc. Keep your lunch money in a safe place and lock your lockers. Students are responsible for their own personal property.

## Physical Education

All students attend physical education classes. They are assigned lockers in the locker room for clothes and valuables to be locked up. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen articles that are not locked in the assigned lockers. Required clothing: sneakers, socks, gym shorts or sweatpants, and tee shirt. Each child should take responsibility for being prepared for gym class. If you are to be excused from P.E. for more than one or two days, a written medical excuse from a doctor is required.

## Physical Exams for Sports

In order for a student to participate in interscholastic sports at the middle school (Field Hockey & Cross Country), he/she must have a physical exam. Somers Board of Education policy (**BOE Policy 6145.21**) requires a physical exam prior to practicing and playing in any interscholastic sport. This physical exam will be valid for thirteen months provided the athlete sustains no serious illness or injury during that period of time.

## School Resource Officer

Somers Public Schools has one school resource officer who circulates between the buildings on campus. The resource officer is here to build relationships between law enforcement and students, educate students

about the law, and to support school safety practices. Students, parents/guardians, and staff are encouraged to seek assistance from the school resource officer as appropriate.

## School Volunteers

Parent/guardian volunteers are an integral part of our school community. Parents/guardians assist the school community by volunteering on field trips, in school, on committees, special grade level events, field days, or as chaperones. Parents/guardians -- If you are interested in volunteering at our school, please call the school office at 860-749-2270, ext. 2601.

## Student Responsibilities

Activities that interfere with learning, safety, and violate others' rights will not be tolerated and consequences will be invoked.

1. Distractions such as, laser pointers, toys, electronic games, skateboards, pets etc. are not to be brought to school.
2. No food or beverage is allowed in the halls or classrooms during school time without prior permission. Gum chewing is not allowed in school.
3. Throwing or possessing potentially harmful objects such as snowballs, ice, rocks, paper, paper clips, rubber bands, coins, chains, erasers, etc. is not permitted.
4. Students have the right to be free from physical harm, harassment, or threats by others. All such cases should be reported to the office.
5. Displays of affection such as kissing are not appropriate in a school setting.
6. Respect for all school property. Compensation is expected if any damage is done to school property.

**Please Note:** For safety reasons students are not permitted to remain on school grounds if they are not participating in a planned after school activity. If they are not participating in a planned after school activity, students must either take their designated bus home or be picked up no later than 2:25 p.m. by a parent or guardian.

## Textbooks

When textbooks are issued, write your name and date on the bookplate. Book covers are required on all school books. It is your responsibility to properly care for all books and other materials which have been issued to you. You should have a notebook to hold your papers. You will be held accountable for returning each textbook in good condition.

## Transportation

Students at the Mabelle B. Avery Middle School ride to school on a bus. Therefore, the buses are often filled to capacity. If a student needs to ride a different bus home, please send a note with your child stating the bus change, the reason for the change, and the dates the change will be in effect. Bus passes will be issued at lunch on the day of the change. Notes must be received by 10:00 on the day of the change. Any effort to provide the office with these notes 24 hours in advance is greatly appreciated. Students cannot change bus assignments without receiving a written pass from the main office.

## Visitors

As a school district, we continue to work diligently to improve school safety. Front entrance monitors have

been hired to greet and check-in all visitors arriving at the school. The presence of the monitors at the front door will increase the safety of all our school occupants. Monitors will be responsible for “buzzing” visitors in, verifying their identity (through Driver’s License or State issued ID), signing them in/out, directing them to their appointments, and calling down students who will be dismissed early, as well as other tasks. This will help make our schools more secure as visitors will not gain entrance to the school interior unless there is a legitimate reason or previously arranged appointment.

## Chapter 5 – Discipline

Our goal is to create a positive and safe environment that promotes opportunities for learning and growth. This environment is created through a climate in which mutual respect and trust are displayed. Every student is expected to function as a decision-making citizen who respects the rights of others. All students of the Mabelle B. Avery Middle School are therefore expected to practice self-discipline, to obey school rules, and to follow the normal social rules of good behavior.

### Classroom Expectations

- Be on time and prepared for class.
- Follow directions the first time given.
- Remain in assigned seat.
- Raise hand and wait to be recognized.
- Be courteous and respectful to everyone.

### Drugs and Alcohol

The Board of Education prohibits student possession, use, and/or distribution of any drugs, alcohol, or drug paraphernalia or being under the influence of any drug or alcohol. Any student found to be violating this student conduct policy would be dealt with in accordance with the regulations set by Board of Education policy. The consequences of such violations may ultimately result in the expulsion from school and/or criminal prosecution.

Recognizing the potential of each student and that drug or alcohol abuse and dependency can seriously impair a student’s ability to learn, it is the policy of the schools to take positive actions to prevent drug and alcohol abuse. These actions will be through education, early intervention, parental involvement, medical and/or assessment referral, and police referral in the handling of incidents in the schools involving the possession, sale, and/or use of behavior-affecting substances. **(BOE Policy 5131.6 - Drugs, Tobacco, Alcohol)** School authorities in the interest of maintenance, health, and safety may inspect school properties. Inspections for the location of drugs, narcotics, liquor, weapons, poisons and missing properties are matters relating to health and safety and may be regarded as reasonable purposes for inspection by school personnel. **(BOE Policy 5145.12 - Search and Seizure)** Disciplinary procedures will be administered with the best interest of the student, school population, and community in mind as the result of a team decision. Personal privacy rights of students shall be protected as provided by law.

### Expulsion

The Board of Education may expel any student whose conduct endangers persons or property, or who is seriously disruptive of the educational process, or who violates a published policy of the Board of Education provided a public hearing is held under Connecticut Statutes. **(BOE Policy 5114)**

## Illegal Substances

Smoking, use of nicotine/vapor products, alcohol, and the use of illegal drugs are not permitted at the Mabelle B. Avery Middle School. Smoking, or use of nicotine/vapor products, are not permitted on school grounds, by students, staff, parents, or visitors. It is the policy of Somers Schools to take police action in the handling of incidents in the schools involving the possession or use of illegal substances including but not limited to alcohol, drugs and weapons such as knives and guns. School and police authorities in the interest of health and safety may inspect school property. School personnel may regard inspections for the location of illegal substances as reasonable for inspection.

## Office Detention

Office detention is issued only by the administration for infraction of school rules. Parents/guardians will be notified of the detention and the infraction of the school rule. Office detention is served with the Office Detention Paraeducator. Students must report on the day assigned. Detention assignment has precedence over all other after school activities. If you are absent on the assigned day, you will serve it on the day you return. **Additional consequences may apply for missing detention.** Detention runs from 2:25 - 3:00. Transportation is the responsibility of parents/guardians.

## Saturday Detention

Saturday detention is issued only by the administration for an infraction or pattern of infractions of school rules. Parents/guardians will be notified of the Saturday detention and the reason for issuance. Saturday Detention will be served in the Cafeteria on the date assigned from 8:00-11:00 a.m. and will be monitored by two staff members. This consequence takes precedence over all other school activities. Additional consequences may apply for missing Saturday Detention. All school rules apply during the Saturday Detention period. Students are strongly encouraged to bring school work and a book to read. Transportation is the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

## Office Referral

If you do not follow school rules or teacher direction and/or you exhibit inappropriate behavior, you could be referred to the office by means of an online Behavior Tracking Sheet. The office will take appropriate action. In addition to detention or suspension, when appropriate, you may be required to perform other means of restitution, such as school community service. Restorative practices accompany disciplinary consequences.

## Severe Clause

Any action by a student, which jeopardizes the safety of another, or shows blatant misbehavior with malice towards another student or staff member, may cause the administrator to enact this Severe Clause. Under this clause, the administrator may begin disciplinary action or do whatever the administrator deems necessary. Examples of such blatant misbehavior may include, but are not limited to the following: fighting, defying authority, possession of any illegal substance or possession of a dangerous instrument, destruction of property, etc.

## Suspension

Students may be disciplined for conduct on or off school grounds or at any school-sponsored activity that endangers persons or property, is seriously disruptive of the educational process, previous disciplinary problems that have led to suspension or that violates a publicized policy of the Board of Education. Suspension will be served either in school or out of school. **(BOE Policy 5114 outlines suspension procedures.) Suspended students may not participate in school activities on the day(s) of**

**suspension.** If it is determined to be appropriate and necessary, the administration may place a student on a probationary period during which time they may not take part in any extra-curricular or out of the regular classroom activities such as field trips and dances. Out-of-school suspension will be used for the most serious of school offenses. Repeated suspensions, or an accumulation of detentions during the school year may result in the loss of class activities, such as field trips, assemblies and other special privileges.

Examples of violations that may result in consideration for suspension or expulsion:

- Insubordination/defiance - refusal to obey a school staff member.
- Lying to a school staff member.
- Use of profanity - language or gestures.
- Theft.
- Vandalism (willful destruction of school property).
- Possession, using, or selling/distributing of illegal substances (drugs, alcohol, tobacco, vaping) or medications such as aspirin, ibuprofen, etcetera.
- Possession of weapons, including jackknife.
- Fighting, hitting, kicking, or otherwise assaulting a student or school staff member.
- Harassment.
- Threatening, or otherwise intimidating students or school staff members.
- Leaving the school building or grounds during the school day without permission.

## Teacher Detention and Other Consequences

Teachers may assign consequences to students who are not meeting classroom expectations. Consequences can range from a conversation and warning, to parent/guardian contact, to an office referral (for repeated or serious infractions). Teacher detention is assigned by the teacher and served in the classroom. In all cases, the student and parent/guardian will be given 24 hours notice. Students must report on the day assigned. This detention assignment has precedence over all other after school activities (except office detention or suspension). If the student is absent on the assigned day, he/she will serve it on the day he/she returns. **Additional consequences, including an office referral, may apply for missing a teacher detention.** Transportation is the responsibility of parents/guardians.

## Tobacco

Smoking, possession of smoking materials, or other use of tobacco products by students of Somers Public Schools is prohibited by BOE Policy 5131.6.

- Prohibited in all school buildings, on school grounds, on recreational fields, on transportation provided by the Board of Education, or at any time when the student is subject to the supervision of designated school personnel such as when the student is at any school function, extracurricular event, field trip, or school-related activity such as a work-study program.
- Any student found to be in violation of the tobacco policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

An ongoing program of student support and counseling will be offered to provide support for students who wish to break the smoking habit.

## Use of Physical Force and Seclusion Policy

(DBS Code: 5144.1)

Public Act 07-147 requires the district to inform parents/guardians of its policy specific to the use of physical force and seclusion, which may be used by staff to protect a student from harming him/herself or to protect others from harm. This policy may be accessed on the district website: [www.somers.k12.ct.us](http://www.somers.k12.ct.us)

## Weapons and Dangerous Instruments

Students shall not possess firearms, facsimiles of firearms, knives, weapons or dangerous instruments of any kind, including martial arts weapons, in school buildings, on school grounds, on school transportation or at any school-related or school-sponsored activity away from school facilities. Violators shall be subject to suspension and/or expulsion from school.

Possession of or bringing such weapons or devices on school grounds or other areas under the control of the Board of Education may also be a violation of criminal law and, therefore, any violation of this policy shall be reported immediately to the proper law enforcement agency and the Board of Education. The parent(s) or guardian(s) shall also be notified immediately. Students who violate this policy shall be subject to appropriate school disciplinary action, as well as possible criminal or civil action. (BOE Policy 5131.7)

A student who, off school grounds, unlawfully possessed a firearm as defined in 18 USC 921 or used a firearm, dangerous instrument or deadly weapon in the commission of a crime as defined by law, shall be subject to expulsion proceedings and the length of the expulsion shall be one calendar year, subject to reduction on a case-by-case basis.



## Chapter 6 – District Policies

The policies listed below are a selected representation of the Somers Public Schools district policies. Some of the policies and regulations have been referenced and abbreviated in the handbook. Access to the complete district policy manual, along with Board of Education meeting agendas and minutes may be obtained through our district website ([www.somers.k12.ct.us/district/](http://www.somers.k12.ct.us/district/)) located in the District menu under Central Office/BOE.

**AIDS Instruction - BOE Policy 6144.1**

**Asbestos Management Plan** – A plan is on file in the district office.

**Attendance and Excuses - BOE Policy 5113**

**Bullying - BOE Policy 5131.911**

**Child Abuse - BOE Policy 5141.4**

**Cleaning Program** – A list of environmentally preferable products used in the schools may be obtained from the district's business manager or director of maintenance.

**Comparability of Services - BOE Policy 6161.3**

**Cyberbullying – BOE Policy 5131.913**

**Dietary Needs - BOE Policy 5141.25**

**Drugs/Alcohol/Tobacco - BOE Policy 5131.6**

**Electronic Devices – BOE Policy 5131.81**

**English Language Learners - BOE Policy 6141.31**

**Grading System - BOE Policy 6146.1**

**Graduation Requirements/Standards of Proficiency – BOE Policy 6146**

**Grievance Procedures (Title IX) - BOE Policy 5145.6**

**Harassment – BOE Policy 5145.52**

**Health/Medical Records - BOE Policy 5125.3**

**Homeless Students - BOE Policy 5118**

**Homework - BOE Policy 6154**

**Medication - BOE Policy 5141.21**

**Migrant Students - BOE Policy 6141.312**

**Non-Discrimination - BOE Policy 5141.4**

**Pesticides - BOE Policy 3516.11**

**Physical Restraint and Seclusion - BOE Policy 5144.1**

**Pledge of Allegiance – BOE Policy 6115**

**Posting of Public Notices in Schools – BOE Policy 1110.1**

**Promotion/Acceleration/Retention - BOE Policy 5123**

**Psychotropic Drug Use - BOE Policy 5141.23**

**Public Schools of Choice - BOE Policy 5117.1**

**Recruitment Policy - BOE Policy 5125**

**Reporting to Parents - BOE Policy 5124**

**Smoke Free Environment - BOE Policy 1331.1**

**Student Searches - BOE Policy 5145.12, Admin Reg 5145.12**

**Suicide Prevention - BOE Policy 5141.5**

**Survey of Students (Student Privacy) - BOE Policy 6162.51**

**Suspension/Expulsion/Due Process - BOE Policy 5114**

**Student Records; Confidentiality - BOE Policy 5125**

**Sexual Harassment Policy BOE Policy 5145.5**



**Technology - BOE Policy 6141.321**

**Title I Parental Involvement - BOE Policy 6172.5**

**Transportation - BOE Policy 3541**

**Transportation Complaints/Procedures 3541.36**

**Use of Physical Force and Seclusion - BOE Policy 5144.1**

**Weapons and dangerous instruments - BOE Policy 5131.7**

**Youth Suicide Prevention - BOE Policy 5141.5**

## **Non-Discrimination Statement**

The Somers Public Schools is committed to equal opportunity for all students, applicants and employees. The district does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, disability (including, but not limited to, mental retardation, past or present history of mental disability, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, gender identity or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. Inquiries regarding the District's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to Mrs. Dina Senecal, Title IX Coordinator, 1 Vision Boulevard, Somers, CT 06071, 860-749-2270 x2039 or Dr. Denise Messina, Section 504 Coordinator, 1 Vision Boulevard, Somers, CT 06071, 860-749-2270 x2035.

## **Student Support Plan Strategies**

All students are required to set SMART goals at the beginning of each year and review them periodically throughout the year. The SMART goal-setting process ensures that every goal is measurable and clear. The advantages of the SMART goal-setting process are:

- Provides a structured approach to a complex task;
- Gives a clear framework for creating meaningful and achievable goals;
- Accommodates all kinds of goals;
- Is easy to teach others how to develop;
- Helps to define goals in terms that can be widely understood; and
- Requires thinking through the implementation as well as the outcome.

The characteristics of SMART goals are:

- **Specific and Strategic**  
The goal should be well defined enough that anyone with limited knowledge of your intent should understand what is to be accomplished.
- **Measurable**  
Goals need to be linked to some form of a common measure that can be used as a way to track progress toward achieving the goal.
- **Aligned and Attainable**  
The goal must strike the right balance between being attainable and aligned to standards but lofty enough to impact the desired change.
- **Results-Oriented**  
All goals should be stated as an outcome or result.
- **Time-Bound**  
The time frame for achieving the goal must be clear and realistic.

## SMART goals Dos and Don'ts

### DO:

- Create a plan
- Start small
- Write it down
- Be specific
- Track your progress
- Celebrate your success
- Ask for support sooner than later
- Make commitments

### DON'T

- Expect to accomplish without effort
- Focus on too much at once
- Forget to make a deadline
- Deal in absolutes
- Expect perfection
- Keep your goal on a shelf
- Beat yourself up over shortcomings
- Try to accomplish it alone
- Forget that you CAN DO IT!

# School Calendar of Events 2023 - 2024

<b>Date(s)</b>	<b>Event</b>
August 31	First day of school
September 26, 2023	Picture Day
September 28	Open House for All Grades
November 7, 9	Parent Conferences
November 8	Picture Day Retakes
November 22	First Trimester Ends
February 29	Second Trimester Ends
Last day of school	Third Trimester Ends