



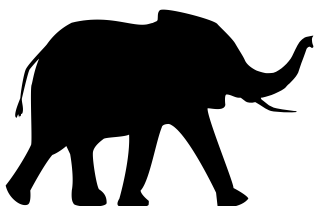
2024-25



FORWARD IN EXCELLENCE REPORT



Somers Central School District
Comprehensive Report



SOMERS
Central School District
Forward in Excellence

SOMERS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
250 ROUTE 202, SOMERS, NEW YORK 10589

WWW.SOMERSSCHOOLS.ORG

MISSION

Somers Central School District will ignite a passion in each student by engaging all learners at a personal level to ensure success in a global society.



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Family and Community Engagement

A Message to Our Community

Welcome to the Somers Central School District.

As a community, and a family, we strive to ignite a passion for discovery and exploration and to foster a lifelong love of learning in all students.

We are deeply committed to ensuring that all children feel that they are valued members of our school community. In Somers, we educate the whole child by equipping each student with 21st century knowledge and skills, emphasizing social, emotional, and physical wellness, and modeling a spirit of global citizenship.

By partnering with the Somers community, we aim to build consensus and to move Forward in Excellence in our schools in a way that enjoys enthusiastic support from parents and other stakeholders.

None of this would be possible without the endless devotion of our teachers, parents, students, staff, and community members. Each plays a vital role in helping to prepare our children for success in a global society. I thank you all.

You can read more about the results of the process in the following pages.

In partnership,
Harry

INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
Harry LeFevre



2024-25

About the Report

The annual Somers Central School District Forward in Excellence Report is a comprehensive overview of the accomplishments related to the mission of the Somers Central School District. The district uses the Elements of Excellence, clearly defined below, as the framework to guide decision-making to ensure the development of the Whole Child.

At different times during the year, the data and information about an individual Element will be presented to the community at Board of Education meetings.

ELEMENTS OF EXCELLENCE

Professional Learning Communities

SCSD will cultivate a community of professional learners focused on advancing student success.

Social, Emotional & Physical Wellness

SCSD will advance social, emotional, and physical wellness in all learners to successfully navigate current and future experiences.

21st Century Knowledge & Skills

SCSD will ensure the intellectual growth and development of critical skills so that all learners can thrive in an ever-changing world.

Global Citizenship

SCSD will nurture a sense of responsibility, belonging, and acceptance in all students and foster a respectful understanding of broader perspectives.

Fiscal Stewardship

SCSD is committed to responsible financial planning and allocation of resources to ensure a safe learning environment where all students achieve excellence.

Family and Community Engagement

SCSD will strengthen and nurture connections across the Somers community through engagement, constructive partnerships, and the inclusion of all voices.



FORWARD IN EXCELLENCE

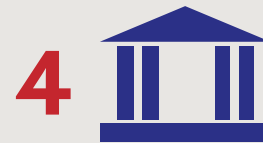
About Somers CSD

Somers is a suburban community located in Westchester County about 45 miles north of New York City. It is home to some of the finest schools in New York State. Our two campuses are the hub of activity in the town of Somers and foster collaboration between the school district and the community.

Our district is committed to the development of the whole child, encompassing three fundamental areas:

- 21st Century Knowledge & Skills
- Social, Emotional, & Physical Wellness
- Global Citizenship

The programs and teaching methods are designed to meet the needs of each individual learner, focusing on the knowledge and skills necessary to solve problems, think critically and creatively, and work collaboratively and cooperatively with others.



Schools



Students



275 Teachers

184

(Full time)

69

(Part time)

Support Staff

18 Administrators

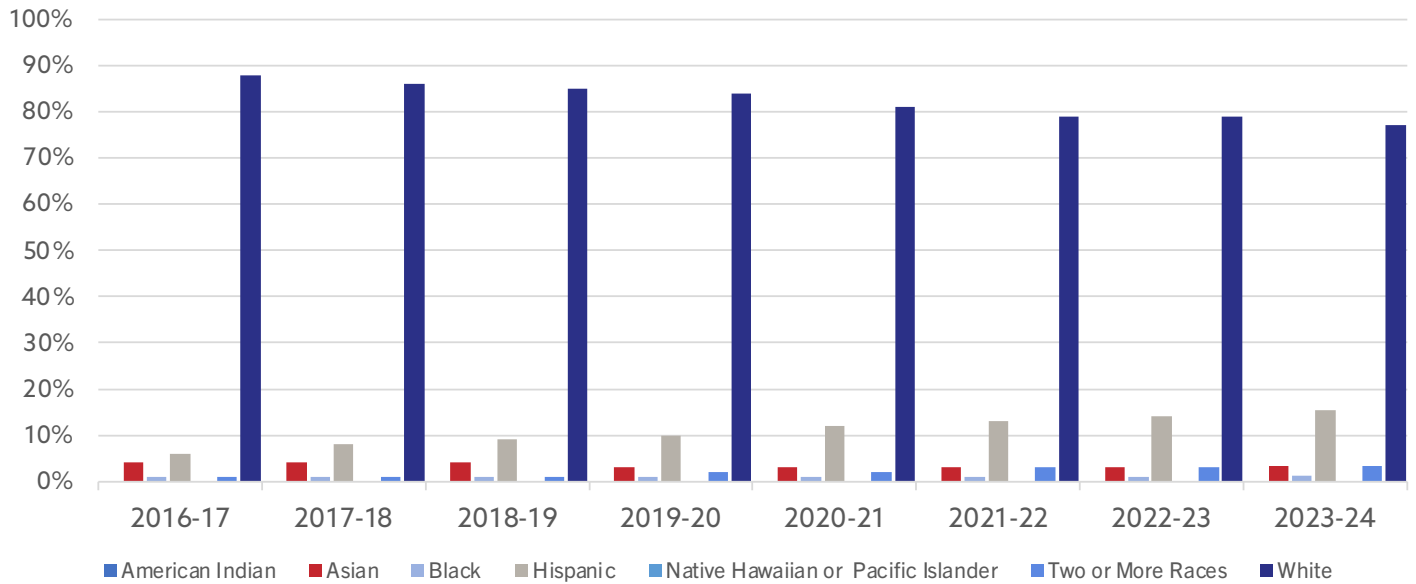
*Excludes out of district enrollment

**Employee data for 2024-25 school year

SCSD Demographics

Somers Central School District is an increasingly diverse district. In the year 2023-2024, at least seven languages were spoken in district homes.

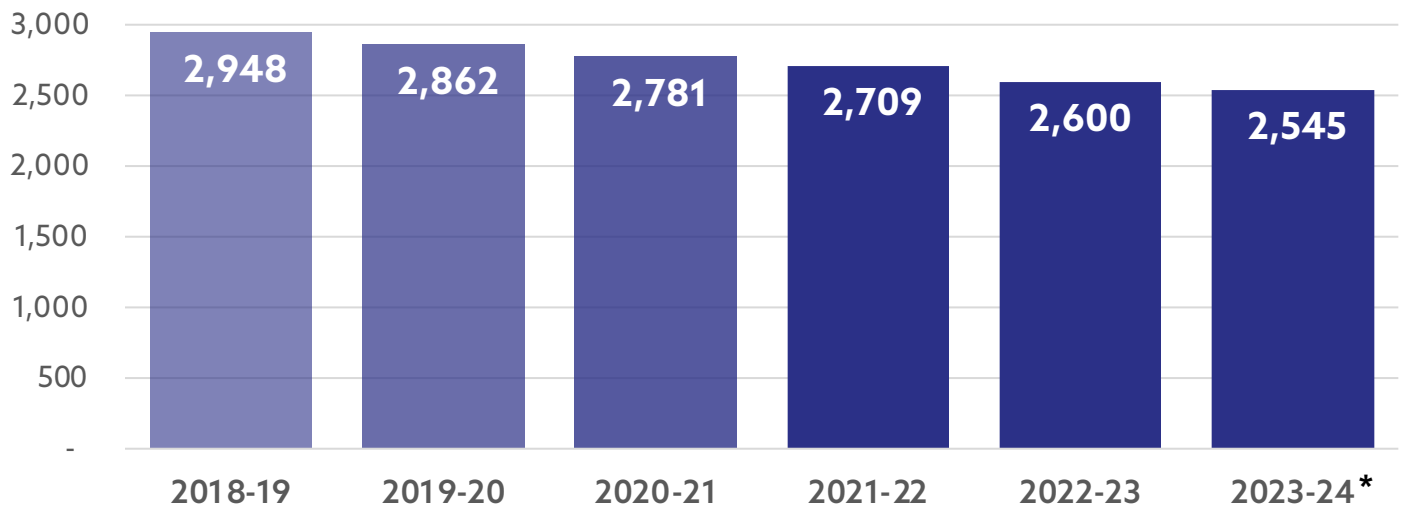
In the last 12 years, the number of students in the district identifying as non-white increased from 8% to 21%. By 2030, that number is projected to increase to 25%.



Building Enrollment

The number of students enrolled in Somers public schools has been decreasing since 2012, due to declining birth rates. At the elementary and middle schools, enrollment has reached the lowest projected level of 175-200 students per grade, where it is expected to remain. As those smaller classes progress through the high school, total enrollment at the high school will level out at approximately 800 students. As enrollment decreases, SCSD is reducing staffing through attrition.

Total Enrollment Over a 6-Year Period



Information based on latest data available from the New York Basic Education Data System
 * This number is approximate, final number will be reported in October 2024.

ELEMENTS OF EXCELLENCE

Professional Learning Communities

SCSD will cultivate a community of professional learners focused on advancing student success.



SCSD strategically engages adult learners in being active contributors to a professional learning community (PLC) by continuously engaging the following questions:

“What do we want our students to know, be able to do, and understand?”

“How do we know what our students know, are able to do, and can understand?”

“What do we do when students don’t know, aren’t able to do, or can’t understand?”

“What do we do when they already know, are able to do, and understand?”



Stakeholder Engagement

The Learning Office provides professional learning for faculty and staff, including teaching assistants and aides, clerical workers, monitors, bus drivers, and food service workers. We also ensure that families, community members, and students are engaged in learning throughout the year.



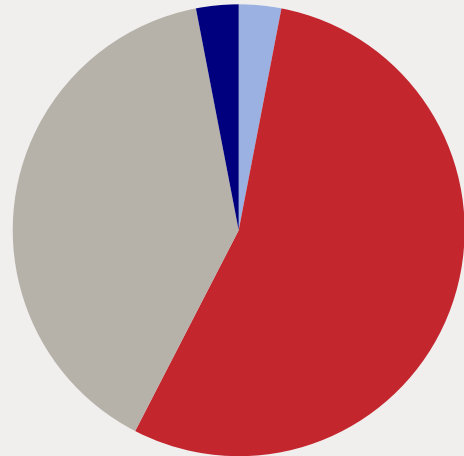
When, What, and How We Learn

FOCUS AREAS



All faculty and staff participated in professional learning during the 2023-24 school year. Opportunities included professional learning days, faculty meetings, teacher-facilitated workshops, and conferences.

Faculty & Staff



■ 0-9 Years ■ 10-19 Years ■ 20-29 Years ■ 30+ Years

Average Years of Experience per Teachers

98%
in 2024

Teacher Retention Rate

97% of Teachers have a Masters Degree

23 Average In-House Professional Learning Hours per Teacher for 2023-24





What Drives Our Professional Learning

The Learning Office works closely with faculty and staff to design the district's professional learning experiences. Our professional learning priorities:

Increase teacher voice, choice and agency through:

- Surveys - Professional Learning Interest Survey and Professional Learning Reflection Tool
- Focus Groups - Building-based with faculty and staff
- Teacher-designed and facilitated learning opportunities
- Student Learning Data - formal and informal
- Student Focus Groups

Provide learning opportunities that are:

- Aligned to New York State curriculum standards
- Aligned to SCSD mission, vision, collective commitments
- Aligned to expressed need
- Focused on increasing student engagement
- Supportive of SMART goals
- Easily applied





Targeted Professional Learning



Objectives

In addition to the ongoing professional learning that is available to all faculty and staff, we also provide targeted learning opportunities to effectively support student growth.



Participation

Teachers, teaching aides, teaching assistants, and administrators come from across the district to work together to learn about specific topics related to curriculum, standards, technology, assessments, and other areas.



Examples

- International Baccalaureate and Middle Years Programme workshops
- Best practices in literacy instruction and assessment K-8
- K-12 MTSS Alignment
- In-service courses (evidenced-based grading, executive functioning, technology integration)



Summer Work

While students are on summer break, our teachers invest time in professional learning to improve their educational practices and materials.

SUMMER LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Every year before the start of school, leaders from kindergarten through high school gather to ensure K-12 alignment in professional learning and goals.



Objectives

1. Familiarize ourselves with the SCSD Success Plan
2. Engage in learning on our Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) structures and how these structures support Whole Child instructional planning and equity for our learners
3. Reflect on our roles in supporting Tier 1 instruction and learning for students
4. Consider how MTSS influences the school experience for all



Participation

Administrators and teacher leaders including: grade-level leaders, curriculum area leaders, team leaders, and teachers on special assignment.



Summit Feedback

One participant shared: *“Collaboration is essential for the effective implementation of MTSS. Teachers, leaders, and support staff should be unified on their vision and understanding of MTSS for students. Personally, I can contribute to the collective effort by creating a culture of community for all students, using research based best practices for Tier 1 instruction, collecting and maintaining data and using that data to collaborate with colleagues on next steps.”*

SUMMER CURRICULUM WORK



Objectives

Teams and individuals work on adapting, creating, or aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment to appropriately reflect student experiences in the classroom.



Participation

- 53 proposals approved, representing all four schools.
- 1,425 hours of work completed.
- Work conducted across all subject and support areas.



Examples

New course material development, literacy curriculum development, world language expansion to Primrose, differentiated instruction and small group planning, MYP, embedded honors, special education, Tusker101, school counseling, evidence-based grading, computer science and digital fluency, executive functioning, and arts.

TUSKER U: FACULTY FOCUS

Professional learning sessions created and facilitated by faculty and staff for their colleagues that are aligned with the SCSD mission, visions, and collective commitments.



Objectives

1. Practical, responsive to expressed needs, and focused on increasing student engagement
 2. Provides time and structure for faculty and staff to learn from and with each other
 3. Encourages interdisciplinary and cross-grade and/or building level collaboration
-



Participation

- 73 teacher and teaching assistant participants
 - 7 sessions offered
 - All grade levels represented
-

TUSKER U: FAMILY FOCUS



Objective

To be responsive and proactive in engaging families and community members in learning that is related to a variety of student experiences.



Participation

All SCSD stakeholders: families, guardians, community members.



Examples

- English as a New Language Night
 - Annual Wellness Summit (2023 topic: Executive Functioning)
-



TUSKER U: STUDENT FOCUS



Objectives

To engage students in summer learning activities that maintain the home-school connection and provide meaningful opportunities for developmentally appropriate learning and collaboration with teachers.



Participation

- 20 class sections offered
- 107 registered students



Feedback

“We learned to cooperate with each other.” - SCSD student

“We are so happy that he was open to trying these sessions with you and give you so much credit for him wanting to come back and do more.” - SCSD parent

“My daughter is really enjoying the classes - she loves attending them.” - SCSD parent



ELEMENTS OF EXCELLENCE

Social, Emotional & Physical Wellness

SCSD will advance social, emotional, and physical wellness in all learners to successfully navigate current and future experiences.



There are many innovative and proactive approaches in our schools that support our students' social, emotional, and physical wellness. Programs and skills are developmentally appropriate and flexible, and designed to engage and support all students.

Wellness Team Mission

The mental health team teaches and models for all students the life-long skills of self-regulation, self-management, and effective social engagement.

School Counselors provide direct services to all students at Tier 1, student who need support at Tier 2, and help to identify and support students who need Tier 3 assistance.

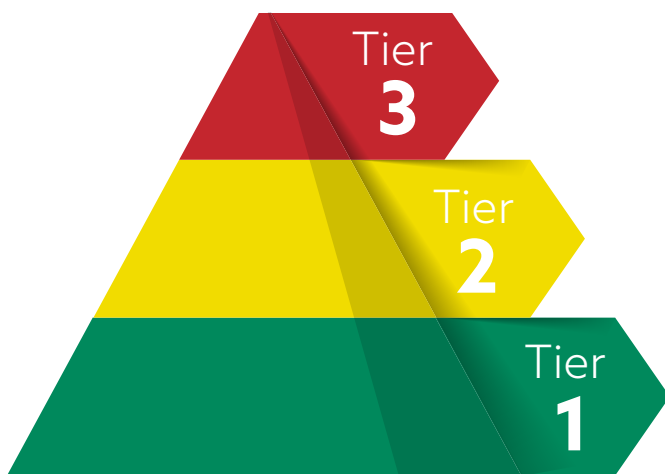
School Social Workers facilitate classroom lessons and work with greater emphasis on Tier 2 individual and group counseling. They also provide unique connections between our families and community agencies and support services.

Student Assistance Counselors (SAs) are employed in partnership with the Student Assistance Services Corporation for our middle and high schools. SAS counselors offer a unique level of confidentiality with a focus on drug and alcohol counseling. They also provide Tier 1 classroom lessons to students and Tier 2 individual support.

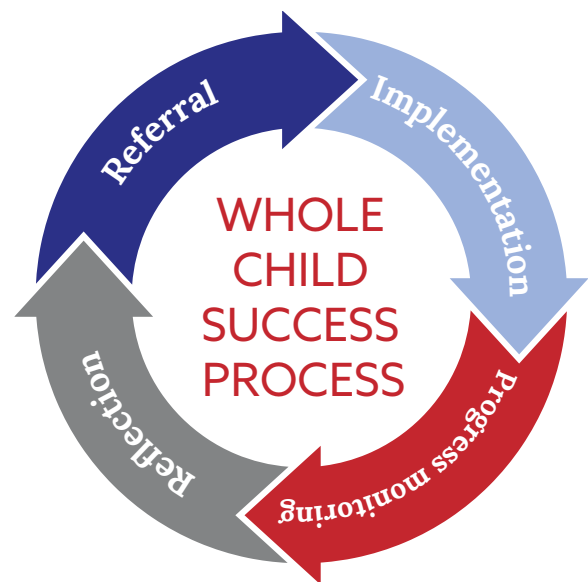
School Psychologists facilitate classroom lessons and provide Tier 2 assistance through individual counseling, assessment, and Individualized Education Plan (IEP) planning. They also provide school-based Tier 3 support, as well as transition support for students in out-of-district Tier 3 programs.

The Whole Child Success Team is a proactive, collaborative approach to support the social, emotional, physical, and academic growth of our students. This data-driven process supports students who are struggling by examining all aspects of the child's life - from academics to social to family situations.

Tiers of Support



- Individually focused, more intensive interventions
- Targeted interventions to work on specific skills
- Core instruction for all students



The Family Liason is responsible for communicating with families new to Somers schools, helping them make new connections, and building home-school partnerships. The position is funded through the Somers Partners in Prevention (SPP), in collaboration with SCSD.

The Path to Social and Emotional Wellness

Tier 1 lessons are part of the core instruction for all students. They are developmentally appropriate and build upon each other each year. The common focus is teaching practical strategies to manage emotions and to be present for learning.

Responsive Classroom (K-5)

Teaches students to be engaged as a learner and to be a positive member of the classroom community.



School to school transition support (K, 3, 6, 9, 12)



Second Step (2-5)

Develops emotion regulation skills and strategies.

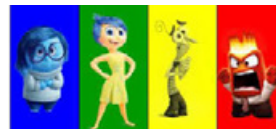
JCK and Self-Care Programs (9)



Explores the importance of talking about mental health and practical self-care strategies.

Zones of Regulation (K-3)

Develops emotion identification and regulation skills.



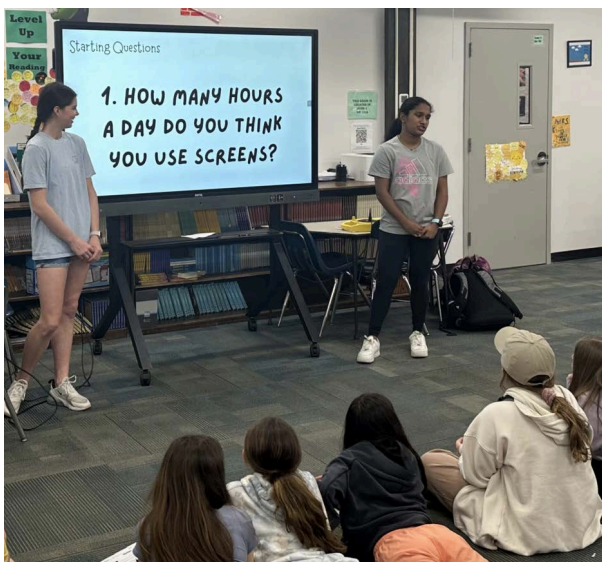
DBT Steps-A (6, 8, 10)

Teaches students the concept of dialectics and the core skills of mindfulness, emotion regulation, distress tolerance, and interpersonal effectiveness.



College & Career Planning (10-12)





Tier 2 support is targeted intervention that helps develop specific skills in individuals and groups of students who need support beyond the core classroom instruction.

Counseling check-ins are part of the Tier 2 process in all Somers schools. These visits create a consistent adult connection and routine monitoring of students, as well as encourage effective coping skills and decision-making.

Small Groups – Elementary

At our two elementary schools, various small groups meet to build personal connections, practice routines and play, share personal experiences, and process transitions.

Social Skills



Changing Families



Problem-Solving



Small Groups – Secondary

At the middle school, small groups are largely focused on peer relationships and further development of interpersonal skills and self-awareness. Groups at SMS help students form positive social connections and mitigate feelings of isolation.

Newcomers



Selfcare



Peer Guidance



At the high school level, Tier 2 support focuses on individual check-ins and building-level counseling services. There are also targeted efforts in partnership with the SHS Student Life Coordinator to help students engage in the school community through clubs and extra-curricular activities to create a greater sense of belonging.

Tier 3 is highly individualized support for students who have not found success in Tier 1 or Tier 2 interventions. These supports may include specialized, school-based programs (True North and Transitional Support Program) and out-of-district special education placements.

Social and Emotional Survey 2023-24

A social-emotional survey is administered each fall and spring to students in grades four through 12, with fourth grade also participating next year. The survey helps identify students who need extra support beyond the social-emotional wellness Tier 1 lessons.



MEASURING SOCIAL EMOTIONAL GROWTH as identified by the CoVitality Survey

Improvement Among "Struggling" Students		
Fall 2023	to	Spring 2024
SIS	↑	61%
SMS	↑	71%
SHS	↑	65%

Rate of Growth in Connectedness		
Fall 2023	to	Spring 2024
SIS	↑	92%
SMS	↑	87%
SHS	↑	63%

This survey captures a moment in time and does not define the student. It is one of many valuable tools SCSD uses in conjunction with academic screening used to determine the needs of each individual student.

Note: some students choose to opt out of the survey.

What happens when the survey indicates that a child is struggling? Those students are contacted by a wellness team member, followed by a phone call to the family. Working with the student and the family, the wellness team designs and implements a support plan when appropriate.



Faculty/Staff/Community Learning

Executive Functioning Training Professional learning for faculty in kindergarten through 12th grades to learn how to best support students' executive functioning, including organization, time management, and initiation of tasks.

Fall 2023 Wellness Summit: Executive Functioning Training for Parents



- **All staff** (K-12) received two hours of virtual introductory training
- **35 staff members** (K-5) participated in a 10-week in-service Executive Functioning training

Middle School Mentoring

The middle school mentor program connects 8th graders with 6th graders to influence positive interactions, socialization, and a sense of belonging while limiting social isolation within the school environment. Once per week during 6th-grade lunch, 8th-grade mentors create meaningful connections through games and conversations with 6th graders. Our goal is to empower and inspire all participants to thrive while building lasting friendships that contribute to a more inclusive and compassionate society.



- 2023-2024 - **63** mentors
- 2024-2025 - **75** mentors

Secondary Building-Based Clinical Services

In the spring of 2024, SMS and SHS added an in-house therapist through a NYS grant supported by Student Assistance Services.

- Somers students in grades 6-12 are now able to access therapeutic services within the school building. Our providing therapist also partners with a prescribing psychiatrist through telehealth services to address medication management.
- These services are different from school-based mental health supports, as students can engage in therapy in the same way they would with an outside service provider. The same level of confidentiality exists, as the therapist is not a school employee, but is contracted through funding from a NYS grant and Student Assistance Services.

Social Emotional Wellness Advisory Council (SEWAC)

This team consists of students, parents, staff, administrators, Board of Education members, and community members

SEWAC is a resource and a springboard to aid the district in better fulfilling the district's mission of supporting the social, emotional, and physical wellness of all learners.

Extra-curricular Engagement



When students are socially and emotionally connected and engaged in school, attendance, grades, and graduation rates increase.

570 Number of student athletes at Somers High School

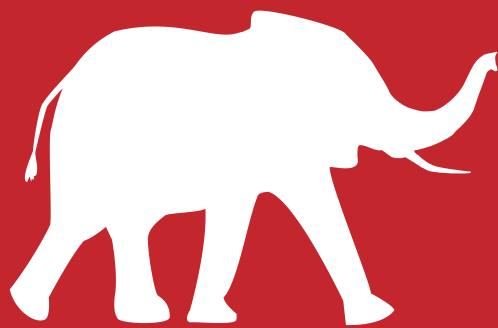


SHS Clubs	SMS Clubs	SIS Clubs
70 Clubs	12 Clubs	8 Clubs
578 members	285 members	210 members



"The experience of theatre brings out a piece of you that you never expected. Exploring emotions and learning to be vulnerable around a cast of people teaches you to bond and love each other as well as the world around you."





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