



SAFETY NET

NJSIG'S SAFETY NEWSLETTER



Somerville Board of Education

We are excited to spotlight the **Somerville Board of Education** for its strong commitment to student safety at Van Derveer Elementary School. By transforming the school's aging mulch playground into a modern, safer, and more welcoming outdoor space with a new rubberized surface and other thoughtful enhancements, the district is creating an environment where all students can play, explore, and enjoy.

Project highlights include upgrades focused on safety, comfort, and play:

- New rubberized playground surface to help reduce slip and fall injuries
- New play structures to encourage active play and engagement
- Covered shelter for year-round outdoor usage
- Planting of new shade trees to create a more comfortable and welcoming environment
- Inclusive design ensuring every child, regardless of ability, feels welcome and included



Photos submitted by: Jimmy Gabriel, Director of Buildings & Grounds / Transportation

The district's goal is to create a safe, enjoyable, and accessible space for students while strengthening community connections. The upgraded playground is set to open in *September 2026*, giving the Somerville community a space to enjoy for years to come.

We applaud Somerville Board of Education for their continued dedication to school safety and operational excellence.

Share your story! Submit your school's safety initiative to riskcontrol@njsig.org to showcase your commitment to safety excellence.



Planning a Safe Send-Off

As you plan end-of-year celebrations, keep these simple safety considerations in mind to help ensure a fun and injury-free event for students and staff.

General Vendor Management

- Verify vendors are properly licensed, permitted, and insured; and obtain Certificates of Insurance.
- Do not sign agreements that waive or limit a vendor's responsibility for their activities.
- Follow district procedures and confirm all required health, fire, and operating permits are in place.

Emergency Preparedness

- Ensure a nurse or designated responder is available during the event.
- Have AEDs, EpiPens, and emergency contact information readily accessible.
- Confirm staff know how to contact emergency services if needed.

Event Oversight & Security

- Designate event leaders to coordinate activities and respond to issues.
- Maintain communication through radios or cell phones when appropriate.
- Monitor entrances, student movement, and event areas to help maintain a safe environment.

With a few simple precautions, districts can create a fun, safe, and successful celebration that sends students and staff into summer on a positive note.



Everything You Need for Summer Shutdown

As schools hold graduation ceremonies and prepare for summer break, NJSIG is committed to providing our member districts with safe and effective closing guidance.

Proper shutdown procedures help protect buildings, reduce risk, and ensure readiness for the upcoming school year while preserving the safety and security of school facilities throughout the summer.

Building Security

- Secure all doors, windows, gates, and building access points
- Limit access to authorized personnel only
- Verify alarms and monitoring systems are working properly

Systems & Maintenance

- Inspect boilers and HVAC systems; schedule preventative maintenance
- Test fire alarms, sprinklers, emergency lighting, and extinguishers
- Check roofs, gutters, and drainage for issues

Safety & Grounds

- Inspect playgrounds, fields, and exterior areas for hazards
- Secure tools, chemicals, and maintenance equipment
- Ensure hazardous materials are properly labeled and stored

Interior Closeout

- Remove perishable food from kitchens and storage areas
- Clean classrooms, cafeterias, and common spaces
- Secure technology, records, and equipment

Final Review

- Complete a final walkthrough of all buildings and grounds
- Confirm summer contractor access and work procedures
- Update emergency contacts and procedures as needed

Summer shutdown procedures are guided by NJDOE facility compliance requirements and NJOEM emergency planning guidance, which support schools in securing buildings, maintaining essential systems, and ensuring a safe transition into the summer months.

References:

<https://www.nj.gov/education>

<https://www.nj.gov/njoem>

CHUBB In-Person Training

**Tuesday, July 21, 2026
9:00am - 4:00pm**

CHUBB Risk Engineering Center
35 Columbia Road
Branchburg, NJ 08876
3 CEFM credits

CHUBB Risk Engineering Services, in partnership with NJSIG, is hosting a hands-on training for facilities staff, administrators, and brokers.

This training provides valuable, practical insights into water treatment systems, boiler controls, and safety devices, all delivered in a live, interactive environment where you can ask questions and engage directly with experts.

Register by: Saturday, July 18, 2026 9:00 AM



Register Now!

[CHUBB Registration Instructions](#)

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