

Special Meeting
South Orange-Maplewood
Board of Education
June 29, 2022

A Special Meeting of the Board of Education of South Orange-Maplewood was held utilizing an online video conference platform on June 29, 2022.

Board President Thair Joshua called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Adequate written notice of this meeting of the South Orange-Maplewood Board of Education was sent to the Township and Village Clerks, The Star Ledger, the News Record, TAPintoSOMA.net, villagegreennj.com and the District website.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL

Present: Board Member Bergin, Board President Joshua,
Board Member Malespina, Board Member Siders,
Board Member Vadlamani, Board Member Winkfield,
Board Member Wittleder, Board Member Wright,
Student Rep. Previlon

Absent: Board Member Telesford

EIGHT VOTING MEMBERS AND ONE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE PRESENT

BOARD PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT

The school board meeting is a business meeting in public and not a meeting with the public. Oftentimes it may appear to members of our audience that the Board of Education takes action with very little comment and in many cases a unanimous vote. Before a matter is placed on the agenda at a public meeting, the Administration has thoroughly reviewed the matter with the Superintendent of Schools/Chief School Administrator (CSA). If the Superintendent of Schools/Chief School Administrator is satisfied that the matter is ready to be presented to the Board of Education, it is then referred to the appropriate Board Committee. The Members of the Board Committee work with Administration and the Superintendent to assure that the members fully understand the matter. After the committee discusses the matter, it is then shared with the other Board members for consideration. Only then is it placed on the agenda for Board discussion and action at a public meeting.

Motion made by Board President Joshua, seconded by Board Member Bergen to conduct this meeting in a virtual setting. Motion passed unanimously.

HEARING OF INDIVIDUALS AND DELEGATIONS

Sally Unsworth - Commended the teachers and students of Jefferson

Elementary School who presented the Board with five excellent options for the renaming of their school. Echoed the sentiments of community members Leslie Kerner and David Huemer.

Dr. Taylor - Thank you for your comment and thank you to the Jefferson staff and students who exceeded our expectations on this project.

ITEMS FOR ACTION

Motion made by Board President Joshua, seconded by Board Member Bergin to discuss and approve the following:

4319A. WHEREAS the Lenape Valley Regional High School Board of Education and South Orange & Maplewood Board of Education entered into an Interlocal Vehicle Sales Agreement, and;

WHEREAS, the South Orange & Maplewood Board of Education has one (1) 2022 54 passenger Thomas C2 Bus, and one (1) 2023 54 passenger Thomas C2 Bus, which are no longer of service to the District, and;

WHEREAS Lenape Valley Regional High School Board of Education is desirous of purchasing said vehicles via interlocal sales agreement, and

WHEREAS, HCESC has agreed to waive the 10% Commission for the sale of said vehicles

WHEREAS, 18A:18A-5. Any contract, the amount of which exceeds the bid threshold, shall be negotiated and awarded by the board of education by resolution at a public meeting without public advertising for bids and bidding therefor if It is to be made or entered into with the United States of America, the State of New Jersey, county or municipality or any board, body, officer, agency, authority or board of education or any other state or subdivision thereof

WHEREAS, Lenape Valley Regional High School Board of Education has made an offer to purchase said 2022 vehicle for \$122,164.76 and 2023 vehicle for \$122,277.25 for a total sale price of \$244,442.01

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, in accordance with NJSA 18A:6-51 and N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5b, the South Orange & Maplewood Board of Education agrees to sell Lenape Valley Regional High School BOE the vehicles, as follows:

<u>BUS</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>MAKE/ MODEL</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>VIN</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
102	2022	Thomas C2	54-Passenger Bus	4UZABRFA4NCMT9951	\$122,164.76
118	2023	Thomas C2	54-Passenger Bus	4UZABRFD5PCUA0598	\$122,277.25

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, as per this agreement, the Lenape Valley Regional High School Board of Education agrees to forward payment directly to South Orange & Maplewood Board of Education in the amount of \$244,442.01.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon receipt of proceeds, South Orange & Maplewood Board of Education agrees to allow Lenape Valley Regional High School BOE to inspect vehicles and will release clear vehicle titles to Lenape Valley Regional High School BOE.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that payment and vehicle transfer will occur on or before August 31, 2022.

4319B. WHEREAS the Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission and South Orange & Maplewood Board of Education entered into an Interlocal Vehicle Sales Agreement, and;

WHEREAS, the South Orange & Maplewood Board of Education has four (4) 2023 54 passenger Thomas C2 Buses, which are no longer of service to the District, and;

WHEREAS Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission (HCESC) is desirous of purchasing said vehicles via interlocal sales agreement, and

WHEREAS, HCESC has agreed to waive the 10% Commission for the sale of said vehicles

WHEREAS, 18A:18A-5. Any contract, the amount of which exceeds the bid threshold, shall be negotiated and awarded by the board of education by resolution at a public meeting without public advertising for bids and bidding therefor if It is to be made or entered into with the United States of America, the State of New Jersey, county or municipality or any board, body, officer, agency, authority or board of education or any other state or subdivision thereof

WHEREAS, HCESC has made an offer to purchase said vehicles at \$122,277.25 each for a total sale price of \$489,109.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that, in accordance with NJSA 18A:6-51 and N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5b, the South Orange & Maplewood Board of Education agrees to sell HCESC the vehicles, as follows:

<u>BUS</u>	<u>YEAR</u>	<u>MAKE/ MODEL</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>VIN</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
119	2023	Thomas C2	54-Passenger Bus	4UZABRFD7PCUA0599	\$122,277.25
120	2023	Thomas C2	54-Passenger Bus	4UZABRFDXPCUA0600	\$122,277.25
121	2023	Thomas C2	54-Passenger Bus	4UZABRFD1PCUA0601	\$122,277.25
122	2023	Thomas C2	54-Passenger Bus	4UZABRFD3PCUA0602	\$122,277.25

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, as per this agreement, the HCESC agrees to forward payment directly to South Orange & Maplewood Board of Education in the amount of \$489,109;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon receipt of proceeds, South Orange & Maplewood Board of Education agrees to allow HCESC to inspect vehicles and will release clear vehicle titles to HCESC;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that payment and vehicle transfer will occur on or before August 31, 2022.

ROLL CALL: Motion 4319A-B PASSED YES: Joshua, Siders, Vadlamani, Winkfield, Wittleder, Wright NO: Malespina

**BOARD MEMBER TELESFORD JOINED THE MEETING AT 6:54 P.M.
NINE VOTING MEMBERS AND ONE STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE PRESENT**

Motion made by Board President Joshua, seconded by Board Member Bergin to discuss and approve the following:

4320. WHEREAS, the Board of Education may consider a change in the name of an existing school or facility to ensure and model an inclusive, welcoming and respectful learning environment; and

WHEREAS, naming a school for a person is to honor that person and to hold them up as a role model for students; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education previously adopted Resolution 4190 at its August 16, 2021 meeting directing the Superintendent or a designee to work with the students of Jefferson Elementary School to seek input from the District's student community to propose a new name for that school to the Board of Education by June 30, 2022, so that the Board may vote on the adoption of such name to take effect commencing with the 2022-2023 school year; and

WHEREAS, the Jefferson Elementary School community recommended to the Board of Education five names for consideration, which the Board shared with the public at its June 20, 2022 meeting and discussed further during its June 27, 2022 meeting; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education will no longer hold up an enslaver as a role model for students of the South Orange Maplewood School District; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that Jefferson Elementary School be renamed to Delia Bolden Elementary School; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the District take the necessary steps, including but not limited to installing new signage and updating the District website, to reflect the new name by September 8, 2022.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the District consider how to memorialize the building's previous name of Jefferson Elementary School and the reasons for the name change on school grounds by June 30, 2023.

DISCUSSION

Board Members comments/questions included but were not limited to the following:

Board Member Malespina - I am concerned that the process to rename Jefferson Elementary School does not represent the input and voices of all Jefferson Elementary School students and therefore the resolution is not factually correct.

Dr. Taylor - It has been clear from all aspects that this was a very thoughtful and inclusive process. The presentation that we put in your Friday packets and the full presentation that was eloquently presented during the Policy Committee meeting describes the involvement of the students and how inclusive that process was. I agree with the recommendation and I believe they went above and beyond a simple straw poll vote. The principal verified that all five candidates represented the attributes that the students and district valued.

Board Member Bergin made a motion, seconded by Board Member Winkfield to rename Jefferson Elementary School, Delia Bolden Elementary School.

Board Member Wittleder - If it were up to me I would pick Amalya Lyle Kearse, the first woman and second African American person to be appointed as a Justice on the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals. But its not just up to me, it was up to the students at Jefferson School; that was the resolution. I ran for the Board of Education on the campaign slogan *Student Voices Matter*. As I sit here today I am frustrated and disappointed that our students' voices are being ignored and belittled. Board Member Wittleder went on to explain that the Board did not choose the names selected by Jefferson students; Jefferson students chose Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Erna Schneider Hoover.

Board Member Wright - For me it is the same issue. The rush to change the name is the real change. I would like to know the cost of the name change on the District Website and other signage. I would like to know the cost and savings by renaming Jefferson School at this moment, before we vote. Secondly, Maplewood named a street very close to Jefferson School after Jefferson. The contradiction of street being named after Jefferson near a school that is no longer named after him gives a major contradictory message to the residents, students and the communities at large.

Board Member Vadlamani - I find it very strange that Board Members who have always complained that the renaming is a distraction, want to take this back to the community and distract us for another year. We have heard enough on this matter, let's move forward, change the name, so we can continue working on other matters.

Board Member Telesford - Echoed comments made by Board Member Vadlamani.

Board members continued the discussion on resolution 4320.

ROLL CALL: Motion 4320 PASSED YES: Joshua, Siders, Telesford, Vadlamani, Winkfield NO: Malespina, Wittleder, Wright

Motion made by Board President Joshua, seconded by Board Member Wittleder to move up the Hearing of Individuals and Delegations on the agenda. Motion unanimously approved.

HEARING OF INDIVIDUALS AND DELEGATIONS

None.

Motion made by Board President Joshua seconded by Board Member Wittleder to move up New Business on the agenda. Motion unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

Board Members presented the following topics for discussion:

Board Member Wittleder - Requested pass/fail data for the 21-22 school year and Star Renaissance test results from the first and second half to compare data.

Board Member Malespina - How many students were affected by the floor grade change at Columbia High School.

Board Member Wright - Requested the Board move swiftly to help overaged and under credited students. Who is monitoring these students to make sure they are succeeding?

Board Member Wittleder - Asked administration to do everything they can to honor the request of 250 community members who signed a petition requesting the last day of school for the 2022-2023 school year be sooner than June 26.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Board President Joshua made the following motions seconded by Board Member Wittleder:

The Board of Education will meet in Closed Session on Monday, July 18, 2022 at 6:00 pm in the Superintendent's Office, 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, NJ, as well as using an online video conference platform to discuss personnel and legal issues, negotiations, and other matters to be announced at a later date. Immediately following the Closed Session, the Board of Education will meet in Public Session at 7:30 pm in the District Meeting Room, 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, NJ in person and utilizing an online video conference platform which will include Hearing of Individuals. Action will be taken. Motion unanimously approved.

The Board of Education will meet in a Special Public Meeting on Thursday, July 21, 2022, at 6:30 pm in the District Meeting Room, 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, NJ, as well as using the online video conference platform, which will include Hearing of Individuals and Delegations. Immediately following the Public Session, the Board of Education will move to go into Board Retreat, in person and utilizing an online video conference platform to discuss the Board and District Goals. Action may be taken. Motion unanimously approved.

MOTION made by Board President Joshua, seconded by Board Member Siders to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss the Chief School Administrator's evaluation. The Board will not return to public session.

Motion unanimously approved at 7:38 p.m.

Eric Burnside, Board Secretary