

Special Meeting  
South Orange-Maplewood  
Board of Education  
June 19, 2023

A Special Meeting of the Board of Education of South Orange-Maplewood was held in the District Meeting Room at the Administration Building, 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, New Jersey, as well as utilizing the online video conference platform on June 19, 2023.

Board President Kaitlin Wittleder called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Board Member Duvall Wilson, Board Member Eckert,  
Board Member Gifford (6:11 p.m.) Board Member Malespina  
Board Member Telesford, Board Member Vadlamani,  
Board Member Winkfield, Board President Wittleder

Absent: Board Member Wright

*EIGHT VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT*

NOTICE OF THE MEETING

Please take notice that adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in the following manner:

- A. Written notice was sent from the Office of the Secretary of the Board at 10:00 a.m. on June 14, 2023.
- B. That said notice was sent via email to Maplewood and South Orange Township Clerks and the Editors of the News Record, Star Ledger, and the Village Green.

HONORING JUNETEENTH

Board President Wittleder took a moment to recognize and honor Juneteenth. On June 19, 1865 enslaved African Americans in Texas were told they were free. Juneteenth commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans in the United States and signifies an important milestone in the ongoing pursuit of equality and justice. Acknowledging Juneteenth allows us to reflect on the progress we've made educating ourselves about the struggles faced by African Americans and reaffirming our Board's commitment to building an inclusive and Equitable School District. As we commemorate Juneteenth, let us come together as a Board, Administration and Community to celebrate diversity, promote equality and foster an inclusive environment where every student in the South Orange Maplewood School District feels valued and respected.

## CSA EVALUATION

Tonight's Special Meeting has been organized as part of the Annual Chief School Administrator (CSA) Evaluation process which the Board is required by law to conduct by July 1st each year. The CSA evaluation will be based on the goals and objectives of the district responsibilities of the Superintendent and other criteria prescribed by the New Jersey State Board of Education. We will also discuss CSA negotiations this evening, a continuation of board dialogue from our May 1st special meeting around CSA negotiations. Please note the Superintendent serves under tenure under his contract which does not expire until June 30th 2024.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

## HEARING OF INDIVIDUALS AND DELEGATIONS

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.

Thank you for coming in-person and dialing-in by phone this evening. The South Orange - Maplewood Board of Education certainly respects that you've taken the time out of your busy day to address the Board at tonight's meeting. We value public involvement in our school district, and we are eager to hear what you have to say. The board does have time limits by policy, and it will be enforcing those to enable as many people to speak as possible this evening. Each individual will be given three minutes to speak, please do your best to stay within the time afforded to you. The first public comment period is usually limited to one hour and the second public comment period may be limited to thirty minutes. All input shared with the Board of Education is taken very seriously, and will inform future deliberations and work by the Board of Education and its committees.

The following community members spoke during the Hearing of Individuals and Delegations: Stephen Carberry, Allison Bekkedahl, Beth Cosentino , James Davis and Will Meyer.

Board President Wittleder made a motion, seconded by Board Member Malespina to adjourn to Executive Session to discuss the CSA Evaluation and CSA Negotiations. The length of the Executive Session is estimated to be three hours after which the Board will reconvene only to immediately adjourn. No action will be taken.

***Motion to adjourn to Executive Session unanimously approved at 6:24 p.m.***

***Board Members Reconvened at 9:26 p.m.***

***8 VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT***

#### FUTURE MEETINGS

Board President Wittleder made the following motions, seconded by Board Member Winkfield:

The Board of Education will meet in Public Session on Thursday, June 22, 2023 at 6:30 pm in the District Meeting Room, 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, NJ. Immediately following the opening of Public Session, the board will move to go into a Closed Session in the Superintendent's Office, 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, NJ, as well as using an online video conference platform to discuss personnel, matters within the attorney-client privilege, legal, negotiations, and other matters that may arise and require discussion, to be announced at a later date. Immediately following the Closed Session, the Board of Education will meet in Public Session (estimated to be 7:30 pm) in the District Meeting Room, 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, NJ in person, utilizing an online video conference platform which will include Hearing of Individuals. The community can view the meeting by following the steps which will be listed on the agenda. If there are members of the community who would like to attend the meeting in person, please note that masks and social distancing are optional in accordance with the guidance received from the local DOH and the CDC. Action will be taken.

The Board of Education will meet in a Special Public Session on Tuesday, June 27, 2023 at 6:30 pm at 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, NJ and will immediately adjourn to go into Executive Session in person as well as using an online video conference platform in the Superintendent's Office to discuss the Chief School Administrator (CSA) evaluation. No action will be taken.

Motions unanimously approved.

Motion made by Board President Winkfield, seconded by Board Member Malespina to adjourn. Motion to adjourn was unanimously approved at 9:26 p.m.

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Andrea Del Guercio, Asst. Board Secretary