

Reorganization Meeting
South Orange-Maplewood
Board of Education
May 8, 2025

A Reorganization 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 May 8, 2025.

Board President Nubia DuVall Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

ROLL CALL: Present: Board Member Brown, Board Member Callahan,
Board President DuVall Wilson, Board Member Eckert,
Board Member Meyer, Board Member Sackett-Gable

Absent: Board Member Bennett, Board Member Gifford,
Board Member Kapadia

SIX VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

Pledge of Allegiance

NOTICE OF THE MEETING

Adequate notice of this meeting has been provided in the following manner:

- A. That written notice was sent from the Office of the Secretary of the Board at 2:30 pm on January 3, 2025.
- B. That said notice was sent via email to Maplewood and South Orange Township Clerks and the Editors of the News Record, Star Ledger, TapintoSOMA and the Village Green.

SOUTH ORANGE-MAPLEWOOD BOARD OF EDUCATION RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING EXECUTIVE SESSION

WHEREAS, while the "Sen. Byron M. Baer Open Public Meetings Act" (N.J.S.A. 10:4-6 et seq.) requires all meetings of the South Orange Maplewood Board of Education to be held in public, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12(b) sets forth nine (9) types of matters that may lawfully be discussed in "Executive Session," without the public being permitted to attend, and

WHEREAS, the Board has determined that one (1) issue is permitted by N.J.S.A. 10:4 - 12 (b) to be discussed without the public in attendance and shall be discussed during an Executive Session to be held on Thursday, April 24, 2025 at 6:30 PM, and

WHEREAS, the nine (9) exceptions to open the public meetings set forth in N.J.S.A. 10:2-4(b) are listed below, and next to each exception is a box which will be marked when the issues to be privately discussed fall within that exception, and after each exception is a space where additional

information that will disclose as much information about the discussion as possible without undermining the purpose of the exception shall be written:

X "(1) Any matter which, by express provision of Federal law, State statute or rule of court shall be rendered confidential or excluded from public discussion." The nature of the matter, described as specifically as possible without undermining the need for confidentiality, is **attorney/client privilege and personnel.**

WHEREAS, the length of the Executive Session is estimated to be thirty (30) minutes after which the public meeting of the Board shall reconvene and proceed with business where formal action will be taken.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the South Orange Maplewood Board of Education will go into Executive Session for the above-stated reasons only; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board hereby declares that its discussion of the aforementioned subject(s) will be made public at a time when the public's interest in disclosure is greater than any privacy or governmental interest being protected from disclosure.

Motion made by Board President DuVall Wilson, seconded by Board Member Eckert to adjourn to Executive Session. Motion unanimously approved.

Board Members adjourned to Executive Session at 6:33 p.m.

Board Members reconvened at 6:50 p.m.

Board Members Bennett, Gifford and Kapadia Present

9 Voting Members Present

BOARD PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

Tonight, is our Organizational, Staff Renewal Special Meeting during which we vote on staff renewals for the district, along with those who are up for tenure. We also have another important vote tonight. It's our teacher's contract for 2024-2027. Thank you to the district for working with the board to ensure performance reviews were conducted after we received our QSAC audit, where we lost points because of incomplete evaluations. Last fall, we agreed as a Board to strengthen oversight through committee work to address this issue. We appreciate the Senior Leadership Team, Human Resources, and Curriculum and Instruction Departments for working together with our building Administrators and Supervisors to stay on schedule with evaluations. Compliance with this process ensures accountability and enables our board to pass these recommendations with our votes tonight more confidently.

Next, we're passing our 2024-27 contract for our district's amazing teachers who work hard both inside and outside of the classroom to support our students. We truly appreciate the community's patience and understanding as we work through this process with SOMEA leadership and the district. Although this process began in February 2024, we did not confirm the percentage of salary increases until after our first negotiations

meeting on January 7th, 2025. That January 7 meeting started at 5:30 p.m. and lasted until after midnight. Shout out to the negotiating committee for their endurance after months of long meetings to finalize the salary guides. We are here today to deliver a contract enabling more than 700 teachers to receive raises this summer. Teachers, please know we appreciate you and thank you for your patience at a time when the country's Department of Education is in flux, government aid is not a certainty, and the State of New Jersey is experiencing a teacher shortage, as is the rest of the country. It is imperative that we continue to create an environment in SOMSD that is attractive to new teachers, while also supporting our teachers who have been here for years.

Lastly, there was a resolution on Policy 5120: Assignment of Students to skip the May AAA survey this year for a number of reasons, including the fact that the district is planning to revise the survey to more effectively collect data that will have a greater impact on the success of the III. There have been a number of surveys and data collection instruments to our district families in recent months that have provided insights for us such as the III survey released at the end of January 2025, the Seton Hall University Market Research Project the Hanover Research Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging survey and the NJ Sky Culture and Climate Survey which is going on right now. We look forward to discussing the district's adjustments to the III survey at a future Rutgers Committee meeting.

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.

HEARING OF INDIVIDUALS AND DELEGATIONS

None.

ITEMS FOR ACTION

Motion made by Board Secretary Moody to move resolutions 4789-4797 discussion and voting.

4798. The Superintendent recommends that the Board of Education approve the following personnel fiscal resolutions.

APPROVE REAPPOINTMENT OF NON-TENURED STAFF FOR THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR (See attached list)

4799. APPROVE REAPPOINTMENT OF ALL OTHER STAFF FOR THE 2025-26 SCHOOL YEAR (See attached list)

4800. Approves the following Organizational Appointments for the 2025-2026 School Year:

1. Approve Thomas Giglio as the District Health and Safety Officer.
2. Approve Thomas Giglio as the Integrated Pest Management Coordinator, AHERA Coordinator and Asbestos Management Officer.
3. Approve Thomas Giglio as the Right to Know Officer.
4. Approve Thomas Giglio as the Indoor Air Quality Officer.
5. Appoint Imani Moody as Board Secretary and authorize him to sign checks, notes, drafts, bills of exchange, acceptance, undertakings or other orders for payment of money.
6. Appoint Imani Moody as the Qualified Purchasing Agent and authorize him to negotiate and award contracts pursuant to NJSA 18A:18A-3.
7. Appoint Imani Moody as the Custodian of Records for the school district.
8. Approve Imani Moody as the Public Agency Compliance Officer for the school district.
9. Approve Dr. Kevin Gilbert as the Affirmative Action Officer for the school district.
10. Approve Dr. Kevin Gilbert and Dr. Kerri Waibel as District Liaisons for the Education of Homeless Children (per N.J.A.C. 6A:17-2.5).
11. Approve Kathleen Gesumaria as the Liaison to the Department of Children and Families Division of Child Protection and Permanency.
12. Approve Kathleen Gesumaria as the District ADA/504 Compliance Committee Coordinator for students.
13. Approve Tunde Adedoyin as the District ADA/504 Compliance Committee Coordinator for employees.
14. Appoint Dr. Kevin Gilbert as the Anti-Bullying Coordinator for the school district.
15. Appoint Dr. Kevin Gilbert as the District Title IX Coordinator.
16. Approve Ann Bodnar or Designee to implement the district's approved vocational and technical education safety and health programs (per N.J.A.C. 6A:19-10.2(b)).
17. Approve Stanley Valles, Director of School and Community Safety and Kerri Waibel, Director of Access and Equity as School Safety Specialists for the District.
18. Appoint Melissa Beattie as Treasurer for the school district.
19. Appoint Dr. Michael Kelly of West Orange, New Jersey as School Physician at an annual fee of \$37,500.
20. Appoint the firm of PFK O'Connor Davies, LLP as the independent statutory auditor for the school district at an annual fee of \$78,000.
21. Appoint Lenox Law Firm as General Counsel for the District at the following rates: Partner \$190.00/hour, Associate \$165/hour, Paralegal \$85/hour, plus the cost of filing fees, investigation costs, transcripts costs, expert fees, witness fees, service

- charges and the like, Federal Express (overnight) and messenger charges where the use of a messenger is necessary to meet a client's requirements and copying services for projects in excess of 100 pages.
22. Appoint David B. Rubin, Esq. of David B. Rubin, PC and Busch Law Group as Special Counsel to the Board of Education at a rate of \$195 per hour, plus reimbursement of all costs, disbursements and expenses reasonably and necessarily incurred in connection with this agreement.
 23. Appoint Busch Law Group as Special Education Counsel for the District at the following rates: Attorneys \$175 per hour, Paralegal \$85 per hour, plus the cost of direct expenses.
 24. Appoint the law firm of Wilentz Attorneys at Law as the Bond Counsel firm to provide specialized legal services necessary in connection with the authorization and the issuance of bonds or notes by the Board of Education; fees are determined per agreement on file in Board Secretary's Office.
 25. Appoint the firm of Phoenix Advisors, Inc. as the Continuing Disclosure Agent, Municipal Advisor of Record and to provide annual Financial Advisory Services necessary by the Board of Education; fees are determined per agreement on file in Board Secretary's Office
 26. Appoint Willis of New Jersey, Inc. as Insurance Broker of Record.
 27. Appoint Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc. as insurance agent for School District Employee Benefits.
 28. Appoint the firm of Spiezle Architectural Group as the school district's architect; fees are determined per agreements on file in Board Secretary's Office.
 29. Approve the following depositories for school monies:
 - Bank of America
 - NJ ARM
 - PNC Bank
 - Chase Manhattan Bank
 - Wells Fargo Bank
 30. Authorize signatures for the following accounts:

ACCOUNT	AUTHORIZED SIGNATORIES
South Orange Maplewood BOE Disbursement	Business Administrator / Board Secretary Board President Treasurer
Operating Account	Business Administrator / Board Secretary Asst Business Administrator Board President
Payroll Account	Treasurer Business Administrator
Payroll Agency	Business Administrator / Board Secretary Asst Business Administrator

SUI	Business Administrator / Board Secretary Asst Business Administrator
Revolving Petty Cash	Business Administrator / Board Secretary Asst Business Administrator
Capital Reserve Account	Business Administrator / Board Secretary Asst Business Administrator
School Activities: South Mountain School	Business Administrator / Board Secretary School Principal School Secretary
School Activities: Marshall Elementary School	Business Administrator / Board Secretary School Principal School Secretary
School Activities: Clinton Elementary School	Business Administrator / Board Secretary School Principal School Secretary
School Activities: South Orange Middle School	Business Administrator / Board Secretary School Principal/Asst. Principal School Secretary
School Activities: Maplewood Middle School	Business Administrator / Board Secretary School Principal/Asst. Principal School Secretary
School Activities: Tuscan Elementary School	Business Administrator / Board Secretary School Principal School Secretary
School Activities: Seth Boyden Elementary School	Business Administrator / Board Secretary Asst Business Administrator School Principal School Secretary
School Activities: Delia Bolden Elementary School	Business Administrator / Board Secretary School Principal School Secretary
School Activities: Columbia High School	Business Administrator / Board Secretary School Principal/Asst. Principal Bookkeeper

31. Adopt the following approved District secondary school, middle school and elementary school curricular programs as presently

written for the 2025-2026 school year, with new/revised curricula brought forward for adoption as they are completed and prior to their implementation: [curriculum on file in the office of the Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction]:

Art K-12
Career & Technical Education 9-12
Educational Media & Technology K-12
English as a Second Language K-12
English/Language Arts K-12
Health/Family Life K-12
Mathematics K-12
Music K-12
Physical Education K-12
Science K-12
Social Studies K-12
World Languages 4-12
Pre-K [Tools of the Mind]

32. Accept the existing master agreements with the following units:
 - a. South Orange-Maplewood Education Association (SOMEA); and
 - b. Association of Supervisors, Coordinators and Administrators (ASCA)
33. Adopt the following newspapers for legal advertisements for the 2025-2026 school year: The Star Ledger, News Record, TAPintoSOMA.net, villagegreennj.com or the New York Times, Bergen Record, NorthJersey.com.
34. Authorize the Board Secretary to purchase the following types of securities for the purpose of investment on a short-term basis:
 - a. Bonds or other obligations of the United States of America or obligations guaranteed by the United States of America; or
 - b. Bonds of any Federal Intermediate Credit Bank, Federal Home Loan Bank, Federal Land Bank, Federal National Mortgage Associates or of any United States Band for Cooperatives which have a maturity date not greater than twelve months from the date of purchase; or
 - c. Bonds or other obligations for other school districts. (18A:20-37)
35. Authorize the Superintendent or designee, to approve such line item budget transfers as are necessary between Board of Education meetings, and that such transfers shall be reported to the Board of Education, ratified and duly recorded in the minutes of the next regular meeting.
36. Authorize the Board Secretary to establish the following imprest petty cash fund accounts for the period July 1st through June 30th during the next fiscal year in accordance with N.J.S.A.18A:19-13. Business Administrator's office, amount of fund to be set at \$1,000. Assistant Business Administrator's office, amount of fund to be set at \$100.
37. Authorize the Business Administrator to issue bids on behalf of the Board of Education, as necessary.
38. Approve continued membership in the New Jersey Interscholastic

- Athletic Association and agree to be governed by the Constitution, By-laws and Rules and Regulations of the Association, including all rules governing student- athlete eligibility, for the 2025-2026 school year.
39. Approve continued membership in New Jersey School Boards Association, Minority Student Achievement Network and Garden State Coalition of Schools for the 2025-2026 school year.
 40. Establish a photo copy fee of \$0.05 (\$0.10 color copy) per letter size page or smaller and \$0.07 (\$0.12) per legal size page or larger of official Board Minutes and other public documents. A special service fee may be added for irregular size copies or requests that require an extraordinary amount of time or effort to accommodate the request.
 41. Approve procurement of goods and services through state agencies and Mercer County Special Services Cooperative Pricing System ("MCSSSD"), Morris County Cooperative Pricing Council, Educational Services Commission of New Jersey Cooperative (Middlesex Regional), New Jersey Cooperative Purchasing Alliance (Bergen County), The Educational Services Commission of Morris County Cooperative, Educational Data Services, Inc., Union County Cooperative Pricing Agreement, Hunterdon County Educational Services Commission Cooperative, The interlocal Purchasing System (TIPS), Keystone Purchasing Network (KPN), Omnia Partners, Purchasing Cooperative of America (PCA), Camden County Educational Services Commission Cooperative, Somerset County Cooperative Pricing System, ESC Region 19 Allied States Cooperative and 1 Government Procurement Alliance (1GPA).
 42. Approve the attendance and related travel expenses for regular district business as caused by or subject to contractual provisions, other statutory requirements or federal requirements and approve the reimbursement for such regular district travel expenses not to exceed \$1,500 per employee.
 43. Adopt Code of Student Conduct through June 30, 2026.
 44. Approve the Emergency Management Plan and the Bio-security Plan as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.
 45. Approve the Business Office Purchasing Manual and Business Office Standard Operating Procedures Manual as recommended by the Superintendent of Schools.
 46. R & L Data Centers, Inc. Payroll Company.
 47. Adopt the 403(b) and 457(b) Plan Documents for Public Education Organizations
 48. Approve 403B Tax Shelter Annuity Brokers
 - a. Ameriprise Financial Services
 - b. AXA Equitable
 - c. Great American Life
 - d. The Legend Group
 - e. MetLife
 - f. AIG Retirement-VALIC
 - g. Fidelity Investments
 49. Adopt the Board Policy Manual for the 2025-2026 School Year.
 50. Approve District Organization Chart

4801. WHEREAS, the South Orange-Maplewood Board of Education recognizes the importance of gathering meaningful feedback from students, families, and staff to inform decisions related to district strategy, school supports, and professional development; and

WHEREAS, Board Policy 5120 outlines the implementation of the Experience Survey as a tool for collecting such feedback regarding the Intentional Integration Initiative; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Education is committed to continuous improvement and regularly evaluating the effectiveness of its tools and practices; and

WHEREAS, the District is currently undertaking a comprehensive review of feedback mechanisms and exploring more effective and strategic approaches for collecting data to inform planning, policy development, and program implementation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the South Orange-Maplewood Board of Education hereby waives the directive to the administration to conduct the Experience Survey for May 2025 under Board Policy 5120;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Board supports the administration's efforts to identify and implement improved strategies for collecting and utilizing feedback to guide adjustments to district strategy, school supports, and professional development;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Board will revisit this matter upon the conclusion of the District's review and will consider any proposed updates to Board Policy 5120 that reflect new or revised approaches to gathering stakeholder input.

4802. WHEREAS, the South Orange-Maplewood Board of Education ("the Board") and the South Orange-Maplewood Education Association ("SOMEA") have engaged in collective negotiations in good faith pursuant to the provisions of the New Jersey Employer-Employee Relations Act (N.J.S.A. 34:13A-1 et seq.); and

WHEREAS, the parties have reached a mutually agreeable successor collective negotiations agreement covering the terms and conditions of employment for SOMEA-represented employees for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027; and

WHEREAS, the members of SOMEA have voted to ratify the terms of this agreement; and

WHEREAS, the Superintendent and the Board's negotiations team have reviewed and recommend the approval and ratification of the agreement;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the South Orange-Maplewood Board of Education formally approves and ratifies the successor collective negotiations agreement between the Board and SOMEA for the period of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2027; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board authorizes the Superintendent, the Board President, and the Board Secretary/School Business Administrator to take all necessary steps to implement the terms of the agreement and to execute the finalized contract document on behalf of the Board.

4803. Approves the settlement agreement with employee # 4948 and authorizes the Board President to execute the settlement agreement.

ROLL CALL: Motion 4798-4803 YES: Bennett, Brown, Callahan, DuVall Wilson, Eckert, Gifford, Kapadia, Meyer, Sackett-Gable, NO: None

HEARING OF INDIVIDUALS AND DELEGATIONS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

None.

Future Meetings

The Board of Education will meet in Public Session on Thursday, May 29, 2025 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.

Motion made by Board Member President Duvall Wilson, seconded by Board Member Brown to adjourn. Motion to adjourn was unanimously approved at 7:22 p.m.

Imani Moody, Board Secretary