

South Orange-Maplewood Board of Education

Annual Board Goals

2026-2027

Goal 1: Student Achievement Oversight

The Board will strengthen its governance oversight of student achievement, equity, and student success by establishing a consistent framework for monitoring progress toward Board-approved District goals and ensuring that the Board receives timely, meaningful, and actionable information regarding student outcomes, achievement and opportunity gaps, and the effectiveness of District initiatives across student groups. The Board will use this information to inform policy, priorities, resource allocation, and future goal-setting.

- **Policy Alignment and Oversight**
 - **Measurable Outcome:** Through the Policy Committee, complete an annual review of policies related to student achievement, equity, student services, and other Board priorities to determine whether policies are current, compliant, aligned with Board-approved goals, and supported by appropriate administrative procedures and monitoring processes.
 - **Q1 Measure:** Identify any policy changes or new policy provisions necessary to support Board-approved goals and establish a mechanism for ongoing Board monitoring of implementation.
- **Annual Board Oversight Calendar**
 - **Measurable Outcome:** By the end of Q1, establish an annual Board oversight calendar, aligned with the District's annual calendar, identifying required and Board-determined presentations, reports, monitoring points, and decision milestones related to Board goals, student achievement, achievement and opportunity gaps, special education outcomes and services, and other Board priorities. The calendar will identify the appropriate committee, Committee of the Whole, or full-Board forum for each item.
- **Student Outcomes Reporting**
 - **Measurable Outcome:** The Superintendent and administration will develop and maintain a consistent student outcomes dashboard

and reporting framework that provides the Board with timely and meaningful information to monitor progress toward Board-approved goals and priorities. Reporting will include appropriate disaggregation by relevant student groups, sufficient context for Board-level analysis, and appropriate protections for student privacy.

- **Board Oversight Measure:** The Board and appropriate committees will review student outcomes data at the intervals established in the annual oversight calendar.

- **Goal Monitoring**

- **Measurable Outcome:** At least quarterly, the Superintendent and administration will provide the Board with a structured progress report on Board-approved goals, including relevant indicators, progress toward targets, significant trends, areas of concern, and planned or recommended next steps. The appropriate committees or public board meetings will provide for review of the information and reporting of significant findings or recommendations to the full Board.

Goal 2: Governance Effectiveness

The Board will strengthen its effectiveness as a governing body by improving communication, onboarding and Board development, committee structure and operations, collective Board deliberation, and accountability for Board goals and priorities. The Board will maintain clear structures and processes that support effective oversight, informed decision-making, and alignment of Board work with Board-approved goals and priorities.

- **Committee Structure and Effectiveness**

- **Measurable Outcome:** As part of an annual Board retreat and/or self-evaluation, review the structure, effectiveness, and workload of Board committees and identify any needed adjustments.
 - **Q1 Measure:** Adopt or reaffirm a formal charge for each standing committee and the Executive Committee defining its scope, responsibilities, relationship to the full Board, and relevant Board goals and priorities.
- **Measurable Outcome:** Establish a process through which committees may recommend changes to their charges or the allocation of responsibilities among committees for consideration and approval by the full Board.
- **Measurable Outcome:** Each committee will establish an annual work plan aligned with its Board-approved charge and relevant Board goals and will report periodically to the full Board on its work, findings, and recommendations.
- **Measurable Outcome:** When appropriate, establish temporary special committees for significant initiatives with clearly defined charges, reporting relationships, duration, and sunset provisions.

- **Committee of the Whole and Full-Board Deliberation**

- **Measurable Outcome:** Establish periodic Committee of the Whole sessions to provide the full Board with a structured forum for substantive discussion of cross-cutting priorities, Board goals, committee work, and matters requiring collective Board consideration. These sessions will complement, rather than replace, standing committee work and regular Board meetings.
 - **Measurable Outcome:** Provide each committee chair with an opportunity at least twice annually to report publicly through COW or another appropriate Board forum on committee

work, relevant goals and metrics, emerging issues, and recommendations for full-Board consideration.

- **Board Goal Accountability**

- **Measurable Outcome:** Establish a quarterly Board goal-monitoring process through which the appropriate committees and/or Committee of the Whole review progress toward Board-approved goals and priorities and report findings to the full Board.

Cross-reference: Goal 1, Goal Monitoring.

- **Measurable Outcome:** As part of the annual Board self-evaluation, assess progress toward Board goals and the effectiveness of Board governance practices and identify priorities for improvement.

- **Board Communication and Follow-Up**

- **Measurable Outcome:** Review and refine Board communication and follow-up protocols for questions, concerns, constituent matters, and requests raised by Board members, including appropriate pathways for referral to the Board President, Executive Committee, relevant committee, or Superintendent. The protocols will reinforce the Board's collective role, promote timely follow-up and transparency among Board members, and maintain clear delineation between Board oversight and administrative responsibilities.

- **Board Member Onboarding and Development**

- **Measurable Outcome:** Build upon existing practices to establish a consistent onboarding process for newly elected or appointed Board members addressing Board governance, policies and bylaws, roles and responsibilities, committee structure and charges, Board goals and priorities, the Board-Superintendent relationship, ethics and legal requirements, and relevant District priorities.
- **Measurable Outcome:** By the end of Q1, develop and administer a mid-year Board governance survey addressing communication, committee effectiveness, Committee of the Whole /full-Board deliberation, goal monitoring, onboarding and Board development, role clarity, and Board-Superintendent communication. Provide a summary of findings to the Board in advance of the winter retreat and use the results to identify priorities for governance improvement.

- **Measurable Outcome:** Conduct a mid-year Board retreat or work session to review progress toward Board goals, consider governance survey findings, orient new members to current goals and priorities, and identify adjustments for the remainder of the year.
- **Strategic Decision-Making**
 - **Measurable Outcome:** By the end of Q2, the Superintendent and administration will develop, with input from the Board, a proposed impact-analysis framework for evaluating significant District programs, initiatives, and resource decisions. The framework will identify information needed by the Board to consider alignment with Board goals, anticipated impact, financial implications, alternatives, and measures of success.
 - **Measurable Outcome:** Following Board consideration and adoption, use the impact-analysis framework, as appropriate, to inform Board deliberation of significant initiatives and resource decisions.
- **Board Governance Calendar**
 - **Measurable Outcome:** Explore the feasibility of developing a unified Board governance calendar identifying recurring statutory, policy, committee, oversight, budget, evaluation, and other Board responsibilities.

Goal 3: Strategic Stewardship

The Board will strengthen long-term stewardship of District resources through disciplined financial oversight, long-range facilities planning, personnel oversight, and clear public communication regarding priorities, tradeoffs, and results. The Board will work collaboratively with the Superintendent and administration to ensure that resources are aligned with Board-approved goals and priorities and that the Board receives the information necessary to make informed, sustainable decisions.

- **Financial Oversight**

- **Measurable Outcome:** By the end of Q1, adopt an annual budget development and Board oversight calendar with key milestone deadlines. Cross-reference: Goal 1, Annual Board Oversight Calendar.
- **Measurable Outcome:** By the end of Q1, establish a list and schedule of financial and budget reports to be provided to the Board throughout the year, including the timing and purpose of each report.
- **Measurable Outcome:** Review multi-year financial projections and key assumptions at least quarterly, including significant changes in revenue, expenditures, enrollment, reserves, and other factors affecting long-term financial sustainability.
- **Measurable Outcome:** Establish a consistent process for the Superintendent and administration to present major budget proposals and potential tradeoffs to the Board, including sufficient analysis to support informed policy and resource decisions.

- **Community Engagement and Public Transparency**

- **Measurable Outcome:** Develop a Board-level approach to community engagement around major budget, facilities, and other strategic decisions, using appropriate Board forums to provide intentional opportunities to hear from students, families, staff, and community members, including individuals and groups who may be underrepresented in traditional engagement opportunities. Cross-reference: Goal 2, Committee of the Whole and Full-Board Deliberation.

- Measurable Outcome: Review opportunities to improve the accessibility and transparency of Board information regarding major priorities, decisions, resource allocations, tradeoffs, and progress toward Board goals. Cross-reference: Goal 1, Annual Board Oversight Calendar; Goal 2, Committee of the Whole and Full-Board Deliberation.
- **Strategic Decision-Making**
 - Measurable Outcome: By the end of Q2, the Superintendent and administration will develop, with input from the Board, a proposed impact-analysis framework for evaluating significant District programs, initiatives, and resource decisions. The framework will identify information needed by the Board to consider alignment with Board goals, anticipated impact, financial implications, alternatives, and measures of success.
 - The framework may be applied, as appropriate, to significant decisions involving facilities and capital priorities, staffing and organizational capacity, special education services and resources, major programs and initiatives, and other areas requiring substantial Board consideration or investment.
 - **Measurable Outcome:** Following Board consideration and adoption, use the impact-analysis framework, as appropriate, to inform Board deliberation of significant initiatives and resource decisions and to support ongoing oversight of outcomes and resource alignment. *Cross-reference: Goal 2, Strategic Decision-Making.*