



Board of Education Recognitions

somsdk12.org/board/recognitions

March 2026

NAME/SCHOOL	RECOGNITION
<p>SOMSD Teachers from Achieve Foundation</p>	<p>Congratulations to the teachers and teams of teachers who received Deborah Prinz Educator Grants this month through the Achieve Foundation. Achieve board members delivered more than \$23,600 in grant funding for 14 projects and programs across SOMSD, adding to nearly \$62,000 for 41 grants awarded this past fall. We are grateful for this continued investment in our educators and students, and for the creative opportunities these grants make possible throughout the district.</p>
<p>Walter Bolin Maplewood Middle School</p>	<p>At Maplewood Middle School, Physical Education and Health teacher Jamie Handwerker partnered with USA Track & Field to bring Hazel Clark Day to life, organizing a Run, Jump, Throw clinic that engaged more than 200 students. The event gave students a fun, active way to experience the value of youth sports and healthy living. Also at MMS, Dance teacher Kenya Massey hosted the "One World" Dance Concert in celebration of Black History Month, where students of all skill levels took the stage to express themselves through movement, building confidence and celebrating culture in a welcoming space.</p> <p>At Marshall School, multi-age teacher Emily Mamrak launched the school's first "Girls on the Run" chapter with the support of parent volunteers. Interest was so strong that the program expanded to accommodate more students and an additional coach. Emily's work reflects a deep commitment to student wellness, confidence, and helping young people build healthy habits that extend beyond the classroom.</p>

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<p data-bbox="284 283 535 388"> Sophia Kahn Lola Karp-Foster Columbia High School </p>	<p data-bbox="613 283 1404 514"> Columbia High School is proud to recognize Sophia Kahn as our Class of 2026 valedictorian and Lola Karp-Foster as our salutatorian. Sophia will be attending the University of Pennsylvania, where she plans to study political science and Spanish, after serving as managing editor of The Columbian and being selected for the New Jersey Scholars Program. </p> <p data-bbox="613 556 1404 745"> Lola plans to study biomedical engineering, focusing on neural technologies, building on her advanced classes and research experience in neuroscience. Even though they've taken different paths, both Sophia and Lola have made a real impact at Columbia through their hard work, curiosity, and dedication. </p> <p data-bbox="613 787 820 829"> Congratulations! </p>