

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH ORANGE AND MAPLEWOOD  
PUBLIC BOARD MEETING  
February 26, 2026  
HAND CARRY**

**FOR ACTION**

**5RESOLUTION NUMBER            4930**

**SUBJECT                                DENYING LEVEL IV GRIEVANCE – GRADE  
CHANGES**

**WHEREAS**, the South Orange–Maplewood Education Association (“Association”) filed a Level IV Grievance dated January 8, 2026, alleging that the Columbia High School Principal’s directive establishing a minimum marking period grade of 50 violated Article XX.B.1 of the collective bargaining agreement and related provisions; and

**WHEREAS**, the grievance asserts that teachers must be permitted to determine grades solely in their professional judgment, and that the directive improperly required grade overrides to reflect a minimum of 50; and

**WHEREAS**, the Superintendent denied the grievance at Level III, finding no violation of the collective bargaining agreement; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Education has reviewed the grievance, the Level III response, the collective bargaining agreement, applicable Board policies, including Policy 2624, and relevant legal authority; and

**WHEREAS**, the establishment of grading scales, grading floors, and grading parameters constitutes a matter of educational policy and educational judgment within the inherent managerial prerogative of the Board of Education; and

**WHEREAS**, in *Middletown Township Board of Education v. Middletown Township Education Association*, PERC No. 2016–7, the Public Employment Relations Commission recognized that grading practices and grading systems are matters of educational policy and therefore are not mandatorily negotiable; and

**WHEREAS**, the directive at issue established a grading scale parameter applicable to the

marking period, and did not eliminate teacher professional judgment in determining earned grades within the established grading system;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Education finds that the establishment of a minimum marking period grade of 50 constitutes an exercise of educational policy consistent with the Board's managerial prerogative and applicable law; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Board determines there has been no violation of the collective bargaining agreement; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Level IV Grievance regarding Grade Changes is hereby **DENIED** in its entirety.