

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH ORANGE AND MAPLEWOOD, NJ
PUBLIC BOARD MEETING**

February 27, 2017

RESOLUTION: 3536

**SUBJECT: AFFIRMING OUR COMMITMENT TO EDUCATE ALL
CHILDREN**

WHEREAS, the South Orange Maplewood Board of Education recognizes the unique ethnic, racial and cultural diversity of our School District and celebrates this diversity; and

WHEREAS, approximately 26 percent of Maplewood residents and approximately 20 percent of South Orange residents are foreign-born; and

WHEREAS, the School District of South Orange Maplewood has a well-settled obligation under the Constitution of the United States to provide a free and appropriate public education to all school-age children without regard to their immigration status or their family members' immigration status; and

WHEREAS, the School District of South Orange Maplewood has a well-settled obligation under the Constitution of the United States, the Constitution of the State of New Jersey, federal and state law to provide equal educational opportunity for all students; and

WHEREAS, the Board has adopted a series of policies to ensure that all school age children in the district receive a free and appropriate public education and equal educational opportunity, including Policy No. 5750 (Equal Educational Opportunity); and

WHEREAS, student records are private and confidential; and

WHEREAS, the Board has taken note of historical and recent rhetoric targeting immigrant communities, ethnic groups and religious populations; and

WHEREAS, the Board desires to assure all South Orange and Maplewood residents of the district's commitment to educating all school-age children who live in the district, as required by law; and

WHEREAS, the School District of South Orange Maplewood is committed to ensuring that the climate in district schools is welcoming for all students and their families, and that all students' families are treated as partners in their children's education; and

WHEREAS U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) policy characterizes public schools as "sensitive locations," places where, in the normal course, enforcement actions should not occur; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that while the Board acknowledges the mission of law enforcement agencies charged with enforcing our Nation's immigration laws, the role of the school district is to ensure the education of all school-age children for so long as they may reside in South Orange and Maplewood; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board reaffirms its commitment to equal opportunity for all school-age students residing in South Orange and Maplewood to attend, and to enjoy all opportunities and benefits available in the schools of our district, regardless of ethnicity, national origin, race, immigration status, or religious beliefs, free from harassment or intimidation, for so long as they may reside in South Orange and Maplewood; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board will protect student confidentiality and will not share private information unless required by law or a court order, and we expect all persons employed by and in the South Orange Maplewood School District to protect student privacy and confidentiality as well; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that, in keeping with this commitment, the Board's General Counsel shall advise the school district's Administration regarding the obligations and limits of the district's obligations to cooperate with federal immigration enforcement, and that the Administration shall comply with all legal obligations but refrain from voluntary cooperation beyond those limits;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Superintendent is requested to i) share this Resolution with all staff employed by the school district; ii) request that all vendors employing personnel in district schools share this Resolution with their personnel; and iii) provide guidance, including regulations if necessary, and training to district schools as to steps that shall be taken to ensure that the district's commitment to educating all children is communicated and reinforced with students, families and community stakeholders.