

**SCHOOL DISTRICT OF SOUTH ORANGE AND MAPLEWOOD, NEW JERSEY
PUBLIC BOARD MEETING
SEPTEMBER 25, 2025**

RESOLUTION 4861

FOR ACTION

SUBJECT: APPROVE BOARD GOALS 2025–2026 SCHOOL YEAR

BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Board of Education approve the following Board Goals for the 2025–2026 school year as presented:

Goal #1: In coordination with the district, as financial stewards, formulate a transparent and structured budget process that sets clear expectations and strengthens regular communication among the board, district, and community. In addition, establish ongoing financial oversight mechanisms to proactively monitor district finances, identify emerging risks, and anticipate future financial challenges, ensuring the board can make timely, informed decisions that support long-term fiscal stability.

Action items:

1. Led by the FFT committee, develop a list of common budget requests and questions from board members, to consider for future budget policy or regulations updates, and to use as part of the board's review and approval of the annual budget in general. This list should include a timeframe for budget development updates, and could inform public-facing FAQs and documents the District creates.
 - a. KPI: complete list with related due dates to provide to district by end of November 2025
2. Led by the Policy committee, ensure policy and regulations are aligned with explicit budget process and board expectations (using information obtained in action item 1), including related time frames and deliverables to board. KPIs:
 - a. KPI: By November, identify the policies/regulations that need to be addressed

- b. KPI: By January, finalize drafts of updated policies for passage
- 3. Consider the creation of a special committee tasked with identifying and developing new revenue streams for the district, including researching revenue streams used by other districts and those uniquely available to our district, and assisting the district to take the steps necessary to move forward on one or more opportunities.
 - a. KPI: Before the end of December 2025, confirm volunteers and conduct at least one committee meeting.
 - b. KPI: By June 2026, finalize a plan developed in collaboration with the district that lays out a strategy for new revenue streams that could also connect with the district's 5-Year Plan.
- 4. Assign to one or more committees an ongoing review (cadence to be confirmed in committee) of district legal costs with an eye toward oversight of appropriate spending levels and cost drivers.
 - a. KPI: Board to receive quarterly report on legal spend from each committee, tracking such costs.

Goal #2: Strengthen BOE oversight of District annual calendar and goals, especially with respect to our Board meeting presentations and community updates.

Action items:

- 1. Review the District's new internal year-long calendar for regular updates on student achievement metrics in BOE meetings to evaluate if additional topics should be added to the timeline.
 - a. KPI: Provide District feedback on the calendar and any additional academic update requests before the October 2025 BOE meeting.
- 2. Committee calendar alignment with year-long calendar and District goals
 - a. KPI: Chairs to work with committee on annual agendas by December 2025 and ensure accessible to all board members, potentially via question trackers.
 - b. KPI: In March 2026 and June 2026, Chair to check extent to which annual committee calendar is being followed, and course correct as needed.

Goal #3: Strengthen Board governance, norms, and oversight functions, in collaboration with the district, to ensure effective board operations that are focused on supporting the district to meeting its annual goals, through ongoing oversight and continuous improvement.

Subgoals:

1. The Board will review its framework for gathering and answering board member questions and work product requests to ensure that relevant and actionable information is provided to board members on a timely basis, such as requests posed through question trackers, while managing the overall impact of these requests on district administration. The board should evaluate the role of committee chairs and their relationships with district committee liaisons in facilitating and streamlining responses to these inquiries, including how to manage and satisfy increased requests during intensive projects.
2. The Board will review its committee structure to ensure proper alignment with oversight of district operations, and ensure that all committees are effectively interfacing with all board members, including through strengthening best practices for creating and circulating agendas, receiving and acting on board member agenda items, work product, and requests, and providing detailed and actionable minutes to best track oversight efforts over time.
3. The Board will regularly review and strengthen its Board Manual to ensure that it reflects current Board processes, norms, and expectations, for the benefit of existing as well as new members.
 - a. KPI: Board committees will recommend to the Policy and Governance Committee changes to the Board Manual as necessary to implement the Board annual goals.
 - b. KPI: The Policy and Governance Committee will review the Board Manual, including seeking comment from all board members, in October 2025 and March 2026, to identify areas for revision and growth.
4. The Board will commit to ongoing professional development and growth to ensure that best practices and approaches from experts and other districts are regularly being incorporated into our work, through holding regular retreat meetings, conducting board-wide trainings, and encouraging individual board

member growth through trainings and participation in organizations that support board work.

- a. KPI: The Board will hold quarterly retreats oriented around a topic and including NJSBA training and/or other facilitation as appropriate for board growth. Possible topics to include restorative practices, district finances, student growth, ...
- b. KPI: The Board will maintain NJSBA board certification, including by meeting the required annual rolling objectives.
- c. KPI: The Board will encourage individual member growth, including through participation in NJSBA webinars, attendance at the NJSBA annual conference, participation in meetings held by the Essex County SBA and other county-level SBAs, will promote these opportunities by publicizing opportunities to fellow board members, and will incentivize this growth through regular recognition during board meetings of trainings, certifications, and similar growth and activities undertaken by board members.