



Revised and Adopted August 17, 2009

Our Mission

The South Orange-Maplewood School District prepares each student to be a productive member of society by offering a quality, comprehensive education within a diverse learning community that values academic excellence and has the expectation that all students at all grade levels achieve proficiency in the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards.

As a productive member of society, a student of South Orange-Maplewood will be:

- responsible, caring, collaborative and ethical.
- a critical thinker and problem solver.
- an effective communicator, both orally and in writing.
- a lifelong learner.

Core Values

- We value equity and excellence in achieving our mission.
- We value effective communication and active collaboration.
- We value investments in early childhood as the foundation of good education.
- We value the renewal of our secondary schools as vibrant and rigorous learning environments.

Preamble

These *district goals* establish the ends by which the district's success in fulfilling its mission of educating students shall be measured from 2007 - 2011. Each of these goals, and the underlying objectives, is important and relates to the others. No objective shall be considered met if its achievement comes through the erosion of another objective's baselines.

These goals also comprise essential steps on the path to meeting the aim of the federal No Child Left Behind law to achieve 100% student proficiency in core subject areas by 2014, as measured by standardized assessments. The board hereby embraces that aim.

These goals—specifically their achievement or lack thereof—shall form the primary basis for evaluation of the superintendent by the board. Each is rooted in the strategic imperatives identified in *Vision 2010: Rigor, Relationships & Resources*, the strategic plan that was adopted by the board in October 2005. The board presents this document as the primary statement of priorities that shall govern the initiatives, budget allocations and collective-bargaining objectives of the district in 2007-08 as it looks ahead to 2010-11. Each year the board will review and amend these goals by resolution, including resetting and adding milestones.

Lastly, the board wishes to emphasize that the schools of South Orange-Maplewood seek to educate the *complete* student, utilizing a broad and diverse curriculum that includes art, music, languages, technology, physical education and other subjects that may not be mentioned as priorities for improvement in the goals that follow. Although continuing improvement in the quality of language-arts and math instruction is an essential priority (as indicated in Goal One), it is not the board's intent that such improvement occur through a de-emphasis of the arts and sciences.

Roles

The board has a responsibility to ensure that the district goals reflect community values, to establish the necessary policies to achieve the goals, and to communicate with the community about the goals and progress toward them.

The superintendent is responsible for progress toward the goals, through the management of all staff to achieve clearly stated milestones. The board shall evaluate his performance by assessing success against the milestones on an annual basis.

Definitions

Each of the four district goals has five components.

Goal statement — Articulation of the fundamental, long-term aspirations for the schools of South Orange-Maplewood.

Objectives — Specific targets for each goal area. All objectives are four-year targets.

Indicators — Criteria used to evaluate progress toward the goals. They consist of types of information, both quantitative and qualitative, that can reasonably be used to evaluate progress.

Baselines — Articulation of the current status for each indicator for which information is currently available as of the end of the 2006-07 school year. For many indicators data does not yet exist and a mechanism for collecting and reporting good information needs to be developed before a baseline can be defined.

Milestones — Milestones are one-year targets and will serve as the primary basis for measuring the district's progress and the primary means among several for evaluating the superintendent's performance.

Goal One: Student Learning

The South Orange-Maplewood Public Schools will promote the intellectual, social, emotional and physical growth of all students.

Objective A: On both an aggregated and disaggregated basis, the student body in South Orange-Maplewood will demonstrate academic achievement and breadth equal to or better than peer districts as grouped socioeconomically by the state (District Factor Group “I”).

Indicator 1: Student performance comparisons to the DFG-I on both aggregated and disaggregated scores [comparing like to like] district-wide and school-by-school on state assessments in language arts, math and science for each grade tested.

Milestones:

Baseline	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
2006-07 NJ ASK, NJ ASK 8 (formerly GEPA) & HSPA scores	15% closer to DFG* on: • advanced proficient • proficient (P+AP)	20-35% closer to DFG on: • advanced proficient • proficient	35-65% closer to DFG on: • advanced proficient • proficient	65-100% closer to DFG on: • advanced proficient • proficient

Note: For South Mountain, Jefferson, and Tuscan, the 2009-10 milestone is to achieve a 5-point advantage vs. the DFG for proficiency and advanced proficiency. The 2010-11 milestone is to demonstrate achievement at a level 10 points higher than the DFG (or 100% proficiency in some cases)..

Objective B: Elimination of variations in achievement among student groups correlated with race, socioeconomic status, gender and special needs.

Indicator 1: Disaggregated by race, economic status, gender and special needs, district-wide and school-by-school, in: 1) student performance on state assessments in language arts, math and science; 2) AP scores; 3) course-taking by level; 4) graduation rates; and 5) college matriculation.

Milestones:

2009-2010	2010-2011
20% of the gap closed on: advanced proficient proficient AP scores	An additional 25% of the gap closed on: advanced proficient proficient AP scores
10% decreases in the gaps of numbers of students in higher level classes by course, grade, and subject; 20% decreases in gaps for graduation and college matriculation rates.	Additional 20% decreases in the gaps of numbers of students in higher level classes by course, grade, and subject; additional 20% decreases in gaps for graduation and college matriculation rates.

Objective C: Rigorous curricula and assessments and the creation of expanded learning opportunities to enable the district to meet its goals.

Indicator 1: A consistently implemented and thoroughly articulated K-12 standards-based core curriculum reflecting world class standards and 21st century skills.

Milestones

Core Area	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
English Language Arts	Assess	Develop K-8	Implement K-8; Develop 9-12	Assess K-8; Implement 9-12
Mathematics	Monitor	Monitor	Assess	Revise
Science	Implement	Monitor	Assess	Revise
Social Studies	Revise	Implement	Monitor	Assess
World Languages/ESL	Implement	Monitor	Assess	Revise
PE/Health	Revise	Implement	Monitor	Assess
Fine Arts	Implement	Monitor	Assess	Revise
Media/Educational Technology	Monitor	Assess	Revise	Implement

Indicator 2: Implementation of common district assessments in core content areas.

2009-10 Milestones:

- Implementation of DRA2 in grades K-2.
- District formative assessments in core subjects in grades 3-5.
- Common assessments for midterms and finals in core subjects in grades 6-10.

Indicator 3: Number of classified students taught in an inclusion setting.

2009-10 Milestone:

- Increase in the percentage of classified students taught in an inclusion setting.

Indicator 4: Academic intervention and acceleration for struggling and/or disengaged students.

2009-10 Milestones:

- Meeting of AYP in all schools for all subgroups.
- 10% decrease of students who failed academic courses.

Objective D: School environments that support the social and emotional development of all students.

Indicator 1: Ongoing reinforcement of exemplary student conduct in all schools.

2009-10 Milestone:

- Development and implementation of annual plans at each school for increasing the visibility and numbers of student awards, notices and incentives rewarding exemplary conduct.

Objective E: Secondary schools that leverage proven reforms, pioneer instructional technologies, create greater opportunities for individualized instruction and student development, and foster more collaboration and cross-learning amongst student subgroups.

Indicator 1: Greater use of new methods and programs for stimulating excellence and equity amongst all student cohorts in the middle and high schools.

2009-10 Milestones:

- Stewardship of the newly formed “Excellence and Equity Task Force” in its effort to generate non-binding recommendations to the superintendent for making the secondary schools more supportive of the campaign to narrow and eliminate achievement gaps.
- Development and implementation of a CHS Action Plan for piloting new strategies for supporting and advancing struggling learners.

Goal Two: Professional Staff

The staff of the South Orange–Maplewood Public Schools will be world-class, with a deep knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach, and the ability to achieve the educational outcomes the district seeks to achieve.

Objective A: A performance evaluation and compensation system driven by objective measures that are tied to student learning and school/district goals.

Indicator 1: Valid, fair, reliable and constructive systems for performance evaluation of principals, assistant principals, supervisors, teachers (non-tenured and tenured) and district administrators, driven by multiple measures (student achievement and individual evaluation) of individual performance as well as contributions to team efforts that are aligned to school/district goals.

2009-10 Milestone: One hundred percent district-wide implementation of:

- Coaching and evaluations system based on the Danielson framework for all teachers and staff;
- Coaching and evaluation system based on ISLLC standards for all administrators; and
- Evaluation and compensation for all senior leaders based on district goals.

Indicator 2: Opportunities for incentive compensation tied to performance on multiple measures.

2009-10 Milestone: Implementation of performance-compensation pilot with ASCA members.

Objective B: Professional development programs to equip district faculty to contribute to measurable improvements in student achievement.

Indicator 1: Number of national board certified teachers.

2009-10 Milestone: The current cohort of 10 continues to pursue certification and 10 additional staff members initiate the process.

Indicator 2: High-quality professional development to support teachers in improving instruction and to support administrators in using the new teacher coaching model.

2009-10 Milestones:

- Completion of proposed professional-development exercises throughout 2009-10 according to proposed schedule.
- Improvements in student performance on state ELA assessments (see Goal One, Objective A, Indicator 1, Milestones for 2009-10).
- Ninety percent or greater success rate in implementation of Danielson-based teacher evaluation system, yielding valid, fair, reliable and constructive evaluations and tenure recommendations, as judged by administration.
- One hundred percent success rate in implementation of improved administrator evaluation system, yielding valid, fair, reliable and constructive evaluations and tenure recommendations, as judged by the superintendent.

- Development of baseline data with regard to staff and administrator attendance at optional professional development activities.

Objective C: Recruitment and hiring of qualified and diverse professional staff.

Indicator 1: Bigger pools of highly qualified and diverse candidates for administrative, faculty and support positions.

2009-10 Milestones:

- 10% increase in candidates identifying themselves as minorities.
- One hundred percent of hires made according to district practices (includes use of Danielson framework to assess knowledge of effective practice, a group interview, and a sample lesson done in a district classroom with students).

Indicator 2: Hiring of highly qualified and diverse candidates.

2009-10 Milestone: Establish tracking system to gauge frequency of hiring “top choice” candidates. Exceed 75% “top choice” hires for 2009-10.

Goal Three: Communications

The South Orange-Maplewood Public Schools will promote effective communication within the schools and throughout the greater community.

Objective A: Well-informed internal and external constituencies.

Indicator 1: Disaggregated PTA/HSA, parent, student, staff and community satisfaction ratings gathered through annual survey(s) on the effectiveness of district communications and other elements of education in the district, including student conduct.

2009-10 Milestones: Field one or more survey tools to address each of the five stakeholder groups. Complete analysis of 2009-10 results vs. 2008-09.

Objective B: A system in place for gathering meaningful, actionable feedback from parents, students and staff regarding the quality of curriculum and instruction in schools.

Indicator 1: Disaggregated parent, student and staff input regarding the quality of curriculum and instruction gathered through annual survey(s) and/or other mechanisms.

2009-10 Milestone: Development of a strategic plan for collecting more timely, in-depth instruction- and curriculum-focused feedback from parents, students and staff.

Objective C: Strong partnerships with parents, local businesses and community organizations built around a shared embrace of the district's goals of high achievement for every student.

Indicator 1: Greater participation by parents in managing and monitoring their students' academic performance.

2009-10 Milestones: Establish data gathering to monitor and compare parent attendance in various engagement opportunities. Achieve improved parent attendance at parent-teacher conferences, back-to-school nights, and other in-school events..

Indicator 2: Greater proactive faculty participation in engaging parents in managing and monitoring their students' academic performance.

2009-10 Milestones: Develop strategic plan for effectively increasing faculty usage of email and Edline to engage parents on an ongoing basis. Establish a time period for piloting the plan. Conduct the pilot along with pre/post measurement of outbound email and Edline use.

Indicator3: Greater participation by voters, local businesses and community organizations in lobbying for state-level education reforms that will support the district goals of the South Orange-Maplewood Public Schools.

2009-10 Milestone: Develop a system for collecting email letters from voters and community institutions and forwarding them in batches to state legislators and policymakers.

Goal Four: Resource Management

The South Orange–Maplewood Public Schools will manage fiscal and facilities resources effectively and efficiently.

Objective A: A transparent, efficient budget that aligns with and supports the attainment of district goals and that reins in spending on budget categories that are rising at a faster rate than the cost of living.

Indicator 1: Timely approval of the district budget aligned to district goals and responsive to taxpayer burden.

2009-10 Milestone: Approved 2010-11 budget with a lower year-over-year tax impact than that achieved for 2009-10.

Indicator 2: Rate of growth in health-insurance costs.

2009-10 Milestone: Double number of employees with dual coverage who opt out of district coverage.

Indicator 3: Rate of growth in energy consumption.

2009-10 Milestone: Reduce consumption 5% or more at each district location. (Baseline created in 08-09 of consumption by location.)

Indicator 4: Rate of growth in special education costs.

2009-10 Milestone: Expansion of in-district programs to two more classes of students that would otherwise be served by out-of-district placements.

Indicator 5: Specific shared services and the value or savings associated with them.

2009-10 Milestone: Generate new savings of \$100,000 from shared services or an increase of 10% on 2008-09 savings generated through shared services, whichever is greater.

Objective B: Well-maintained and safe facilities that enable focused and effective teaching and learning, and are repaired and updated in an architecturally sensitive and fiscally responsible manner.

Indicator 1: Feedback from parents, students, administrators and teachers on quality of facilities.

2009-10 Milestone: Improved stakeholder satisfaction rates, as measured by surveys on cleanliness, maintenance, and work-order completion.

Indicator 2: Progress on projects in the Long-Range Facilities Plan

2009-10 Milestone: Complete all long-range facilities projects scheduled for completion during 2009-10.

Objective C: A technology infrastructure that effectively supports instruction and administration for the 21st century.

Indicator 1: Implementation of the district's five-year technology plan.

2009-10 Milestones:

- Completion of scheduled technology projects and development of support instruction on time and on or under budget.
- WAN enhancements and fiber optic ring completed for Maplewood schools, and strategy identified for achieving comparable level of WAN enhancements in South Orange schools.
- Implementation of fifth-grade model classrooms; all 5th grade teachers trained in new instructional technology.
- Middle school technology curriculum developed for September 2010 implementation, and lab implementation on track for January 2011.

Indicator 2: Evidence of technology contributing to improved teaching and learning.

2009-10 Milestones:

- • Development of monitoring instrument(s) for assessing the contributions of information technology in improving teaching and learning.

Indicator 3: Evidence of technology delivering curriculum cost-effectiveness gains.

2009-10 Milestone: Achieve real savings in technology or other expenditure areas that partially offset the cost of investments in technology systems, services and staff.