



Revised and Adopted September 15, 2008

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 District Factor Group on both aggregated and disaggregated scores [comparing like to like] on state assessments in language arts, math and science.

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 • partially proficient	20-35% closer to DFG on: • advanced proficient • partially proficient	35-65% closer to DFG on: • advanced proficient • partially proficient	65-100% closer to DFG on: • advanced proficient • partially proficient

**Example: If the gap in 2007 HSPA scores is 20 percentage points, narrow it to 17 points.*

Objective B: Enactment of rigorous curricula and an aligned, value-added assessment system; and the creation of expanded learning opportunities to enable the district to meet its goals.

Indicator 1: Implementation of a valid, reliable, and fair growth model to assess the progress of student cohorts and frequent diagnostic assessments in core content areas.

Baseline	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
No growth model exists	Develop by spring 2008	Pilot Wireless Generation tools (K-2), Learnia (3-8), and develop common midterm and final exams (6-10). Complete growth model.	Full implementation	Assess and revise

Indicator 2: A consistently implemented K-12 standards-based core curriculum reflecting world class standards and 21st century skills.

Core Area	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
English Language Arts	Assess	See indicator 3 below	See indicator 3 below	See indicator 3 below
Mathematics	Monitor	Assess	Revise	Implement
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 3: (Added 2008) The district will revise its K-12 Language Arts Literacy curriculum to reflect increased rigor for all student populations

Baseline	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Data from LAL Audit indicates need for total revision of K-12 LAL curriculum	Revise curriculum for grades K-8 Develop common grade level assessments for grades 6-10 Identify diagnostic assessment tool(s) for grades 3-5 Implement bi-annual formative assessments for reading and writing in grades 3-8 which focus on skills needed for NJASK Monitor and assess curriculum implementation and protocols Continue district walkthroughs	Adopt revised K-8 curriculum July 2009 Revise curriculum for grades 9-12 Monitor and assess curriculum implementation and protocols Continue district walkthroughs	Adopt revised curriculum for grades 9-12 July 2010 Monitor and assess curriculum implementation and protocols Continue district walkthroughs

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

Milestones for 2008-2009: 10% decrease of students who scored partially proficient and/or failed academic courses

Indicator 5: Number of sections of full-day kindergarten.

Baseline	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
2 full day sections	3 full day; develop plan to promote the readiness of all students for first grade	17 full day sections	Universal Full Day K	N/A

Indicator 6: Aggregated and disaggregated rates of 1) student participation and achievement in: AP and advanced classes, AP and SAT tests, arts, athletics, extracurricular activities, community service; and 2) graduation, and college matriculation.

Milestone 2008-2009: Update data in January state of the district. Reduce outcome and participation gaps correlated to demographics by 10% in all categories.

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

Indicator 1: District leveling policies/regulations/practices based primarily upon objective performance criteria for placement and advancement that are clearly and fully communicated to the school community.

Baseline	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
January 2007 memo from Jim Memoli regarding academic placement criteria	Policies/regs/practices reviewed and fully communicated	Develop and present options of structural and/or criteria changes for board consideration and action by February 2009. Options must reflect current research, best practices in other districts, and implementation considerations.	Begin implementation of desired option.	Monitor and assess impact on achievement

Indicator 2: Development of preparatory programs to enable access for a greater number of students to higher level classes.

2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
Investigate preparatory programs for access to higher level classes	Create baseline of percentages of students in Level 2 and Level 3 that move up a Level over the course of the school year or at the end of the year. Create additional time programs that will enable students (at each grade level and in each core subject) to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to move from Level 2 to Level 3 or from Level 3 to Level 4	Implement Increase the number percentages of students in Level 2 and Level 3 that move up a Level over the course of the school year or at the end of the year by 10%	Monitor and assess impact on achievement

Indicator 3: Size of statistically significant differences in 1) student performance on standardized assessments, SAT and AP scores by race, socioeconomic status, and special needs; and 2) graduation rates, and college matriculation data.

Baseline	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
2006-07 NJ ASK, GEPA, HSPA, SAT & AP scores; graduation and college-matriculation rates	15% of the gap closed on: advanced proficient partially proficient	20-35% of the gap closed on: advanced proficient partially proficient	35-65% of the gap closed on: advanced proficient partially proficient	65-100% of the gap closed on: advanced proficient partially proficient

Objective D: Improved student conduct

Indicator 1: A student-centered districtwide code of conduct, tailored as appropriate to different age groups in the elementary, middle and senior high schools, including a valid, reliable and fair method for honoring outstanding positive conduct.

Baseline: Schools have guidelines in handbooks; infractions and consequences not consistent across the district and not tabulated for data collection

Milestone 08-09: create a districtwide data collection system and a consistent code of conduct across schools

Objective E: Increased excellence and equity at Columbia High School

Indicator 1: Well-articulated and standards-aligned curricula

Milestone 2008-2009: Delineate and prioritize course content (Grades 9, 10). Curricular documents written and field tested for Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, English I, and English II

Indicator 2: Curriculum-based common assessments.

Milestone 2008-2009: Draft and pilot common assessments in core content areas grades 9 and 10.

Indicator 3: A positive, caring and safe environment that supports student achievement and engagement

Baseline-DSACS Student Survey of school climate (May 2008); suspension reports for the 2007-2008; Violence and Vandalism Reports for the 2007-2008

Milestone for 2008-2009: provide training to staff in Social Emotional Learning; strengthen and coordinate at-risk behavior preventions; enhance recognition of students in academics and extracurricular activities. Reduce number of students suspended out of school. Reduce the number of incidents of violence and vandalism.

Indicator 4: Strengthen the special education inclusion program

Baseline: While there are many highly effective co-teaching pairs, the successful team practices have not been identified, quantified, or shared as best practices with colleagues.

Milestone 2008-2009: Develop a systemic procedure to identify highly effective co-teaching pair practices and teacher trends that positively impact instruction in inclusion classrooms.

Milestones 2009-2010: Implement program of professional development based on the data collected and analyzed in 2008-2009 for all inclusion co-teaching teams.

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: Recruitment, hiring and retention of diverse, qualified and high-performing professional staff.

Indicator 1: Number of qualified candidates for employment; percent of qualified candidates of color

Milestones for 2008-2009: Develop the district's definition of a "qualified candidate" and generate baseline data

Indicator 2: Retention of high-performing staff.

Milestones for 2008-2009: Generation of baseline data, including definition(s) of high performance

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

Indicator 1: Rollout of an initiative to stimulate faculty pursuit of national board certification (NBC).

Baseline: No district NBC program and no certified teachers in the district.

Milestones for 2007-08: Development of an NBC program that includes subsidies, supports and incentives for teachers undertaking the process; 5-10 teachers begin the process to attain their board certification, with support (financial and release time) from the district

Milestone for 2008-2009: An additional 5-10 teachers begin the process, and maintained support to the 11 currently committed.

Indicator 2: Access to and provision of high-quality professional development, based on need as identified in the personnel evaluation, to all teachers, school leaders and central office staff.

Baseline: unknown percent of teachers, school leaders and central office staff receive unknown quality of professional development

Milestones for 2007-08: A system to track the amount of professional development that each teacher, school leader and central office staff member participates in and a feedback system that enables the participating person to rate the quality, relevance and ability to apply what they learn to improve his or her teaching/leading and/or other tasks and responsibilities as tied to school and/or district improvement goals

Milestone for 2008-2009: implement the tracking system, with data analysis to be done twice annually.

Indicator 3: Implementation of leadership opportunities to enable teachers to exercise greater leadership without entirely leaving the classroom

Baseline: no formal process to develop teacher leaders

Milestones for 2008-2009: Create opportunities for teachers to exercise leadership in curriculum and staff development

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

Indicator 1: A valid, fair and reliable system for performance evaluation of principals, assistant principals and supervisors, driven by objective measures (student achievement and school/district goals) and linked to opportunities for incentive compensation.

Baseline: No system currently exists

Milestones for 2007-08: Development via committee including ASCA representatives of a system for performance evaluation of principals and supervisors driven by objective measures

Milestones for 2008-2009: Finalize and pilot system in 08-09.

Indicator 2: A multi-rater, team approach to non-tenured and tenured personnel evaluations, using an evaluation format and procedures that are high-quality and aligned to student achievement and district goals.

Baseline	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010	2010-2011
In current process, non-tenured staff have a single primary evaluator; the secondary evaluator does not always formally observe	Development of a multi-rater, team approach aligned to student achievement, and school and/or district improvement goals for 3 rd year non-tenured personnel evaluations	Assess and refine approach; extend to 2 nd year non-tenured and struggling tenured staff	Assess and refine approach; extend to first year non-tenured and struggling tenured staff	Extend to broader tenured staff

Goal Three: Communications

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

Objective A: Improved district communications for internal and external constituencies.

Indicator 1: Implementation of a user-friendly, information-rich district website.

Baseline	2007-2008	2008-2009
Current site is information-rich but unappealing in design and difficult to navigate	New design and navigation on homepage up by Oct. 31, 2007; new site complete by Feb. 1, 2008; Board minutes posted promptly for public view after Board meetings	Usage of and user feedback on the district website. School and curriculum pages are regularly updated, user-friendly and information-rich

Indicator 2: Readable, information-rich regular publications provided in English, Spanish and Haitian-Creole.

Baseline 2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
annual district calendar/handbook published and widely distributed; monthly education page published in News-Record; e-mail to "key communicators" twice a month to announce Board meetings and agendas and as necessary to disseminate messages and other news from the superintendent; board recognitions in a News-Record column and in the South Orange Gaslight	Launch of a periodic e-newsletter in 2007-08 to full parent & citizen community; publication of an annual report to the community in spring 2008	New parent letter and resource packet produced and distributed in Haitian-Creole and Spanish. E-newsletter issued at least monthly; State of the District report released in January

Indicator 3: Parent, staff and community satisfaction ratings from multiple survey tools, aggregated and disaggregated.

Baseline: Survey tools do not currently exist

Milestones 2008-2009: Develop and implement surveys by October 2008 to address satisfaction and solicit ideas for improvement with the website, newsletters; and by February 2009 for the annual report.

Objective B: Strong partnerships with parents, local businesses, and organizations in the community.

Indicator 1: Outreach to welcome and engage parents who are new to the district or marginally engaged in the school community.

Milestones for 2008-2009: Develop inventory and assessment of outreach programs and participation levels at each district school.

Objective C: Assess stakeholder satisfaction.

Indicator 1: Student, parent and staff feedback on quality of instruction and other elements of education in SOM schools.

2008-09 milestone: Conduct survey(s) to garner feedback on quality of instruction and other elements of education from students, parents and staff.

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 budgets in accordance with the state spending cap.

Baseline: 2007-08 budget met cap and included a \$90,000 separate proposal covering two onetime items

Milestone for 2008-2009: Passage of a 2009-10 budget at cap and including no separate proposal items other than items required to achieve these district goals.

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

Baseline: 2006-07 spending on health insurance

Milestones: 2007-08—introduction of an opt-out incentive program whereby employees with the option of being covered by a spouse or other plan can withdraw from district coverage and share in the resulting savings to the district; 2008-09—analyze first- and second-year savings in other similar NJ districts that have introduced opt-out incentives, then achieve participation rate in district's incentive program equal to or higher than average rate for analyzed districts

Indicator 3: Rate of growth in energy costs.

Baseline: 2006-07 spending on energy

Milestones for 2007-08: Limit increase or achieve a decrease in 2007-08 energy usage so that in the case of a comparable winter and energy costs rising at a rate comparable to or below cap district energy spending does not increase by more than cap (4%); implement strategies for controlling or reducing energy spending in 2008-09 budget

Milestones for 2008-2009: Limit increase or achieve a decrease in 2008-09 energy usage so that in the case of a comparable winter and energy costs rising at a rate comparable to or below cap district energy spending does not increase by more than cap (4%); implement strategies for controlling or reducing energy spending in 2009-10 budget. Analysis of energy consumption by location (in anticipation of location-by-location target setting and monitoring for 09-10). Capital planning reflects energy audit finding.

Indicator 4: Usage of alternative sources of energy.

Baseline: 100% reliance on traditionally powered gas & electricity

Milestones for 2007-08: Completion of an alternative-energy sources feasibility study

Milestones for 2008-2009: Long Range Facilities Planning to incorporate feasibility study findings where appropriate

Indicator 5: Rate of growth in special education costs.

Baseline: 2006-07 spending on special education and in particular, on out-of-district tuition

Milestones for 2008-09: identify new opportunities for retaining special-education students in district in 2009-10 with a corresponding improvement in, or at least matching of, delivery of services to those students

Indicator 6: Rate of growth in alternative funding sources.

Baseline: 2006-07 competitive grant applications and dollar value, and competitive grant approvals and dollar value

Milestones for 2007-08: Minimum 20% increase in competitive grant approvals and dollar value, with emphasis on ensuring alignment of grants (and efforts expended in obtaining grants) with district goals

Milestones for 2008-2009:

- Minimum of 20% increase in competitive grant approvals and dollar value, with emphasis on ensuring alignment of grants (and efforts expended in obtaining grants) with district goals.
- Develop district-wide corporate sponsorship inventory. Establish baseline of alternative source revenues, including donations, gifts, corporate sponsorships and other revenue generation, excluding competitive grants.

Objective B: Well-maintained 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 facilities.

Baseline: Some feedback currently exists

Milestones for 2007-08: Introduction of annual parent, student, administrator and teacher surveys

Milestones for 2008-2009: Continuation of annual administrator and teacher surveys, and the introduction of a student survey at CHS.

Indicator 2: Numbers of work orders and their completion.

Baseline: 2006-07 work orders; need to disaggregate into groups defined by complexity and length of time required to complete

Milestones for 2007-08: Decline in work orders; improvement in average time required to close work orders of similar complexity

Milestones for 2008-09: Decline in work orders; improvement in average time required to close work orders of similar complexity

Indicator 3: District spending on repairs, work orders, and building operations.

Baseline: 2006-07 spending on repairs, work orders and building operations

Milestones for 2008-09: Limit increase in spending on repairs, work orders and building operations to cap (4%)

Indicator 4: Progress on Long-Range Facilities Plan.

Baseline: 2006-07 LRFP spending and project completions

Milestones for 2007-08: Issuance of new \$10 million LRFP bonds; timely completion of scheduled projects

Milestones for 2008-2009 Begin planning for the next bond sale.

Architect meetings, engineering studies, decision of project list for the next bond issue. Begin initial study and planning for next Long Range Facilities Plan, with aim of identifying and declaring primary objectives of the next Plan by 2009-10.

Objective C: Effectively operating transportation, food service, purchasing, payroll, security, custodial, and facilities services.

Indicator 1: Parent, student, administrator and teacher surveys.

Baseline: Report-card survey tool used in 2006-07 to gather input on custodial services

Milestones: Improved marks for custodial services on 2007-08 surveys; introduce new survey tool for facilities services in 2007-08; in 2008-09 and beyond, add survey tools for transportation, food and payroll services, and institute an occasional purchasing audit

Objective D: Environmentally responsible facilities operations.

Indicator 1: Expansion of district recycling program.

Baseline: Current recycling activities in some schools and buildings

Milestones for 2007-08: Implementation of expanded recycling programs to collect and recycle paper, glass and plastic at all schools and buildings

Milestones for 2008-2009: Full compliance at every building, checked through random monitoring visits. Addition of recycling of plastic and aluminum at Underhill Sports Complex.

Objective E: Shared services provided in collaboration with the village and township.

Indicator 1: Specific shared services and the value or savings associated with them.

Milestones: Participation in and completion of the SHARE grant feasibility study in 2007-08 in partnership with the municipalities of South Orange and Maplewood

Milestones for 2008-2009: Ensure that SHARE feasibility study either includes or leads to a plan for field use that incorporates Maplewood's plans for turf fields at Dehart Park and the district's plans for a turf field and redevelopment at Underhill Field

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

Indicator 1: A five year technology plan that defines goals and anticipates technology needs and expenditures.

Indicator 2: Increase bandwidth to the internet.

Baseline: The 3meg pipe to the internet serves the entire district, and is at capacity during normal operating hours, making it difficult to access online instruction material, the special services database and online work order system.

Milestone 2008-2009: increase from 3 meg to 9 meg

Indicator 3: State of the art high speed wide area network that can be used to provide 4 digit dialing across the district, ability to centralize database systems, broadcast video across the district, and remove existing wireless network used for the security system.

Milestone 2008-2009: Design for increased WAN focused on school district needs, with optional collaboration with the municipalities, for bid to be supported by capital plan expenditure