

Special Community Forum on Budget Meeting
South Orange-Maplewood
Board of Education
March 12, 2015

A Special Community Forum to discuss the 2015-16 Budget of the Board of Education of South Orange-Maplewood was held in the District Meeting Room at the Administration Building, 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, New Jersey, on March 12, 2015.

President Wayne Eastman called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. in the District Meeting Room.

Adequate written notice of this meeting of the South Orange-Maplewood Board of Education was sent to the Township and Village Clerks, the Libraries, The Star Ledger, the News Record and all schools.

ROLL CALL: Present: Ms. Baker, Mrs. Daugherty, Mr. Eastman,
Ms. Jones, Mrs. Lawson-Muhammad, Ms. Pai, Ms.
Smith, Mrs. Wright

Absent: Mr. Bennett, Ms. Kritzberg

8 VOTING MEMBERS PRESENT

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2015-16 Preliminary Budget - Mrs. Schneider

Mrs. Schneider presented the Powerpoint highlighting items that had changed in the past week.

The budget is a planning tool and specifics may change as it continues to be developed. Based on comments and discussions from last week, the administration has continued to review the budget. The proposed budget has been adjusted to add back the Reading Intervention position. The Board will be asked to approve the budget for submission to the county for review on Monday evening.

[presentation is on file in Board Secretary's office and on district website]

Mr. Bennett Arrived at 8 p.m.
9 Voting Members Present

Board discussion included:

- Appreciate retention of Reading Intervention positions.
- What are the changes to the middle school schedule?
- What will the administrator restructuring look like?
- Concerned about impact elementary staffing.
- What is the financial impact of the Montrose Early Learning Center?
- Have we saved money through outsourced contracts?
- How do we compare with comparative districts?
- What will elementary students be doing instead of World Language?

HEARING OF INDIVIDUALS AND DELEGATION

<u>Name</u>	<u>Topic</u>
Tia Swanson Seth Boyden PTA	Asked the Board to pledge to keep class sizes as small as possible and consider adding a second adult to classrooms when warranted. Also asked that the Social Worker be a full-time position and asked for \$10,000 for field trips.
Amelia Rothenberg, Seth Boyden	Echoed Ms. Swanson's statements and stated that they would like a commitment to close economic achievement gap and can support the needs at Seth Boyden School.
<i>Mrs. Wright indicates that she looks forward to the March 21st Open Forum on Seth Boyden.</i>	
Mike Donahue SEPAC	Gratified to see no budget cuts to Special Education teachers and encouraged that the budget adjustments are being used. Would like to see Special Education staffing broken out on the staffing chart.
Amelia Feinberg Maplewood	Supports comments made by Ms. Swanson & Rothenberg. \$10,000 would help the Seth Boyden students experience things they otherwise would not experience.
Steve Latz Maplewood	Feels if the Board has changes to the budget they should be addressed tonight so that changes can be made before the March 16 th Board meeting. The Board should also get a handle on technology costs. Students should be able to take online courses for credit. Also raised concerns about class size specifically at Seth Boyden.
Paula Bethea SOMEA President	Questioned if World Language in grades 3-5 is mandated and asked if the teachers will be absorbed in other places. Also asked who the Affirmative Action Officer is and if there is a time limit to file complaints. Some staff members have filed complaints but have not gotten a response.

Mr. Memoli states that there is nothing that states we must have a particular world language program. Tenured teachers will be offered positions first. Mr. Memoli is currently the Affirmative Action Officer for the District. Someone will get back to Mrs. Bethea regarding specific complaints.

DISCUSSION

A second discussion among Board members included the following comments and questions:

- Flexibility of making changes to budget after Monday night.
- Allocating resources so that resources follow the student needs as much as possible.
- Seth Boyden School needs and use of Title I funding.
- Out-of-district tuition expenses.
- Concern about local absorption of pensions.

HEARING OF INDIVIDUALS AND DELEGATIONS

<u>Name</u>	<u>Topic</u>
Steve Latz Maplewood	Recommends reallocating funds to lower class size at Seth Boyden School. Without an increase in staff, classes will continue to be at their maximum.
Dionne Williams Maplewood	Applauds the Board for not talking about PILOT's. Concerned that the District's Affirmative Action Officer is a white male and that central office administration is all white. Would like the Board to look at the cost of out-of-district placements to see how many students can come back in district.
Hannah Edelman CHS Teacher	Would like the District to support the class size policy raised by Mr. Latz. Also feels the district should look in other areas for cuts outside of world language and the high school and instead consider cutting the IB program. SOMEA has a stipend for an Affirmative Action Officer. Believes it would be a great benefit to have this position back with SOMEA.

NEW BUSINESS

The Board of Education will meet in Closed Session on Monday, March 16, 2015, at 6:30 pm in the Superintendent's Office to discuss personnel and legal issues, negotiations and other matters to be announced at a later date. Immediately following the Closed Session, the Board of Education will meet in Public Session at 7:30 pm in the District Meeting Room, 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, NJ. Action will be taken.

The Board of Education will meet in Closed Session on Monday, April 27, 2015, at 6:30 pm in the Superintendent's Office to discuss personnel and legal issues, negotiations and other matters to be announced at a later date. Immediately following the Closed Session, the Board of Education will meet in Public Session at 7:30 pm in the District Meeting Room, 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, NJ. Action will be taken.

The Board of Education will meet in Closed Session on Thursday, May 15, 2015 at 6:30 pm in the Superintendent's Office to discuss personnel and legal issues, negotiations and other matters to be announced at a later date. Immediately following the Closed Session, the Board of Education will meet in Public Session at 7:30 pm in the District Meeting Room, 525 Academy Street, Maplewood, NJ. Action will be taken.

MOTION made by Mrs. Daugherty, seconded by Ms. Pai, that the Board of Education meet in Executive Session prior to the March 16, 2015 Public Meeting to discuss personnel, legal and Special Education matters, and negotiations, the nature of which will be made public at a future date. Motion unanimously approved.

MOTION made by Ms. Smith, seconded by Mrs. Wright, that the Board of Education adjourn. Motion unanimously approved at 9:30 p.m.

Cheryl Schneider, Board Secretary