



South Orange - Maplewood School District

Strategic Planning Meeting #3 Outcomes Report

May 11, 2026

Mission Statement

The South Orange & Maplewood School District's mission is to awaken potential by inspiring students to imagine boldly, pursue their passions with purpose, and work together to create a brighter future. We do this by cultivating a learner-centered environment, opening multiple pathways to success, and reimagining the structures, systems, and supports that shape learning. Through innovative teaching, genuine partnership with families, and the collective wisdom of our community, we prepare our students not only to thrive but to lead, create, and transform the world they inherit.

Meeting# 3

Developing Strategic Planning Goals & Objectives

On May 11, 2026, the South Orange & Maplewood School District administrators, Board of Education members, staff, parents, students, and community members thirty-six (36) in all came together for Meeting #3 of the Strategic Planning process. The meeting began with a welcome and introduction by Mr. Jason Bing, Superintendent. NJSBA Facilitator Jeanne Cleary provided an overview of the strategic planning process and the focus for the evening's activity.

The topic for the third meeting focused on developing goal statements and objectives for each of the four (4) goal areas identified at the second meeting. Participants gathered in self-selected groups to work on the goal area of their choice. There were four (4) tables, one for each goal area.

Each group was asked to identify a recorder to enter their consensus points, and a spokesperson who would report their work to the larger group. Each goal area group reviewed the outcomes from Meeting #1 - Strengths & Challenges, and Meeting #2 - Vision and Initiatives, to identify areas of focus, develop objectives, and then develop an overarching goal statement for their goal area. Each group reported their work to the larger group.

The information that follows is a summary of the work of the goal area groups. As discussed with the meeting participants, all consensus points are recorded and posted on the district website to share this work with the community.

Strategic Planning Goals & Objectives

GOAL AREA #1: INFRASTRUCTURE - Strong & Sustainable Infrastructure

Goal Statement: Create a culture of financial sustainability through strong leadership and community investment that supports teaching and learning.

Objectives:

- Identify low-cost and high-impact ways to improve school community spaces
- Strategic expansion of philanthropic avenues to support district initiatives
- Use facilities creatively as a source for additional revenue
- Continue to build transparency with the community and create strategic opportunities for involvement and feedback

GOAL AREA #2: ACTIVE PARTNERSHIPS - Among Students, Staff, Parents, Administration & Community

Goal Statement: To implement a fluid exchange of communication among community members to encourage productive collaboration, proactive solutions, and to ensure accurate information sharing, so that community members may make informed decisions and trust may be built.

Objectives:

- Implementing accessible feedback mechanisms for community engagement
- Ensuring easy access to current, relevant, and factual information
- Publicizing changes to all relevant community members through targeted outreach
- Keeping staff and teachers informed of administrative changes and ensuring they have a seat at the table

GOAL AREA #3: ACCESS - Equitable Access to Learning

Goal Statement: Use the data available to develop and evaluate strategies that close the academic achievement gap and increase the learning opportunities for our most vulnerable students (students of color, neurodiverse students, ML students).

Objectives:

- Ensure all students understand the path to high school graduation, and the path to higher level courses.
- Build tutoring program (Achieve/Slam lab) where students do not feel stigmatized for seeking help, and tutor students understand the benefits to themselves of providing tutoring (volunteer hours etc.)
- Evaluate and address teacher biases with a view to building a culture of success through professional development, where every adult wants every student to fulfill their potential, and every student understands what success looks like for them and wants to achieve it.
- Ensure the action items from the Rutgers Recommendations are ongoing and help to maintain a baseline for the access and equity needed for Black students.
- Give students a way to request help/provide feedback on teachers/schedules etc. online.
- Build on success of Freshman Academy, expanding to middle schools and higher grades.

GOAL AREA #4: PATHWAYS to SUCCESS - College, Society & Career Readiness

Goal Statement: Through holistically supporting students throughout their educational career, and with an eye toward overcoming opportunity gaps, our students will leave high school feeling meaningfully connected to their community and prepared and supported both for higher education and their personal post-high school goals and pursuits.

- Every student by graduation is provided the support of at least one trusted adult to guide them through educational journey.
- Designed advisory, mentorship, and guidance-engagement opportunities are provided that more organically meet students where they are and incentivize participation, including through community involvement.

- Opportunities and space are made available for students to identify their interests, with paths of instruction provided to grow those skills and knowledge, in addition to core instructional pursuits.

Next Steps

The next step in the Strategic Planning process is the development of the action plans to be addressed by the Superintendent and the administrative team. The timelines will be developed for a 5-year plan.

The action plans will include:

- Major activities for each objective
- Who is responsible for the activity
- The resources to be deployed
- Due dates for completion
- Indicators of Success (how we will know the activity has been accomplished)

Thank you to everyone who has contributed their time, talent, and perspectives during any part of the Strategic Planning meetings. We appreciate your participation and contributions which will benefit students at the South Orange - Maplewood School District.

Please watch the district website for final plan delivery to the South Orange - Maplewood Board of Education and for ongoing updates for progress made toward meeting the goals of this multi-year strategic plan.