Dear SOMSD Families, Staff and Community Members:

It is with tremendous pleasure and excitement that the South Orange Maplewood Board of Education announces the appointment of Dr. Ronald Taylor as Superintendent of Schools, effective July 8, 2019.

Dr. Taylor was selected in a robust search process led by Dr. Bill Librera, our search consultant, from West Hudson Associates, which began in August 2018. The search included community meetings and a survey to craft a leadership profile, selection of candidates to be interviewed in a first round with the Board of Education, second round interviews with three finalists. Dr. Taylor emerged as the leading candidate, and subsequent in-depth interviews (including a conversation with the student representative to the Board), background and reference checks, and a site visit by two of the three Board officers confirmed the Board’s conviction that Dr. Taylor is the right educational leader for SOMSD.

Board of Education President Annemarie Maini said: “*Dr. Taylor is an exceptional leader with extensive experience, proven results, and outstanding listening and communication skills. Throughout the search process, the Board focused on finding an educational leader who is unwaveringly student-focused and has a track record of results which match our immediate and long-term needs. Dr. Taylor will be an asset to our community as we work to deliver on major initiatives including a $145+MM bond, a complete elementary reconfiguration, and continue to move our district toward deliberate monitoring and oversight using QSAC.*”

Dr. Taylor started his career as a kindergarten teacher. He was an assistant principal, as well as an award-winning principal, before moving to a Regional Superintendent role in Newark.  He joined Willingboro as Superintendent eight years ago where his research-based, data-driven approach resulted in bringing academic and operational stability to Willingboro.

Dr. Taylor’s eight years of experience as the Superintendent of Willingboro have provided an excellent foundation for him to lead the work to address SOMSD’s current priorities:

* **Infrastructure**: Successfully led the implementation and completion of a $67 Million facilities bond referendum under budget and ahead of schedule.
* **Schools Reconfiguration**: Led successful implementation of reconfiguration of elementary schools.
* **Preschool Expansion:** Facilitated the creation of two District Early Childhood Development Centers using $4+ Million in competitive grant funding.
* **QSAC Monitoring**: Improved Willingboro’s performance by 55% points in Curriculum and Instruction and improved district operational processes.
* **Equity**: “*Dr. Ron Taylor is serving as a strategist on the NJASA Equity for Students Committee because of his courageous and effective efforts in addressing student equity matters in his School District*” according to Dr. Kathleen Taylor (no relation) on behalf of the NJASA Equity for Students Committee. At Willingboro, he successfully implemented student Chromebook “1 to 1” initiative grades 3rd-12th.

More information about his experience in these and other areas is on his attached resume.

We invite the community to join us in welcoming Dr. Taylor to South Orange-Maplewood School District, and look forward to working together to build the infrastructure, systems and educational program which will help all of our students master the skills and knowledge they need to be successful. Dr. Ficarra, the Senior Leaders of Central Office, and the Board of Education are committed to ensuring a smooth transition to our new leadership.

We will be organizing a series of meet and greets between the Superintendent and community members to begin to build relationships and understanding. The first of these will take place on Tuesday, April 30, 2019 at 7pm in the CHS Library.

~ South Orange Maplewood School District