



Dr. Ronald G. Taylor
Superintendent of Schools
Tel. (973) 762-5600 x1820/Fax (973) 378-9464
rtaylor@somsd.k12.nj.us

June 7, 2021

Dear South Orange & Maplewood School Community,

It is with a very heavy heart that we confirm there was a shooting last night with multiple victims at Underhill. One person was killed and at least one other was wounded. Tragically, the police have verified that both victims were Columbia High School students.

This inconceivable calamity is undoubtedly a devastating blow to our students, staff and community. I have been in direct contact with Police Chief Duval, Mayor McGeehee, Principal Sanchez, Principal Gronau and Principal Connors. We have activated our emergency protocols to provide mental health support for Columbia High School, Maplewood Middle and Clinton Elementary.

We are in close communication with the authorities. The District will provide updated information to staff and the District families as it is received. Until such time as information is received, we are making preparations for addressing the needs of our students, staff and families. I have notified our County Executive Superintendent of Schools and we are activating the County Grief Counseling Services via the Traumatic Loss Coalition, to support our students and staff..

With this devastating news, I have confirmed with our Board of Education that the retiree celebration scheduled for this evening will be canceled and postponed to a later date. Also, all activities at Underhill field are canceled while the investigation proceeds. In addition, due to the proximity of Underhill to Clinton Elementary School and the ongoing police investigation taking place, all outdoor activities at Clinton will be canceled for the day (and/or take place indoors where necessary).

At this time, out of respect for the family and due to the ongoing nature of the police investigation, we are unable to share the names of the affected students. We offer our sincere condolences to the family in their time of need. We will follow up with additional communication as we receive clearance from the local law enforcement and the family.

Sincerely,

Dr. Ronald G. Taylor

South Orange & Maplewood School District, Board of Education

c: Frank Sanchez, CHS Principal



Dr. Ronald G. Taylor
Superintendent of Schools
Tel. (973) 762-5600 x1820/Fax (973) 378-9464
rtaylor@somsd.k12.nj.us