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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

South Orange Middle School (SOMS) the First School in Essex County to Attain River-Friendly Certification

SOMS will receive a certification from the Rahway River Watershed Association via a ceremony on Thursday, November 3, 2022

October 27, 2022 – The South Orange and Maplewood School District is pleased to announce that South Orange Middle School (SOMS) received River-Friendly Certification through a partnership with Rahway River Watershed Association (RRWA).

The River-Friendly School Program helps teachers, students, and school leaders reduce water pollution while creating new teaching opportunities, enhancing wildlife habitats, and establishing a healthier environment for our children. Certification is offered at several different levels based on points achieved through lessons and hands-on projects in any of the four River-Friendly categories: water quality, water conservation, wildlife habitat, and education & outreach. In partnership with the RRWA, our students worked diligently to promote the reduction of pollution, conservation of water, maintaining the local habitat for wildlife, and educating the public about becoming better environmental stewards.

Lynn Irby, SOMS Principal shared, “We are proud to be the first school in Essex County to attain River-Friendly Certification. I am so incredibly proud of my 7th grade Science teachers; Mr. Anthony Cicenia, Mrs. Nicole Chirlo & Mr. Frank Guastella for their commitment to our students and this project. We truly are #SOMS STRONG.”

SOMS 7th grade Science teachers and SOMS administrators will host a certification ceremony on Thursday, November 3rd at 1:30 pm at South Orange Middle School (front entrance) in celebration of attaining "River Friendly" certification through their partnership with the RRWA. The brief ceremony will include the unveiling of a sign placed in front of South Orange Middle School displaying recognition of this truly outstanding accomplishment.

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About the South Orange & Maplewood School District

The School District of South Orange and Maplewood serves more than 7,200 students in ten schools, including one early-childhood center, six elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. The community and its schools are racially and economically diverse with more than 90 percent of Columbia High School graduates planning to attend college each year. The mission of the South Orange Maplewood School District is to empower and inspire each student to explore and imagine, to pursue personal passions, and to collectively create a better future by creating a learner-centered environment through multiple pathways; re-imagined structures, systems and supports; innovative teaching; partnering with families; and maximizing community expertise and resources.