

"We are gathered today with the goal to create an opportunity here for our SOMSD school community to hear from folks in the district and folks who represent various safety and security Taylor said to open the forum.

"Welcome to the new safety and security director, Stan Valles, who is being entrusted with the safety of our kids. And I have a lot of confidence in him," Morillo said. "I've had a few opportunities to sit down with him and speak with him one-on-one, and I'm just looking forward to

all CHS students will now have to carry ID card, which they will use to swipe in the building.
 "We really thank your board, superintendent and central office for making the budgetary investments at the high school," Sanchez said. "Of course, real it's about relationships, and so as much as we value our relationships with our students, we of course value our relationships with our community partners including our Maplewood and Somerville Orange police departments. At the end of the day, we're not here to jam any student up but more importantly to work together to make sure students make the right decisions and good choices. So we're very fortunate to have police departments that share that philosophy, and we have great relationships with both police departments."



Photo Courtesy of Maplewood Memorial Park Conservancy

A TRULY 'GREAT' WHITE ASH — Thanks to Jennifer Ryan of the Maplewood Memorial Park Conservancy, the 340-year-old great white ash at the top of the hill in the park has been certified as a 'signature tree,' the biggest ash in Essex County and the second biggest in the state. It will be listed in the NJDEP's Big and Heritage Trees of New Jersey registry. Ryan has nicknamed the tree Yggdrasil, after the great ash in Norse mythology that is the center of the cosmos.

Valles, who himself is a CHS graduate having attended the high school with DeVaul, previously worked for the Essex County Prosecutor's Office, Livingston Police Department and NJ Transit Police Department, and was most recently head of security at St. Michael's College in Vermont. Valles is also a former school teacher, according to Taylor.

"I'm happy to be home and to be in the school district where I spent my formative years. See SECURITY, Page 11

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