

Amherst & Mont Vernon
Voter's Guide
to the
2019 Deliberative Session
of the
Souhegan Cooperative School District
(Grades 9-12)

February 4, 2019

7:00 PM – Souhegan High School Auditorium

Officers and Agents of the School District

Souhegan Cooperative School Board

Amherst Representatives

James Manning, Chair
Steve Coughlan, Secretary
David Chen
Amy Facey
Dwayne Purvis

Mont Vernon Representatives

Pim Grondstra, Vice Chair
Howard Brown

School District Moderator

George Bower

School District Clerk

Christine Janson

School District Treasurer

Catherine Jo Butler

Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee

Martin Goulet, Chair
Ellen Grudzien
Jeanne Ludt
George Torres

Lisa Eastland
Peg Harris
John Stover
Charlie Wyork

Office of the Superintendent

Adam Steel, Superintendent of Schools
Christine Landwehrle, Assistant Superintendent
Meg Beauchamp, Director of Student Services
Porter Dodge, Director of Operations

School Administration

Rob Scully, Principal
Kathy White, Dean of Faculty
Natalie Berger, Dean of Students
Kelly Driscoll, Dean of Students
Dan Wyborney, Athletic Director
Jennifer Huard, Special Services Coordinator

Message from the Souhegan Cooperative School Board Chair

When our newly elected board met for the first time following the election last March, we began asking ourselves fundamentally challenging questions about the future of Souhegan. So, as we began to discuss the FY20 budget before you tonight, there was naturally vigorous debate, but I'm confident I speak on behalf of the entire board when I state that we fully understand and appreciate the challenges that lie ahead.

Our town, our nation and our world are changing rapidly and dramatically. Societal and demographic changes, and the rapid introduction of technology into daily life, have required our entire school system to rethink what it means to be an educated high school graduate. Simultaneously, the communities of Amherst and Mont Vernon are also changing. Our towns are aging along with the rest of New Hampshire, and student enrollment at Souhegan will continue to decline until the mid-2020s before the cycle begins to swing back to increasing enrollment.

Souhegan must adapt to meet these new and emerging challenges. Staying the course, with fastidious adherence to past practices is safe, but will not chart a future course to meet these challenges. Fortunately, Souhegan was already ahead of its time at the founding in 1992, and we need to build on those foundational values if we are to become a destination high school once again. As forward thinking as Souhegan has been, the idea of "school" itself continues to be "education in a box" at a time when our world is demanding so much more from us. We need to ask ourselves over the next few years if we are willing to break free from that box. Will we choose to reflect within our high school what modern communication, commerce and life has become today, by making the difficult budget choices and investments required to break us free? Ultimately, these choices will be difficult but necessary as we simultaneously transform educational quality to meet modern demands, while also addressing the costs that are impacting citizens here at home.

Proposed Budget

So how will the FY20 budget begin to address these challenges? My experience is that school budgets tend to fall into a few broad categories. One common category is a maintenance budget, which seeks to maintain operations and assets to a level of condition that meets the basic needs of our school, at the most economical cost. In this category, big budgetary decisions can be made but they tend to be tactical and are in response to short-term planning horizons. Another is a strategic budget, which seeks to create a long-range plan that supports a future vision and position for our school that includes strategic choices and investments. Budget choices under this scenario tend to link back to the strategic plan and have long-term planning horizons. The FY20 budget before you tonight is a maintenance budget. Although the board recognizes the challenges ahead, we require a long-range strategy and strategic plan so we have a clear and coordinated approach for addressing what will be a constellation of future trade-offs in our budget. That plan, lead by the Superintendent in collaboration with the board, along with the active engagement and support of both the Amherst and Mont Vernon communities, will serve as our blueprint for making both difficult, and yet equally exciting choices to meet these challenges. At present, that plan is still in process. Therefore, this budget addresses current needs and obligations, while making careful choices to address the cost / enrollment equation, without asking the community to bear big changes, or strategic investments at this time.

The Souhegan Cooperative School Board, with guidance and oversight from the Advisory Finance Committee, sought to present a budget that is fair and equitable to all stakeholders in our communities at large. As we continue the lengthy process of formulating a strategy and crafting a strategic plan, the board thought it prudent to support a maintenance budget (Warrant Article 2) that is ~\$73K less than the FY19 budget. This includes overall budget increases in special education up to ~\$215K, offset by reductions outside of special education of ~\$289K. This year's proposed operating budget (Warrant Article 2) is actually -0.4% lower than last year's operating budget. Should Article 2 be defeated, the district's default

budget would be lower by an additional -0.2%. The reductions were primarily achieved through reductions in staffing, facilities, food and transportation. These are explained further in this guidance document.

The Souhegan Cooperative School Board realizes that your vote matters, and that without budget support from the communities of Amherst and Mont Vernon, Souhegan Cooperative High School and the young people it serves, cannot thrive. Souhegan has served as a distinctive point of pride in this community for a quarter-century and represents one of the biggest investments. We believe this budget respectfully and responsibly reflects those considerations.

Respectfully submitted,

James Manning
Chair, Souhegan Cooperative School Board

SOUHEGAN COOPERATIVE SCHOOL BOARD

JAMES MANNING, CHAIR	JMANNING@SPRISE.COM
PIM GRONDSTRA, VICE CHAIR	PGRONDSTRA@SPRISE.COM
STEVE COUGHLAN, SECRETARY	SCOUGHLAN@SPRISE.COM
HOWARD BROWN	HBROWN@SPRISE.COM
DAVID CHEN	DCHEN@SPRISE.COM
AMY FACEY	AFACEY@SPRISE.COM
DWAYNE PURVIS	DPURVIS@SPRISE.COM

Souhegan Cooperative School District Voting

Souhegan Cooperative School District follows the guidelines of Senate Bill 2 (SB2) which are outlined in RSA 40:13. Voting on budgets, appropriations, and other articles culminates with ballot voting. However, prior to the March ballot vote is the Deliberative Session, which will be held on February 4, 2019, at 7:00 PM at Souhegan High School.

The Deliberative Session is the first session of the annual meeting and consists of explanation, discussion, and debate of each article on the warrant. Only voters registered in Amherst or Mont Vernon can amend wording and dollar amounts and vote on approving the warrant articles.

All warrant articles that are presented at the Deliberative Session, including articles that are amended, are then placed on the official ballot and moved to the second session of the annual meeting for a final vote by ballot on March 12, 2019.

Souhegan Cooperative School District Voting is a Two-Step Process

Deliberative Session – 1 st Session 7:00 p.m.	February 4 th SHS Auditorium
School District Meeting – 2 nd Session (Ballot Vote) 6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. 7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.	March 12 th SHS Gymnasium (Amherst) MVVS Gymnasium (Mont Vernon)

In many ways the Deliberative Session resembles District Meetings of years past, but with one fundamental difference. Discussion and voting at this meeting will focus on the *wording* of the questions to be placed on the March 12th ballot, *not* on voting whether the budget, bond, or other warrant articles pass or fail. The wording of a warrant article can be amended to change the dollar amount and/or the wording. In recent years towns and school districts have seen warrant articles amended at the Deliberative Session to \$0.00, thereby defeating the original intent of the article. In other instances, the wording of an article has been amended to completely reverse the petitioner's intent. Simply stated, it is important to attend the Deliberative Session and vote on Election Day for the full effect of your vote to be felt.

The following pages contain the wording of the warrant articles, which will be presented at the Deliberative Session.

2019 Souhegan Cooperative School District Warrant

**Souhegan Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting Warrant
February 4, 2019 and March 12, 2019
Amherst and Mont Vernon, New Hampshire**

To the inhabitants of the Souhegan Cooperative School District, consisting of the towns of Amherst and Mont Vernon, in the County of Hillsborough, and State of New Hampshire qualified to vote in District affairs:

You are hereby notified of the following Annual School District Meeting schedule:

First Session of Annual Meeting (Deliberative)

You are hereby notified to meet at the Souhegan High School in said District on the 4th day of February 2019 at 7:00 p.m. This session shall consist of explanation, discussion, and debate of warrant article 2. Warrant articles may be amended subject to the following limitations: (a) warrant articles whose wording is prescribed by law shall not be amended, (b) warrant articles that are amended shall be placed on the official ballot for a final vote on the main motion, as amended, and (c) no warrant article shall be amended to eliminate the subject matter of the article.

Second Session of Annual Meeting (Official Ballot Voting)

You are hereby notified to meet on Tuesday, March 12, 2019 for official ballot voting on warrant articles numbered 1 through 2. The polls for official ballot voting will be open as follows:

- Voting for Amherst residents: Souhegan High School from 6:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.
- Voting for Mont Vernon residents: Village School from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Article 1. Election of Officers (voting by official ballot March 12, 2019)

To the following school district offices:

- a. To choose two (2) school board members from Amherst for the ensuing three (3) years;
- b. To choose one (1) school board member from Mont Vernon for the ensuing three (3) years;
and,
- c. To choose one (1) school district moderator for the ensuing three (3) years.

2019 Souhegan Cooperative School District Warrant (Cont.)

Article 2. Shall the Souhegan Cooperative School District raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling eighteen million, ninety-eight thousand, two hundred and eighty-nine dollars (\$18,098,289)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be eighteen million, seventy thousand, five hundred and thirty-four dollars (\$18,070,534), which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Souhegan Cooperative School District or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only?" Majority vote required.

Recommended by the Souhegan Cooperative School Board (6-1)

Recommended by the Souhegan Cooperative School District Advisory Finance Committee (7-0)

Estimated tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.11 per thousand for Amherst and \$0.58 per thousand for Mont Vernon.

Estimated tax impact of not passing this article is: \$0.09 per thousand for Amherst and \$0.57 per thousand for Mont Vernon.

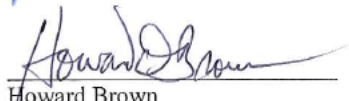
*NOTE: Warrant Article 2 (operating budget) does not include appropriations proposed in any other warrant articles.

Given under our hands as said Amherst, New Hampshire, on the 24th day of January 2019.

Jim Manning, Chairperson



Pim Grondstra, Vice Chairperson



Howard Brown



David Chen



Stephen Coughlan



Amy Facey

Dwayne Purvis

PROPOSED BUDGET

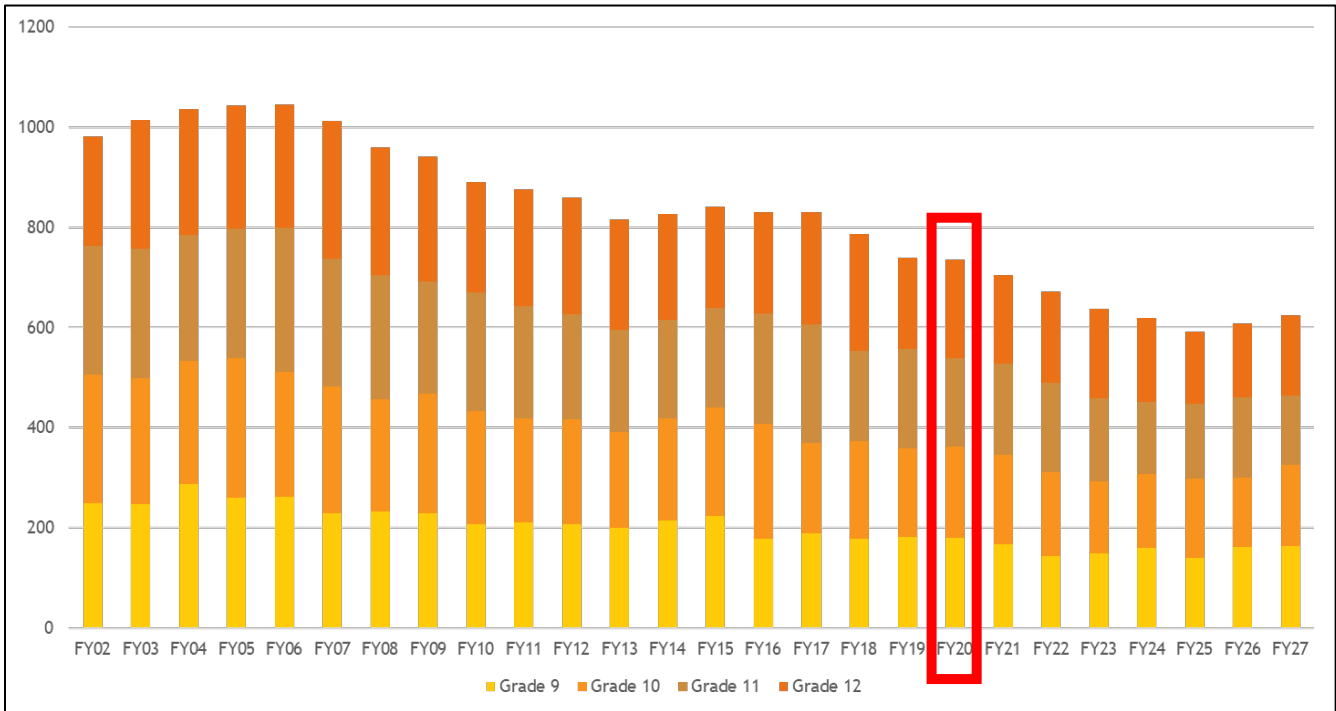
Budget by AFC Category

<u>Sub-Committee</u>	<u>FY19 Budget</u>	<u>FY20 Proposed</u>	<u>Increase \$</u>
Curriculum	\$7,374,271	\$7,234,428	-\$139,843
Special Education	\$3,445,635	\$3,660,992	\$215,357
Athletics	\$673,466	\$693,729	\$20,263
Administration	\$2,956,166	\$2,979,881	\$23,715
Technology	\$949,901	\$920,213	-\$29,688
Facilities	\$1,572,996	\$1,447,653	-\$125,343
Food/Transportation	\$1,199,037	\$1,161,393	-\$37,644
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$18,171,472</u>	<u>\$18,098,289</u>	<u>-\$73,183</u>

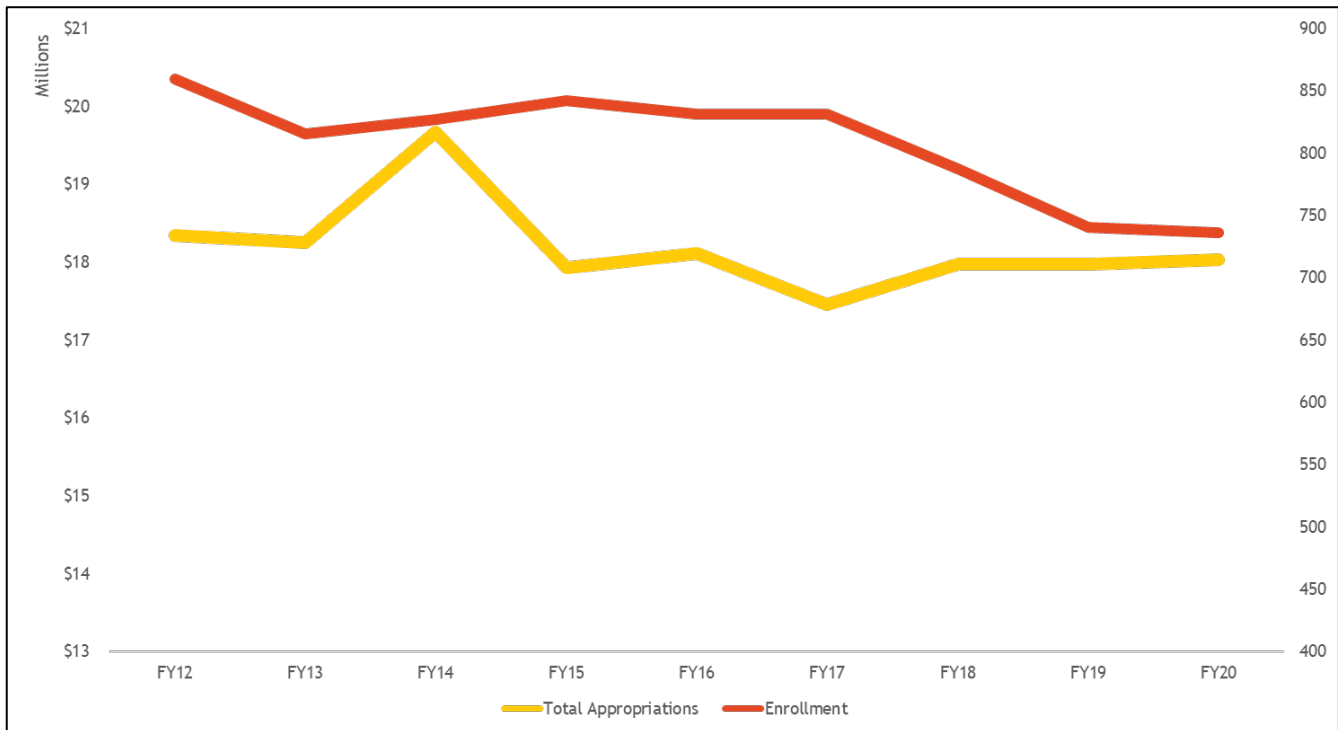
Budget Calculation

FY19 Budget	\$18,171,472	
Previous Year Warrant Article	-\$150,000	-0.8%
Curriculum	-\$118,563	-0.7%
Facilities	-\$48,388	-0.3%
Technology	-\$27,882	-0.2%
Food/Transportation	-\$18,625	-0.1%
SAU 39 Assessment	-\$5,152	0.0%
Special Education	\$93,971	0.5%
Employer Paid Benefits	\$156,499	0.9%
Everything Else	\$17,202	0.1%
<u>FY20 Default Budget</u>	<u>\$18,070,534</u>	<u>-0.6%</u>
Total of all changes to proposed:	\$27,755	
<u>FY20 Proposed Budget</u>	<u>\$18,098,289</u>	

Enrollment



Enrollment vs. Budget Growth



MODERATOR'S RULES OF PROCEDURE

Souhegan Cooperative School District Deliberative Session

1. The Moderator will not follow Robert's Rules. The Moderator will use the following general rules of procedure, whose main purpose is to keep things moving, and not get bogged down in procedural quagmires.
2. Non-voters will be permitted in the auditorium only if the room permits after meeting has begun.
3. The Moderator will take Articles in the order they appear on the Warrant unless the Moderator announces the intent to take Articles out of order.
4. Motions to amend must be made in writing and will be voted separately. Amendments will not be allowed to accumulate.
5. Each speaker shall state name and limit his or her time at the microphone to three minutes. No individual will be allowed to speak a second time until all others wishing to speak for the first time have done so.
6. Speakers wishing to address the meeting should form a line at either of the two standing microphones (one labeled "For" and one labeled "Against"). The moderator will attempt to alternate pro and con points.
7. The moderator will only accept a motion made at a microphone.
8. No motion to call the question shall be accepted by the moderator until there has been sufficient debate on the article.
9. A motion to restrict reconsideration in accordance with RSA 40 Section 10 should be made immediately following the announcement of the vote on that article.
10. The moderator will dispense with reading the warrant at this time; however, each warrant article will be read when it is moved to the floor for deliberation and action. The warrant is also printed in the Voters' Guide. The Annual Report and Voters' Guide to Official Ballot Voting will be sent to all residents prior to March 12th.

George Bower

Souhegan Cooperative School District Moderator

NOTES