

**Amherst & Mont Vernon
VOTERS' GUIDE**
to the

Deliberative Session

of the
Souhegan Cooperative School District
(Grades 9 - 12)

February 2, 2010

7:00 p.m. – Souhegan High School Auditorium

Officers and Agents of the School District

Souhegan Cooperative School Board

Amherst Representatives

Stephen Coughlan, Chair

Christine Janson

Jeanne Ludt, Vice Chair

Mary Lou Mullens

Dana Redmond

Mont Vernon Representatives

Pamela Coughlin

Daniel Foley

School District Moderator

Cynthia Dokmo

School District Clerk

Nancy Baker

School District Treasurer

Ann Logan

Souhegan Finance Committee

Marilyn Peterman, Chair

Gail Agans

Andrea Baver

Fran Harrow

Mary Mahar

John Rizzi

Peter Stearns

Office of the Superintendent

Mary Jennings, Superintendent of Schools

Renea Sparks, Director of Special Instructional Services

Elizabeth Shankel, Business Administrator

Nicole Heimark, Director of Curriculum & Professional Development

School Administration

James Bosman, Principal

Robert Thompson, Dean of Students

Colleen Meaney, Dean of Faculty

Peggy Silva, Dean of Faculty

Please bring this Guide with you to the Souhegan Cooperative School District (9-12) Deliberative Session on February 2, 2010.

A Message from the School Board Chairman

As we pass the halfway mark in the school year, and local, national, and global events impact our towns and school, we see the strength of Souhegan's students, staff, parents, and voters continue to sustain our pupils in undeniably trying times.

We welcomed back Jim Bosman, former math teacher and Dean of Faculty, as our interim principal after the resignation of Scott Prescott at the end of last year. We wish Scott well in his new endeavors, and thank Jim for bringing his experience, wisdom, and gentle style to support us while we search for a new principal. As this is being written, the search for a new principal is underway.

Dean of Faculty Kris Gallo also left us over the summer, and we thank Literacy Coach Peggy Silva for stepping in quickly as interim Dean this year; the search for a new Dean for next year has also begun.

On the budget side, we are grateful to the voters for supporting our budget last March. We are currently in the second year of the three year agreement with the staff, and the third and final year of the agreed terms are incorporated in the proposed budget for next year.

Preparing the budget for next year was very difficult. A number of uncontrollable costs increased, some dramatically; at the same time the economy worsened, making budget development more difficult than usual. Our student population, as expected, again declined slightly, but the decreases we've experienced over the last few years have leveled off, and we project a steady enrollment for the next few years. The proposed budget reflects this, mirroring reductions where costs are proportional to enrollment, re-allocating resources where possible to be more efficient, and not initiating any new programs.

As always, the priority of the administration and board in proposing the budget has been to maintain the services and quality of the Souhegan educational experience for our students, while being mindful of the impact of our programs on the taxpayers of Mont Vernon and Amherst. We ask for your support of the budget at the polls in March to enable what we propose.

Steve Coughlan

Chairman, Souhegan Cooperative School Board

Two-Part Voting Procedure for Souhegan Cooperative School District Annual Meeting

The Senate Bill 2 official ballot voting procedure is in effect for the Souhegan Cooperative School District.

Voting to adopt or amend Souhegan Cooperative School District warrant articles takes place at the February 2nd Deliberative Session. Final ballot voting on the articles that emerge from the Deliberative Session takes place at the polls on Election Day, March 9th, as shown below.

Voting is a Two-Step Process

Deliberative Session February 2nd

7:00 p.m.
SHS Auditorium

Ballot Vote March 9th

6:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
SHS Gymnasium
for Amherst Voters

7:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Mont Vernon Village
School
for Mont Vernon Voters

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 9th 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; this is important to know. 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.

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The following pages contain the wording of the warrant articles, which will be presented at the Deliberative Session, plus school board commentary (noted in italics). A detailed report of recommendations by the Advisory Finance Committee follows these articles and commentaries.

**SOUHEGAN COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANNUAL MEETING WARRANT
February 2, 2010 and March 9, 2010
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 the State of New Hampshire, qualified to vote in District affairs:

You are hereby notified to meet at Souhegan High School in said district on Tuesday, February 2, 2010, at 7:00 p.m., for Session I (Deliberation), for the transaction of all business other than voting by official ballot. This session shall consist of the explanation, discussion and debate of warrant articles numbered 2 through 5. Warrant articles may be amended subject to the following limitations: (a) warrant articles whose wording is prescribed by law shall not be amended and (b) warrant articles that are amended shall be placed on the official ballot for final vote on the main motion, as amended.

You are hereby further notified to meet on Tuesday, March 9, 2010, for official ballot voting on warrant articles numbered 1 through 4, and any other action required to be inserted on the official ballot. 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. To elect all necessary Souhegan Cooperative School District officers for the ensuing terms by official ballot on March 9, 2010.

- Election of two (2) members of the School Board from Amherst for the ensuing three (3) years.
- Election of one (1) member of the School Board from Mont Vernon for the ensuing three (3) years.
- Election of school district moderator for the ensuing three (3) years.

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 amount 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 **\$18,211,827?** Should this article be defeated, the operating budget shall be **\$18,061,184**, 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 to pass.

The Souhegan Cooperative School unanimously recommends the passage of this article by a vote of 6 to 0. The Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article by a vote of 7 to 0.

Souhegan Cooperative School Board Commentary: The proposed budget is an increase of 2.48% over the budget we are operating with this year. This budget includes the third year of costs from the three year Professional and Support Staff agreement approved last year by the voters. Controllable costs have been minimized, including reductions in regular and special education professional and support staff, and deferral of some technology replacements. Increases include significant increases in employee retirement costs mandated by the state, and in medical and dental insurance costs for our employees.

Article 3. Shall the Souhegan Cooperative School District vote to raise and appropriate up to **\$50,000** from the year-end undesignated fund balance (surplus) if available on July 1, 2010 to be added to the Expendable Trust Fund known as the School Maintenance Fund previously established in March, 2005?

Majority vote required to pass.

The Souhegan Cooperative School unanimously recommends the passage of this article by a vote of 7 to 0. The Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article by a vote of 7 to 0.

Souhegan Cooperative School Board Commentary: This article adds to the approximately \$34,000 balance in the maintenance expendable trust. The trust is intended to meet unanticipated maintenance and other extraordinary needs, which are expected to grow as the school facilities age. Most recently, this fund was used to create a long term facilities maintenance and repair master plan. A special advisory committee provides guidance to the school board on the use of this trust. This has no tax impact in the upcoming year, as only surplus funds are used if they are available.

Article 4. Shall the Souhegan Cooperative School District vote to raise and appropriate up to **\$25,000** from the year-end undesignated fund balance (surplus) if available on July 1, 2010 to be added to the Expendable Trust Fund known as the Fund for Unfunded Liabilities for Retiring Employees previously established in March, 2007?

Majority vote required to pass.

The Souhegan Cooperative School unanimously recommends the passage of this article by a vote of 7 to 0. The Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee unanimously recommends the passage of this article by a vote of 7 to 0.

Souhegan Cooperative School Board Commentary: This article adds to the approximately \$26,000 balance in the unfunded liabilities expendable trust. When district employees retire, if certain conditions are met, they are entitled to various one-time lump-sum payments. We know, thanks to last year's actuarial study, that the expected cost of all these benefits to all employees is approximately \$119,000. The voters created this expendable trust to accumulate funds to pay for these benefits as they are earned, and avoid any wild swings in the budget in years where a large number of retirees might require benefits. As with our other expendable trust, we plan to fund this from any surplus we might have at the end of the year, so no additional funds need to be raised.

Article 5. To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

**Souhegan Cooperative High School Advisory Finance Committee
Report to the Souhegan Cooperative School District
FY10-11 Budget Deliberative Session**

Souhegan School Budget FY 2011

Advisory Finance Committee

Gail Agans	Amherst
Andrea Bayer	Mont Vernon
Fran Harrow	Amherst
Mary Mahar	Amherst
John Rizzi	Mont Vernon
Pete Stearns	Amherst
Marilyn Peterman -Chair	Amherst

The Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee met in sub-committees with the department heads and administration to review all areas of the budget.

After these reviews and careful consideration, the committee believes that the Administration, department heads and School Board worked very hard to bring in a budget that reflected the difficult economic times and little to no change in the student population. They were aggressive in their reductions to present a budget with an increase over last year's approved budget of 2.48%.

The handicap they faced was an increase of 22.5% in health benefits, 5.5% increase in dental benefits and an increase in NH Teacher's Pension of 15.23%. These percentages equate to \$221,860 for health insurance, \$9,986 for dental insurance and \$91,603 for NH Retirement. Other increases were in the salary lines as negotiated and plant operation.

Reductions were made across the board highlighting staffing, technology, text books, new and replacement equipment and interscholastic supplies and travel.

After meeting with the administration and department heads we were assured that in spite of the reductions everyone would continue to provide the best education the students at Souhegan High School deserve and the community has come to expect.

The Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee voted unanimously to support Article #2

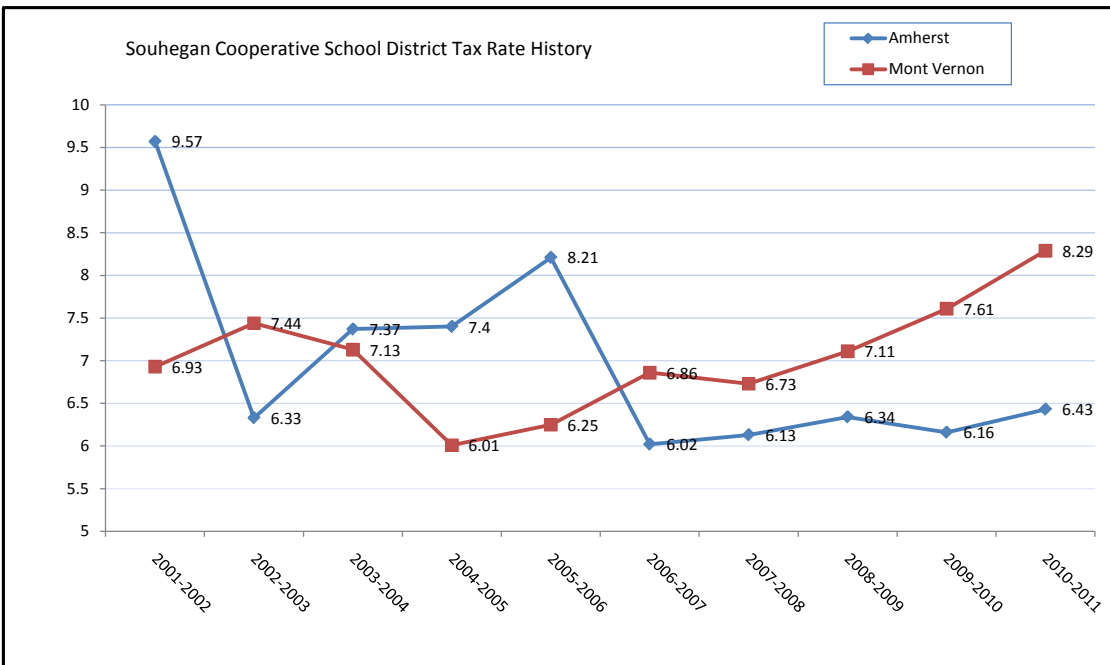
The Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee voted unanimously to support Article #3.

The Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee voted unanimously to support Article #4.

**Respectfully Submitted,
Marilyn Peterman, Chairman
Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee**

**Souhegan Cooperative School District
FY11 Summary of Warrant Articles and Tax Impact**

Article #	FY 2009-2010 Budget	Cost	Estimated Tax Impact	
			Amherst	Mont Vernon
		\$17,770,722	\$6.16	\$7.61
2	Budget - Net Increase	\$441,105	\$0.27	\$0.68
	Total FY 2010-2011 Budget	\$18,211,827	\$6.43	\$8.29
	Tax Impact to \$400 K Home - Budget Only		\$108	\$272
3	School Maintenance Trust	\$50,000	\$0.03	\$0.03
	Tax Impact to \$400 K Home - Article 3		\$12	\$12
4	Unfunded Liabilities Trust	\$25,000	\$0.01	\$0.02
	Tax Impact to \$400 K Home- Article 4		\$4	\$8
	Total FY11 Budget and Articles 3 and 4	\$18,286,827	\$0.31	\$0.73
	Total Tax Impact to \$400 K Home		\$124	\$292



**Souhegan Cooperative School District
FY11 Proposed Revenue Summary**

Acct #	Item	2009-2010 DRA	2010-2011 Proposed	Change
	General Fund Expenditures	\$17,058,281	\$17,524,942	\$466,661
	Special Revenue and Food Service	\$712,441	\$686,885	(\$25,556)
	Budgeted Expenditures (All Funds)	\$17,770,722	\$18,211,827	\$441,105
770	Unreserved Fund Balance	\$286,027	\$182,118	(\$103,909)
	State Aid			
3210	School Building Aid	\$319,999	\$277,068	(\$42,931)
3230	Catastrophic Aid	\$673,195	\$650,000	(\$23,195)
3270	Driver Education	\$16,575	\$24,000	\$7,425
3280	Medicaid	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$0
3290	Other	\$0	\$0	\$0
	Subtotal: State Aid	\$1,109,769	\$1,051,068	(\$58,701)
	Federal Aid			
4500	Grants In Aid	\$211,791	\$222,790	\$10,999
	Subtotal: Federal Aid	\$211,791	\$222,790	\$10,999
	Other Revenue			
5100	Sale Of Bonds / Notes			
5230	Transfer From Cap. Pr. Fund	\$3,500	\$0	(\$3,500)
	Subtotal: Other Revenue	\$3,500	\$0	(\$3,500)
	Local Revenue			
1300	Tuition - Parents, Summer School, Adult Ed	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0
1400	State AV 1 Transportation Reimbursement	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$0
1510	Interest Income	\$55,000	\$20,000	(\$35,000)
1600	Food Service	\$496,650	\$462,095	(\$34,555)
1700	Pupil Activities	\$138,750	\$133,550	(\$5,200)
1910	Rentals	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0
1990	Other - Local Grants & Trusts	\$4,000	\$2,000	(\$2,000)
	Subtotal: Local Revenue	\$751,900	\$675,145	(\$76,755)
	Assessment:			
	Budgeted Expenditures (All Funds)	\$17,770,722	\$18,211,827	\$441,105
	Less Unreserved Fund Balance	\$286,027	\$182,118	(\$103,909)
	Less Subtotal: State Aid	\$1,109,769	\$1,051,068	(\$58,701)
	Less Subtotal: Federal Aid	\$211,791	\$222,790	\$10,999
	Less Subtotal: Other Revenue	\$3,500	\$0	(\$3,500)
	Less Subtotal: Local Revenue	\$751,900	\$675,145	(\$76,755)
1111	Current Appropriation	\$15,407,735	\$16,080,706	\$672,971
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1112	Deficit Appropriation			
	Advance Appropriation			
	Total Appropriation	\$15,407,735	\$16,080,706	\$672,971
	AMHERST SHARE	\$12,939,046	\$13,446,670	\$507,624
	Adequacy Aid Grant	\$1,528,445	\$1,528,486	\$41
	Statewide School Property Tax	\$1,401,025	\$1,349,060	(\$51,965)
	Total Credits- Amherst	\$2,929,470	\$2,877,546	(\$51,924)
	Assessment - Town of Amherst	\$10,009,576	\$10,569,124	\$559,548
	Net Assessed Value/\$1000 - Amherst	\$1,856,030	\$1,856,030	\$0
	Tax Rate - Amherst	\$5.39	\$5.69	\$0.30
	Local Assessed Value/\$1000 Less Utilities	\$1,820,484	\$1,820,484	\$0
	Statewide School Property Tax	\$0.77	\$0.74	(\$0.03)
	Total School Tax - Town of Amherst	\$6.16	\$6.43	\$0.27
	MONT VERNON SHARE	\$2,468,689	\$2,634,036	\$165,347
	Adequacy Aid Grant	\$561,124	\$556,958	(\$4,166)
	Statewide School Property Tax	\$212,101	\$215,930	\$3,829
	Total Credits- Mont Vernon	\$773,225	\$772,888	(\$337)
	Assessment - Town of Mont Vernon	\$1,695,464	\$1,861,148	\$165,684
	Net Assessed Value/\$1000 - Mont Vernon	\$250,748	\$250,748	\$0
	Tax Rate - Mont Vernon	\$6.76	\$7.42	\$0.66
	Local Assessed Value/\$1000 Less Utilities	\$249,427	\$249,427	\$0
	Statewide School Property Tax	\$0.85	\$0.87	\$0.02
	Total School Tax - Town of Mont Vernon	\$7.61	\$8.29	\$0.68

Souhegan Cooperative School District
FY11 Budget Proposal By Function

Function	Description	FY10 Voted Budget	FY11 Proposed Budget	Variance \$	Variance %
1100-1199	Regular Education Programs- Teacher salaries, textbooks, substitutes, supplies	\$6,956,531	\$7,284,578	\$328,047	4.72%
1200-1299	Special Education Programs- Teacher salaries, aides, substitutes, evaluators, textbooks, supplies, and items specific to SPED	\$3,663,925	\$3,701,569	\$37,644	1.03%
1400-1499	Co-Curricular Programs - Interscholastics, intramurals, student body activities	\$397,350	\$420,385	\$23,035	5.80%
1600-1699	Adult Education Programs	\$1,112	\$3,460	\$2,348	211.15%
2000-2199	Student Support Services- Guidance, health, nurses, and SRO salaries	\$938,117	\$1,005,623	\$67,506	7.20%
2200-2299	Instruction Support Services- Library salaries, supplies, curriculum coordinators, professional development, consultants	\$482,578	\$505,150	\$22,572	4.68%
2300-2319	School Board- Treasurer, moderator, SB stipends, SB minute taker	\$54,117	\$47,460	-\$6,657	-12.30%
2320-311	District Assessment - SAU 39 Souhegan portion of the SAU budget	\$645,142	\$654,307	\$9,165	1.42%
2400-2499	School Administrative Services- Principal salary, Deans' salaries	\$735,241	\$768,795	\$33,554	4.56%
2500-2599	Business- Printing costs	\$4,500	\$4,500	\$0	0.00%
2600-2699	Operation and Plant Maintenance- Custodial salaries, electricity, natural gas, water, trash, loss and liability insurance premiums, building maintenance	\$1,140,327	\$1,189,080	\$48,753	4.28%
2700-2799	Student Transportation- Bus contract, fuel	\$512,417	\$513,691	\$1,274	0.25%
2800-2899	Support Service - Technology Technology staff salaries, local and wide area network costs	\$259,189	\$274,569	\$15,380	5.93%
5110	Debt Service - Principal	\$713,718	\$692,670	-\$21,048	-2.95%
5120	Debt Service - Interest	\$502,017	\$444,105	-\$57,912	-11.54%
5200	Fund Transfer	\$52,000	\$15,000	-\$37,000	-71.15%
	Total Fund 10	\$17,058,281	\$17,524,942	\$466,661	2.74%
	Fund 21 - Food Service	\$496,650	\$462,095	-\$34,555	-6.96%
	Fund 22 - Title Grants/IDEA Grant	\$215,791	\$224,790	\$8,999	4.17%
	Total Budget	\$17,770,722	\$18,211,827	\$441,105	2.48%

**Souhegan Cooperative School District
FY11 Default Budget Calculation**

Adopted 2009-2010 Budget		\$ 17,770,722
	REDUCTIONS	
	Other Programs	\$ 2,692
	School Board	\$ 7,500
	Student Transportation	\$ 5,606
	Debt Service - Principal & Interest	\$ 78,960
	Fund Transfers	\$ 40,000
	Food Service Fund	\$ 40,125
	Subtotal	\$ 174,883
	ADDITIONS	
	Regular Programs	\$ 311,071
	Special Education	\$ 36,145
	Student Support Services	\$ 40,305
	Instructional Staff Services	\$ 2,768
	SAU Management Services	\$ 9,165
	School Administration	\$ 6,736
	Plant Operation & Maintenance	\$ 40,616
	Technology	\$ 9,540
	Federal Grant Fund	\$ 8,999
	Subtotal	\$ 465,345
FY 2010-2011 Default Budget		\$ 18,061,184
FY 2010-2011 Proposed Budget		\$ 18,211,827
Difference Between Default Budget and Proposed		\$ 150,643

MODERATOR'S RULES OF PROCEDURE

Souhegan Cooperative School District Deliberative Session

1. No smoking in the building.

Announce Rules 2, 3, and 4 only if attendance warrants:

2. Non-voters will be permitted in the auditorium only if room permits after meeting has begun.
3. Rooms 101 and 102 are set up with audio and video from the auditorium if needed, for an overflow crowd.
4. People in overflow rooms 101 and 102, if any, who wish to speak must use a microphone in the auditorium.

5. Motions to amend must be made in writing and will be voted separately. Amendments will not be allowed to accumulate.
6. 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.
7. 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.
8. The moderator will only accept a motion made at a microphone.
9. No motion to call the question shall be accepted by the moderator until there has been sufficient debate on the article.
10. 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.
11. 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 9th.

Cynthia Dokmo
Souhegan Cooperative School District Moderator