

1 Souhegan Cooperative Board Meeting

2 Monday, November 18th, 2019

3 Meeting Minutes- Approved 12 17 19

4 Attendees:

5 Administrative Team: Adam Steel- Superintendent, Christine Landwehrle- Assistant
6 Superintendent, Bill Hagen- Principal SHS, Michele Croteau- SAU #39 Business Administrator,
7 Meg Beauchamp- Director of Student Services, Karen Chininis- Director of Guidance, Dr. Lisa
8 Femia-Hou- SAU Administrator for Special Programs, Social Emotional Learning, and
9 Behavioral Science, Jenn Huard- SHS Special Education Administrator, Sheelu Joshi Flegal-
10 SHS Social Worker and Kelly Driscoll- Dean of Students

11 Souhegan Cooperative School Board: Jim Manning- Chair, Pim Grondstra- Vice Chair, Laura
12 Taylor- Secretary, Steve Coughlan, Amy Facey, and David Chen.

13 Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee: Martin Goulet, Chairman, Continuing-Amherst (2017),
14 John Stover, Continuing-Amherst (2018), Charlie York, Continuing-Mont Vernon (2018), Peg
15 Harris, Continuing-Amherst (2017), Jeanne Ludt, Continuing-Amherst (2018 alternate appointed
16 full member) (2019), Joel Gordon, Appointed full member (2019). *Alternates-* Dan Veilleux,
17 appointed alternate (2019), Mark Vincent, appointed alternate (2019), John Bowkett, appointed
18 alternate (2019) and Howard Brown.

19 SHS Student Videographer: Shannon Hargreaves

20 Board Minutes: Danae A. Marotta

21 Public: Jeanne Ludt, SAFC Member, Amherst NH, Delaney Facques, SHS Community Council
22 Liaison, Stephanie Grund, Amherst NH, SHS Students and Community Members

23 I. Call to Order

24 **Chair of the SCSB, Mr. Jim Manning, called the meeting to order at 6:01PM**

25 II. Superintendent's Report

26 Follow Up Items

27 Superintendent, Mr. Adam Steel, noted that he had a few follow up items for discussion first
28 starting with Competitor School Districts (Neighbors), Competency Based Education Districts
29 and High Achieving Districts. They will use these districts as a basis for comparison in terms of
30 budget and enrollment in the future.

31 He remarked that he will send this information out for Board review and input.

32 Enrollment Trends

33 Last week, Amherst Community Member, Mr. Steve Frades, gave his presentation on enrollment
34 trends to the SAU Board. He has also done significant work on the Master Schedule.

35 Mr. Steel then showed the Board a comparison of Teacher's Class Load from last year to the
36 current year.

37 He then explained the Student Load Distribution by Teacher chart. He added that they have a
38 target of 80.

39 Mr. Steel concluded by stating that Master Schedule efficiency has slightly improved from last
40 year to this year, sections with low enrollment are still dominated by advanced and capstone
41 courses and a significant reduction in staffing will result in the reduction of AP courses.

42 Schedule Redesign Process

43 Principal of SHS, Mr. Bill Hagen, discussed that every schedule design has constraints and
44 presents obstacles to meeting needs. Their current schedule design supports some identified
45 needs but also creates constraints and challenges.

46 They have been working to develop data from staff around the priorities of learning. They had a
47 great response and it was very helpful. The top priorities are, long instructional blocks, common
48 planning, flex time for students, greater student access to courses and consistency.

49 Additionally, beginning November 25th, Staff and Community Council Members have been
50 invited to participate in a schedule redesign that will best meet articulated priorities and future
51 considerations (Late Start)

52 They will then look at a cost /benefit analysis of the "Team" model. There are pros and cons and
53 they have to decide what is best for their kids and as many kids as possible.

54 Ms. Karen Chininis, Dean of Guidance, then reviewed the Program of Studies process. They are
55 well underway in that process.

56 In exploring and developing ideas for new courses, teachers are asked to consider the following,
57 student interest, competencies/ next generation standards, research, and habits of learning.

58 Mr. Manning asked for Board questions.

59 Mr. Chen asked about the difference between capstone and dual enrollment courses and how
60 many can they run. He then asked if they have decided on that yet.

61 Superintendent Steel replied that they have not decided on that yet.

62 Ms. Facey noted that this looks like a teacher driven process. She then asked if they have taken a
63 global look at courses.

64 Principal Hagen replied that relevance and student interest is very important to them. When they
65 went from trimesters to semesters they had to thoroughly review the courses that were
66 meaningful.

67 Ms. Chininis added that they have looked and found AP courses that they did not have and then
68 brought forward. They look at other high schools and what classes have not run in a while.

69 Ms. Facey clarified that their program of studies should reflect student need first.

70 Mr. Steel agreed with Ms. Facey.

71 Staffing Update

72 Mr. Steel then discussed that the initial budget left a placeholder for staffing.

73 Additionally, the remaining questions to be answered are: how many of the early retirement
74 requests will be accepted, what efficiencies will be created by the new schedule being developed,
75 and what savings will be achieved through retirement turnover.

76 He then commented that his recommendation is to reduce the proposed budget by \$300k. The
77 anticipated savings are likely to be higher than projected.

78 Right now, the proposed budget is at \$18, 457,961 an increase of \$359,672 over FY'20 (1.99%).

79 Mr. Chen asked about the Unexpended Fund Balance. He then added that it is November and
80 when will they see it. He then noted that it is in the minutes.

81 Ms. Croteau added that she would be happy to look at that but there could be more expenditures.
82 She understands that he would like to the UFB more frequently and they will work to that end.

83 Mr. Chen then asked if they can see it in December, May and June.

84 Superintendent Steel replied, yes.

85 Mr. Chen asked about the current policy in regards to teacher facing.

86 Mr. Steel replied that 80 is an average. He then explained that policy states that if they go over a
87 certain threshold that they get a 5% increase in pay. There are a few teachers that fall under that
88 category.

89 Mr. Chen added that there can be greater optimization with the classes under 15.

90 Mr. Steel, agreed and noted that there are still constraints. Principal Hagen is thoroughly
91 reviewing the schedule.

92 The Board thanked Superintendent Steel.

93 III. Public Input I of II

94 Ms. Jeanne Ludt, member of the Souhegan AFC, Amherst NH, asked if they are taking in to
95 account class sizes. She then noted that this school was not meant for large classes. She does not
96 know how they would add the larger classes.

97 The Board thanked Ms. Ludt.

98 IV. Principal's Report

99 Principal Hagen then discussed that all 9th grade students received hard copy progress reports to
100 take home this past Friday. Competency scores were reported along with teacher comments for
101 courses through the Empower progress report.

102 In grades ten and eleven, paper progress reports went home on Friday as well. Letter grades were
103 reported for all courses using the MMS progress report. Parents are also able to see grades in the
104 MMS Parent Portal.

105 Students in grade twelve received hard copy first quarter report cards with letter grades for all
106 courses using the MMS report card. Student grades are also open in the MMS parent portal.
107 These report card grades are used to send to universities and colleges as part of the application
108 process.

109 In regards to grade 9 Social Studies, they have been spending the first few months of school
110 introducing the political spectrum to students. They push our students to examine the issues of
111 the day and to begin to determine their own point of view after careful analysis of a range of
112 perspectives. It is fascinating to see their growth as they investigate the political spectrum.
113 Students have been assessed on their knowledge of the political spectrum and are about to start to
114 apply that knowledge with the Letter to the Editor Performance Assessment. The Letter to the
115 Editor will ask them to write a persuasive argument backed by solid thesis and claims, evidence
116 and analysis, and a counterclaim. They encourage all families to engage their children in a
117 discussion about their research and topics that they are studying. Moving forward, they will be
118 looking at the evolution of Democracy from Greece to the Romans and how both of those
119 democratic systems impact their political system in America.

120 Finally, the Fall sports season has come to an end and, it was very successful.

121 He then added that he will be happy to answer questions.

122 Ms. Taylor asked about the percentage in students that participate in sports.

123 Principal Hagen added that 270 students in sports and 725 students in the school.

124 Mr. Manning replied that would be 37%.

125 Mr. Chen asked about GPA and sports participation.

126 Principal Hagen replied that afterschool life helps with responsibility and generally is good for
127 their entire wellbeing.

128 Mr. Chen noted that there is great value to it.

129 Ms. Facey added that she is guessing that it is most of the student body.

130 Mr. Manning asked to see how many kids participate in sports/activities and averages of their
131 GPA's. It would be interesting to present that at the Deliberative Session.

132 Mr. Steel remarked that the SHS Drama Department is performing the play "Filtered" starting on
133 Thursday, Nov 21st, and showing on Friday, Nov 22nd and Saturday, Nov 23rd at 7:00PM. There
134 is a video of him interviewing two of the stars of the show. He emphasized that it is well done
135 and encouraged everyone to go and see it.

136 The Board thanked Principal Hagen.

137 V. Committee Updates

138 Ms. Taylor on the Facilities Committee commented that she did a walk through with Director of
139 Facilities, Mr. John Robichaud. She noted that he did an excellent job.

140 Mr. Grondstra thanked her for the invitation of their meeting, but noted that he could not attend.
141 He then asked about identifying any major projects.

142 Ms. Taylor replied, yes, this is her first year with the process with warrant articles and budgeting.
143 The biggest things are the Science Labs in the Annex and the Chemistry Labs in this main
144 building that are 24 years old. The Boys Locker Rooms were also in great disrepair.

145 Mr. Manning noted that he had a couple of parents that have reached out to him about the Boys
146 Locker Rooms. He added that as it related to the budget the Science Labs would take top
147 priority.

148 Mr. Steel agreed that the Science Labs are the number one academic need.

149 Mr. Coughlan added that he has a Non-Public Session agenda item regarding PPC.

150 Ms. Facey noted that the next meeting of the Principal Search Committee is Dec 6th.

151 Mr. Chen asked about the process and timeline.

152 Ms. Facey added that she will give the Board a more comprehensive update at the next Board
153 Meeting.

154 Mr. Chen added that the Bean Foundation will have a presentation on Dec 4th at 3:00PM in the
155 SHS Auditorium. The Keynote Speaker will be Superintendent Steel. The Bean Foundation
156 provides benefits to families of Amherst and Manchester.

157 VI. Community Council- Update

158 Ms. Delaney Facques, Community Council Liaison, mentioned that they discussed the later start
159 time and they were all actually against it. They are looking for more concrete facts to inform the
160 rest of the school.

161 Mr. Manning asked for further questions.

162 There were no further questions

163 VII. Consent Agenda

164 Ms. Taylor pulled the 1. October 24th 2019 Draft Minutes.

165 Mr. Coughlan noted the change to line 51.

166 From:

167 *“He then noted their website: ethicsforum@sau39.org”*

168 To:

169 *“He then noted their website: ethicsforum.sau39.org”*

170 Mr. Chen then noted the change on lines 189-191.

171 From:

172 *“Mr. Grondstra asked about the clarification of Special Education students, out-of-district, not*
 173 *190 being included in the CCP, however, they do have to account for them in the budget. Budget*
 174 *191 goes up and CCP stays down. Whereas here, the budget goes down and CCP goes up.”*

175 To:

176 *“Mr. Grondstra asked about the clarification of Special Education students, out-of-district, not*
 177 *190 being included in the CPP, however, they do have to account for them in the budget. Budget*
 178 *191 goes up and CPP stays down. Whereas here, the budget goes down and CPP goes up.”*

179 Ms. Taylor asked about Policy BDD. She added that Mr. Coughlan was going to get more
 180 information for her.

181 Mr. Coughlan explained how Policy BDD is the mortar between two irregular bricks.

182 Ms. Taylor noted the change on line 270.

183 From:

184 *“Mr. Chen asked if they can identify the top 5% of districts to compare themselves to. He added*
 185 *that their goal is to be measured against the top 5%.”*

186 To:

187 *“Mr. Chen asked if they can identify the top 5 of districts to compare themselves to. He added*
 188 *that their goal is to be measured against the top 5”*

189 She then noted the change on Line 295.

190 From:

191 *“Ms. Taylor added that in 2017-2018 they had a huge middle school math focus”.*

192 To:

193 *“Ms. Taylor noted that the students (Juniors) who took the SAT in 2017 and 2018 were part of a*
 194 *middle school emphasis on Math while in middle school”.*

195 Mr. Grondstra asked about the Joshua Tree Fieldtrip. He then asked about clarifying if it is Italy
 196 or Greece.

197 Principal Hagen clarified that it is the Italy trip.

198 Ms. Taylor noted that the Joshua Tree Fieldtrip does say that it is Wintercession.

199 Superintendent Steel noted that it is definitely not a Wintercession trip.

200 **Ms. Facey motioned to approve the Consent Agenda Items 1. October 24th 2019 Draft**
 201 **Minutes, as amended, 2. Oct 2019 Treasurer’s Report, 3. Policies from 10 24 19 SCSB**
 202 **Meeting- BBAB/BDB, BDC, BDD, BEDA, BEDB, BGA, BGC, DKC, GBEC/ADB, JI,**
 203 **JICD, JICDD, JICH, JICK, and JIHB. 4. SHS Italy Trip 2020 5. SHS Joshua Tree**

204 **National Park Fieldtrip and 6. SHS Bermuda Trip 2020. Mr. Coughlan seconded the**
 205 **motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

206 VIII. FY' 21 Budget

207 Mr. Steel thanked the AFC, emphasizing that they have done excellent work. He added that Ms.
 208 Croteau has also done a wonderful job.

209 Mr. Martin Goulet, Chair of the AFC, thanked the Board and Administration for all of their
 210 assistance. He then introduced the members of the committee.

211 He then explained that they did a few "Reasonableness" tests. He added that roughly \$500K is in
 212 Special Education.

213 Mr. Goulet then noted some improvement areas for next year's process.

- 214 • Strategic Direction for SHS, articulated consistently to all stakeholders would help them
 215 evaluate more than just the numbers but whether the numbers support the stated
 216 objectives.
- 217 • The SAU Business Administrator and a designated Board Liaison should be regular,
 218 active participants in SAFC meetings.
- 219 • The continued absence of a broad capital/building plan and associated funding strategy, is
 220 really worrisome and must be addressed. He then referenced the Gail Report.
- 221 • Past enrollment projections have been low. Better enrollment forecasting, starting with
 222 tracking forecast accuracy is required for multi-year planning.
- 223 • A collaboration location for SAFC work product sharing would be efficient and improve
 224 year to year knowledge transfer.

225 Mr. Manning asked if they have had ample time and interface with the BA.

226 Mr. Steel remarked that they will be addressing some of those items at the Joint Facilities
 227 Meeting on December 5th that will include discussing long range capital projects and a capital
 228 maintenance plan.

229 Mr. Goulet added that they did not have that context.

230 Ms. Facey mentioned that Mr. Steve Frades, Amherst Community Member, was at the recent
 231 SAU Board Meeting discussing enrollment projections.

232 Mr. Steel commented that Mr. Frades has done an analysis and did a significant data dive. He did
 233 that work last year and projected 95 Kindergarteners and they have 128.

234 Mr. Goulet then reviewed AFC provisional recommendations. He added that these are the things
 235 that they want the Board to be thinking about.

236 He added that they are concerned about the Budget Buffers (budget-actual) and those should be
 237 under increased scrutiny.

238 He finalized that they look forward to voting.

239 Mr. Manning then asked the Board for open conversation.

240 Mr. Chen added that he is concerned about programs that are break even and there is no way to
241 track it. He noted that he is thinking of the laptop funds.

242 Mr. Steel replied that with the laptop funds the fees are a part of the annual audit.

243 Mr. Manning noted that they will follow up on that. He then asked for further questions or
244 comments.

245 Ms. Taylor commented that there are people that use their facilities and then they have to pay for
246 the janitors.

247 The Board thanked the Advisory Finance Committee.

248 IX. Social Emotional Program Development Presentation

249 Director of Student Services, Ms. Meg Beauchamp, introduced SAU Administrator for Special
250 Programs, Social Emotional Learning, and Behavioral Science, Dr. Lisa Femia- Hou, SHS
251 Special Education Administrator, Ms. Jenn Huard, and SHS Social Worker, Ms. Sheelu Joshi
252 Flegal. She then commented that they do tremendous work.

253 Last spring the Board had asked for a review on programs for students with Social/Emotional
254 needs. They were still working on that during that time.

255 Dr. Lisa Femia- Hou then discussed that that they are seeing a different type of need. This is not
256 unique to Amherst.

257 In looking more specifically at NH, this shows an anxiety disorder and the rise is quite large.

258 “The rate of major depression among young adults, ages 18 to 25 rose 63% between 2009 and
259 2017, according to a national study published earlier this year in the Journal of Abnormal
260 Psychology” (Schoenberg, 2019).

261 Dr. Femia- Hou then reviewed statistics from the National Institute of Mental Health.

262 In discussing resources, there are fewer than 17 child and adolescent psychiatrists in the US per
263 100,000 children. Hillsborough County is in the severe shortage category. 6 months is the
264 minimum wait time if they are even accepting new children.

265 Ms. Joshi Flegal then discussed that trying to be more proactive for their students. What she
266 would like to do more of is to allow for more proactive measures and teaching kids how to build
267 up inner resiliency. She then reviewed an important visual for the Board.

268 She then reviewed the supports that are available for all students. This included a showing of
269 Angst, Resilience, have a Wellness Day, and Connect.

270 She mentioned that she also is the Advisory Coordinator this year and dovetails nicely with all
271 the Social Emotional work that they are doing.

272 Ms. Jenn Huard then reviewed some additional supports that are available for students. They
273 start with transition planning with AMS, they also offer Saber Startup and Saber Support. They

274 also have group counseling available, anxiety, grief, etc. They also have proactive measures to
275 support student success.

276 Additionally, they have interventions available for highest need students. They were lucky
277 enough to hire a BCBA (Board Certified Behavior Analyst).

278 She then reviewed some community resources.

279 Ms. Huard noted what they will be working on for the future, Challenge Day, Staff-wide
280 training, improved data management system, expanding alternative pathways to postsecondary
281 goals, DOE approval for Alternative Support, specialized training for paraprofessionals, and
282 continued family and community engagement.

283 Principal Hagen added that the numbers are alarming and real. One of the things that they need
284 most are adults that are building relationships with kids. He will be looking at the budget,
285 however, if you put too many students with adults you are losing that process.

286 Ms. Facey asked about Advisory. She then asked what she is looking at and trainings for
287 Advisors and that is a great place for kids to let their guards down in addition to the classroom.

288 Ms. Joshi Flegal replied that she would like to be able to protect the Advisory with approx. 10
289 students. She added that making new she has been open to Advisors and about any support that
290 she can give.

291 Mr. Coughlan asked about teachers assessing competencies.

292 Ms. Sheelu replied that they are looking at the 5 competencies for Social Emotional Learning
293 through Advisory. SEL is happening in all curriculums all over the place. She then explained that
294 she frequently gives advice to teachers.

295 Mr. Coughlan asked about a feedback loop.

296 Ms. Sheelu replied that is the Dean of Faculty and Department Heads. There is also ease of
297 discussion as far as that goes.

298 Principal Hagen added that as they learn the competencies through the Advisory, they are taking
299 the time to have those discussions.

300 Mr. Chen asked about the boundary line between the family and the school.

301 Ms. Beauchamp replied that they help to support families but the bottom line is that they work
302 with families. They have to have supports for them in school because this is where they are.

303 Mr. Chen added that it sounds like a first responder type of model.

304 Ms. Beauchamp replied yes, they do have students like that but they have to work collaboratively
305 with the families.

306 Mr. Steel referenced the work of Mr. Jamie Vollmer and then explained that it is a greater
307 question than what they do at school.

308 Mr. Chen asked about distinct State Laws.

309 Ms. Beauchamp added that when they were going in the tiered level of supports that student
310 would not be in school. The reason why they have tiered system is so that does not occur.

311 Mr. Manning commented that there is no bright line. He then discussed the difference in health
312 issues and there is not.

313 Ms. Beauchamp added that they are a public school system and need to make sure that they can
314 access the educational opportunities for all students.

315 Ms. Huard added that her line is when it is impacting their education.

316 Ms. Joshi Flegal added that she talks a lot about risk protective factor.

317 The Board thanked Ms. Beauchamp, Dr. Femia-Hou, Ms. Joshi Flegal and Ms. Huard.

318 X. Public Input

319 Ms. Stephanie Grund, 5 Colonel Wilkins Road, Amherst NH, asked about holding Project
320 Safeguard.

321 Ms. Kelly Driscoll, Dean of Students, replied that they do plan to do a Wellness day on Jan 3rd.
322 There is a planning team and they are looking at research and best practice.

323 Ms. Stephanie Grund asked Ms. Facques asked about having another vote on later start times.

324 Mr. Manning replied that they take the recommendation of Community Council very seriously.
325 They would have to dig into it and it is an SAU discussion.

326 Ms. Facey mentioned that there was a number of outstanding issues that the committee is
327 working on. Student input is a huge part of that.

328 Mr. Manning asked if CC has had a formal presentation from leadership on later start times.

329 Ms. Facques replied that they had an open discussion today with members of the committee and
330 then students gave their opinions.

331 Superintendent Steel added that he would be happy to come to Community Council and present
332 on behalf of the SAU Board. He then asked if she could find out if CC would be open and
333 comfortable to give their input on things.

334 Ms. Facques replied, yes, she will find out.

335 XI. First Reading Policy- BEDG (from 10 22 19 SAU meeting)

336 Mr. Manning noted that Policy BEDG- Minutes, was discussed at the SAU Meeting last
337 Thursday.

338 Ms. Taylor asked if this is their standard practice now.

339 Superintendent Steel replied, yes, it is standard practice.

340 Mr. Manning asked if it comes from NHSBA (New Hampshire School Board Association).

341 Mr. Coughlan noted that one of the things that he looks at is if it reflects the current practice.

342 Mr. Chen then asked about the editing.

343 Ms. Landwehrle replied that it is the first page of the policy.

344 Mr. Manning remarked that on several occasions he has asked for Board Correspondence to be in
345 the Minutes and they are.

346 Mr. Steel noted that the Board Minutes are posted in the Trello within that 5-day period. He then
347 noted that if there are no objections, Policy BEDG will be added to the Consent Agenda for next
348 month's meeting.

349 Mr. Manning asked the Board for further discussion.

350 Mr. Grondstra remarked that there have been questions, especially during budget season, about
351 Turf Field replacement. He noted that the fees for athletic use is down and asked the Board to
352 start thinking about putting together a committee to collect and maintain funds for the turf field
353 replacement.

354 The Board thanked Mr. Grondstra.

355 XII. Non-Public Session- RSA 91 A:3 II

356 **Mr. Grondstra motioned to enter into Non-Public Session RSA 91 A:3 II (a) and (i) at 8:07**
357 **PM. Mr. Chen seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

358 **Mr. Manning called a Roll Call: Manning-Yes, Grondstra-Yes, Taylor- Yes, Coughlan-Yes,**
359 **Facey- Yes, and Chen- Yes.**

360 Other Persons Present during Non-Public Session: Michele Croteau, Christine Landwehrle and
361 Adam Steel.

362 Description of matters discussed and final decisions made: Employee Compensation and Safety
363 and Security Discussed

364 **Mr. Manning motioned to exit Non-Public Session and return to public session. Mr.**
365 **Grondstra seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, motion passed.**

366 Public session reconvened at 9:43PM.

367