



SOUHEGAN COOPERATIVE SCHOOL DISTRICT

DELIBERATIVE SESSION
FEBRUARY 6, 2024 6:00PM
SOUHEGAN HIGH SCHOOL

Souhegan Cooperative School District – Officers & Agents

School Board

(A) Stephanie Grund – Chair
(A) Christine Peters – Vice Chair
(A) Anna Goulet-Zimmerman – Secretary
(MV) Sonny Daniels
(A) John Glover
(MV) Stephen O’Keefe
(A) Daniel Veilleux

Office of the Superintendent

Michael Berry – Superintendent
Steven Chamberlin – Assistant Superintendent
Christine Landwehrle – Assistant Superintendent
Amy Facey – Business Administrator
Meg Beauchamp – Director of Student Services

Moderator

George Bower

Souhegan High School

Dana Curran – Principal

Clerk

Elizabeth Kuzsma

Treasurer

CJ Butler

Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee

(A) Jeanne Ludt – Chair
(A) Christine Grayson – Vice Chair
(A) Mark Cheney – Secretary
(MV) Howard Brown
(A) Nicole Christensen
(MV) Paul Lavertu
(A) Mary Lou Mullens



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 is held February 6, 2024 and the Public Hearing, which took place in January.

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 were presented at the Deliberative Session, including articles that were amended, are then placed on the official ballot and moved to the second session (ballot voting) of the annual meeting for a final vote.

Voting in the Souhegan Cooperative School District is a Two-Step Process:

Deliberative Session: February 6, 2024, 6:00 p.m. Souhegan High School Theater

Ballot Vote: March 12, 2024

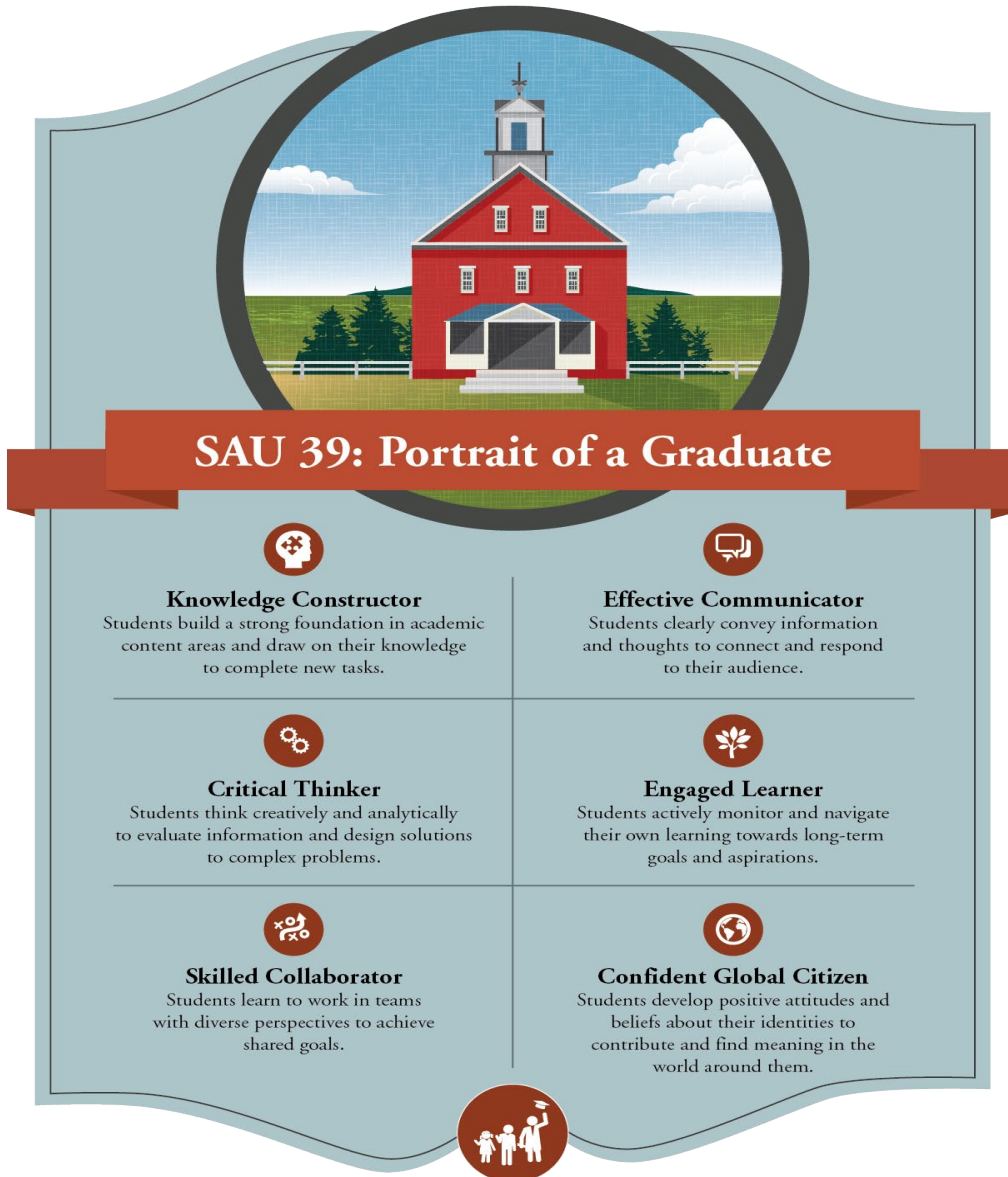
Amherst: 6:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. Souhegan High School Gymnasium

Mont Vernon: 7:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. Mont Vernon Village School

Rules of Order

- Smoking is prohibited on school property.
- Every resident who wishes to vote must have checked in with the Supervisors of the Checklist outside the auditorium door and have a colored dot visible on their clothing.
- Each voter has a colored card. At the call for any votes required, please hold up your card and indicate your aye or nay vote, respectively.
- This meeting is subject to the state Right to Know/Public Meeting law and as such we are required to maintain a complete and accurate record of all actions of the meeting. To ensure the accuracy of the record, each speaker is required to begin any and all comments by stating their name and address. Each member of the meeting making a motion must begin by stating their name and address and each member seconding a motion must do the same. This procedure will enable the moderator and clerk to maintain an accurate record and for viewers of the live or recorded broadcast to follow the actions of the meeting.
- There are two microphones on the floor – no speaking from your seat, please. Please remember to get close to the microphone and state your name & address. Either microphone may be used to discuss the article and/or to amend the articles, call the question, etc.
- All motions must be presented in writing to the Moderator and must include the name and address of the voter making the motion and the voter making the second.
- The moderator will not accept amendments to amendments. The meeting will vote on one amendment at a time. All amendments must be submitted in writing.
- There will be a three-minute time limit to state your opinion at the microphone.
- The Moderator will recognize District employees who might not be residents to speak on matters of their expertise at the request of the Board. All other non-residents may only speak with the consent of the body.
- No one may speak a second time until all who wish to speak a first time have done so.
- Any Motion from the floor to call the question will be recognized only after those at the microphone at the time of motion have had their turn to speak or if they wish, of their own volition, to relinquish the right to speak.
- If there is a request for a vote by secret ballot, voters will proceed to the lobby. The voter will then present the Assistant Moderator on duty with the voter card given to them when they initially checked in. The Assistant Moderator will provide a ballot and mark the voter card to indicate that the voter has received a ballot. The voter will then vote and deposit the paper ballot in the voting box and return to their seat. This same procedure will be followed for each secret ballot vote taken during the evening.
- At the close of discussion and voting for each warrant article, the moderator will put the warrant on the ballot and accept a motion to “Restrict Reconsideration of the wording” of that article. This is for your protection. After you restrict reconsideration, the article cannot come up again, should someone request reconsideration at a later hour.
- The moderator will ask the meeting to revisit "Where we are" insofar as finishing the agenda at 10:00pm and based on the will of the body, accept a motion to recess or continue until completion.

George Bower
Souhegan Cooperative School District Moderator



Our goals for SAU39 and Souhegan Cooperative School District include focusing on reading to ensure evidence and research-based practices are implemented, capturing and expanding instructional time, supporting the supervision and evaluation model to ensure strong instruction practice and student engagement, building trust with the community, and accurately reporting district achievement by using data wisely. The Portrait of a Graduate was developed to demonstrate the six key skills we know are highly desired by employers and are requisites for entrepreneurs. These skills are consistent with our mission statement to develop student agency and responsibility. Our goals, mission statement, and Portrait of a Graduate are used as guideposts to develop our curriculum, student engagement, and school processes.

The FY25 Operating budget is \$20,617,059 which is a \$248,368 or 1.2% increase from the current year budget. The default budget calculation is a decrease of \$7,918 from the current year operating budget. In order to create our budget, we balance the student population with the course offerings that students are requesting to ensure we have the proper level of staffing

for required courses. The budget includes the addition of a full time Business teacher, a Classroom Assistant, and a part time Learning Commons Math Tutor. These additions are due to more students requesting business classes and the new State of New Hampshire requirement that all students take a Personal Finance course to graduate. We are requesting a Classroom Assistant to work with students in the Saber Flex course and allow our professional teaching staff to be fully engaged in a classroom teaching students. The Math Tutor currently works in the Learning Commons with students at all math levels. This position is currently funded through ESSER funds which are no longer available to us after this year. As this position has been impactful for students and the tutor is fully engaged, we would like to continue supporting this position in the budget. Other changes to staffing include a reduction in Special Education teachers and other para-professional positions.

One of the main drivers of the budget increase is due to the high increase in our health care rate of 21.8% and Dental of 4.7%. This impacts our budget by \$439,838. This estimate is due to our experience in health care services and a general increase in costs by insurance companies.

Other changes to the proposed budget include an increase in transportation costs due to an increase in the students requiring Special Education transportation and the cost of the new contract for Special Education Transportation services. There is a decrease in the administrative costs that are driven by new administrative hires, a thorough review of various costs in the administrative budget, and a decrease in the SAU assessment charged to Souhegan Cooperative School District of \$55,361. This decrease is due to the work done by the new Superintendent, Mike Berry, aligning the needs of the district with the SAU personnel as well as a decrease in the apportionment calculated from 32.23% in FY24 to 31.03% in FY25.

Budget by SAFC Category

<u>Sub-Committee</u>	<u>FY24 Operating</u>	<u>FY25 Proposed</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>	<u>% Change</u>
Transportation	\$852,154	\$1,037,786	\$185,632	22.0%
Curriculum	\$8,295,571	\$8,630,854	\$335,283	4.0%
Facilities	\$1,582,061	\$1,625,748	\$43,687	2.8%
Technology	\$434,194	\$470,228	\$36,034	8.3%
Athletics	\$785,319	\$820,248	\$34,929	4.4%
Food Service	\$497,676	\$509,285	\$11,609	2.3%
Administration	\$3,161,516	\$3,053,335	(\$108,181)	(3.4%)
Student Services	\$4,760,200	\$4,469,575	(\$290,625)	(6.1%)
<u>Total</u>	<u>\$20,368,691</u>	<u>\$20,617,059</u>	<u>\$248,368</u>	<u>1.2%</u>

Proposed Budget Items at Risk

FY25 Default Calculation	\$20,360,773	%
Salaries and Benefits		
Business Teacher	\$89,300	
Saber Flex Classroom Assistant	\$71,979	
.5 Learning Commons Math Support	<u>\$37,776</u>	
Total	\$199,055	1.0%
Curriculum inc. Improved CTE Program	\$39,154	0.2%
Technology	\$22,114	0.1%
Misc.	(\$4,037)	0.0%
Total	\$256,286	1.3%
FY25 Proposed Budget	\$20,617,059	

We are pleased to present a new contract proposal with the PPC (Personnel Policy Committee) as Warrant Article 3. Our teachers are not unionized, but we work collaboratively renegotiating policy changes that include salaries, benefits, and work environment. The priorities of this work included increasing instructional time, ensuring the compensation level/working conditions would continue to attract and retain professional and support staff, and reviewing the cost of the current salary schedule and health insurance offerings. The proposed contract includes:

- 1) Adding five (5) additional days to the schedule that include four (4) education days and one (1) professional development day.
- 2) The teachers and support staff will receive a 3.3% increase each year of the agreement as well as an additional 0.54% to the teachers' individual retirement savings account and 0.27% to the support staffs' individual retirement savings account.
- 3) The HMO health insurance plan will be sunsetted and the employees will be paying a higher percentage of the costs over the next three years.
- 4) Retiring staff who meet the years of service criteria will receive an increase in the honorarium of \$4,000 for teachers and \$2,000 for support staff.

The costs of this proposed contract are \$439,838 in FY25, \$432,555 in FY26, and \$439,305 in FY27.

Warrant Article 4 supports our Long-Term Facilities planning. The Director of Facilities evaluates our buildings, grounds, and classrooms. He schedules maintenance work as well as larger replacement projects over a 10-20 year period. We support this plan, and we are asking for a \$365,000 contribution to support the skylight replacements in FY25 as well as building funds for replacing the main building generator, the main building and annex fire system, furniture replacement, and exterior wall repairs planned for FY26. This amount would come from the unassigned fund balance.

Long Term Facilities Project and Funding Plan

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Contribution</u>	<u>Withdrawal</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Balance			\$417,000
FY24	\$220,000*	\$374,000	\$263,000
FY25	\$365,000*	\$330,000	\$298,000
FY26	\$300,000	\$367,000	\$231,000
FY27	\$325,000	\$227,000	\$329,000
FY28	\$350,000	\$75,000	\$604,000
FY29	\$325,000	\$643,000	\$286,000
FY30	\$325,000	\$250,000	\$361,000
FY31	\$325,000	\$290,000	\$396,000
FY32	\$325,000	\$484,000	\$237,000
FY33	\$300,000	\$153,000	\$384,000

**Proposed from FY24 Unassigned Fund Balance*

- FY24 - Phase 1 Skylights, Furniture replacement (if available)
- FY25 - Phase 2 Skylights
- FY26 - Main Building Generator, Main Building and Annex Fire System, Furniture Replacement, Exterior Walls-Metal panels
- FY27 - Track and Field, Crack-fill and Sealcoat, Auditorium (rigging/lighting/stage), Controls BMS, DHW Generation, Cafe and Stage Floors
- FY28 - Annex Building Generator
- FY29 - Phase 3 Skylights
- FY30 - Main Building Boilers (2)
- FY31 - Roof-Rubber Membrane, Kitchen Appliances
- FY32 - Crack-fill and Sealcoat, Site Lighting, Emergency Lights, Classroom Ceilings, Halls/Stairs/Lobby, Gymnasium/Locker Room/Restrooms Walls/Ceilings/Floors, Cafeteria and Stage Walls, Library Walls/Ceiling/Floors, Admin/Support Offices Walls/Ceilings, Kitchen Walls/Ceilings
- FY33 - Classroom Walls, Landscaping, Exterior Walls- Metal Panels

Warrant Article 5 supports the Turf Field replacement that is currently scheduled to be replaced in 2030. The School Board requested funding starting in FY21 to save money toward the replacement field. We are fortunate that the turf field remains in good condition and we are able to extend the life past the original estimate. We are asking for \$70,000 from the unassigned fund balance to continue saving for a future withdrawal of these funds.

Turf Field Funding Plan

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Contribution</u>	<u>Withdrawal</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Balance Forward			\$364,000
FY25	\$70,000*	\$0	\$434,000
FY26	\$70,000	\$0	\$504,000
FY27	\$50,000	\$0	\$554,000
FY28	\$50,000	\$0	\$604,000
FY29	\$50,000	\$0	\$654,000
FY30	\$50,000	\$550,000	\$154,000

**Proposed from FY24 Unassigned Fund Balance*

Warrant Article 6 supports the Technology Fund. This was a new fund established in FY24 to help us save an even amount each year based on planned technology replacement and purchase costs. The Director of Technology has provided a 4-year plan that includes replacing the Wide Area Network Access points over the next two fiscal years. In order to fund these costs, we are requesting \$50,000 from the unassigned fund balance to support this work.

Warrant Article 7 supports the planned purchase and maintenance costs of the vehicles owned by the school district. We are able to reduce costs for transportation of Special Education students, CTE (Career and Technical Education) students, and athletics by owning our own vehicles. In the past, we used the Special Education Transportation provider to transport the Special Education students to Transition programs that provide training for when they graduate from Souhegan and to transport our CTE students to offsite programs. However, due to increased costs, we are able to save money by owning vans and using employees to drive our students. Also, our Athletic programs look to use these vans when appropriate instead of paying the regular bus transportation provider. Based on the schedule to purchase vehicles to support these programs, we are establishing a fund to save money over the life of the vehicles in order to withdraw funds at the time of purchase of a new one. We are requesting \$20,000 from the unassigned fund balance to fund this request.

Summary of Warrant Articles

	Warrant Article	FY25
1	Election of Officers	Non-Monetary
2	Operating Budget	\$20,617,059
3	PPC Agreement	\$439,868
4	Capital Reserve ETF*	\$365,000
5	Turf Field*	\$70,000
6	Technology Fund*	\$50,000
7	Vehicle Fund*	\$20,000

**Proposed from FY24 Unassigned Fund Balance*

The Souhegan Cooperative School Board worked closely with the Souhegan Administration, SAU staff, and the Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee to present a budget that continues to support our school and the community. We realize that your vote matters, and that without the support from the communities of Amherst and Mont Vernon, the Souhegan High School and the young people it serves, cannot thrive. Souhegan has served as a distinctive point of pride in our communities for almost 30 years and represents one of our biggest investments. We believe this budget supports the Souhegan High School Mission responsibly.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie Grund, Chair
Christine Peters, Vice Chair
Anna Goulet-Zimmerman, Secretary
Sonny Daniels
John Glover
Stephen O'Keefe
Dan Veilleux

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT THIRTY-NINE

Amherst, Mont Vernon, and Souhegan Cooperative School Districts



MICHAEL BERRY
Superintendent of
Schools

STEVEN CHAMBERLIN
Assistant Superintendent

CHRISTINE
LANDWEHRLE
Assistant Superintendent

MARGARET
BEAUCHAMP
Director of Student
Services

AMY FACEY
Business Administrator

Frequently Asked Questions

*PPC - SCSB Negotiations
December 2023*

- 1. How are negotiations different from Districts where the teachers have formed a union?*
In unionized Districts, negotiations are focused around a Collective Bargaining Agreement. In Souhegan, the teachers' and the board's negotiations result in policy changes. The compensation is covered by policy GCBA (Professional and Support Staff Compensation Schedule).
- 2. What positions are covered by this policy?*
Two classifications of employees are governed by policy: professional staff and support staff. Overall, 120 employees are covered by this policy. Professional staff includes teachers, counselors/social workers, library media specialist, and the nurse. Support staff includes paraprofessionals, school nutritionists, facility staff, and office staff.
- 3. What were the board's priorities in this negotiation?*
The board's priorities during this negotiation were to increase instructional time, ensure the compensation level/working conditions would continue to attract and retain professional and support staff, and review the cost of the current salary schedule/ health insurance offerings.
- 4. How were the priorities addressed?*
Instructional Time: The board and PPC agreed to add four instructional days and one professional development day over the term of this policy (one instructional day and one professional development day in 2024-2025, two instructional days in 2025 - 2026, and one instructional day in 2026-2027).
Attract and Retain Employees: The current teaching load (five courses one semester, four courses the other semester) remains. The stipend for carrying four different classes was eliminated. The modest increase in salary keeps the compensation level competitive with neighboring districts.
Salary Schedule: The number of lanes in the current salary schedule has been capped. The number of opportunities for advancement through career growth has also been capped. The salary schedule will no longer grow indefinitely.
Health Insurance: The more costly plan, the HMO plan, is sunsetted for new employees. In addition, the employee share of the premium increased.
- 5. What are specific changes related to compensation?*
The teachers and support staff will receive a 3.3% increase each year of the agreement. In addition, the teachers will receive an additional 0.54% to their individual retirement savings account. Support staff will receive an additional 0.27% in their individual retirement savings account.

6. *How do these negotiations impact employee health insurance?*

As stated earlier, any employee hired after July 1, 2024, will not be eligible to participate in the HMO plan. In addition, the employer share of the HMO premium decreases as follows over the term of this policy:

Single: 85%, 83%, 80% (from 90%)

Two person/Family: 75%, 74%, 73% (from 77%)

7. *What are other changes that are connected to employee compensation?*

Retiring staff who meet years of service criteria (at least 15 years at SHS) receive an honorarium. The payment is divided into two payments to support the budget development, the hiring timeline, and the staff transition. For the first time since its inception, the amount received in the second year increased (\$4K for teachers and \$2K for support staff).

8. *What are the changes to policy beyond compensation?*

Flexibility in Hiring: The Superintendent will be able to advance a candidate in an assignment on a state-determined critical shortage list up to three steps. This ability will make SHS more competitive in the hiring process.

Support Staff Contracted Days: Support staff will have the option to attend one day of the back-to-school retreat.

Tutor Role: A teacher-credentialed tutor role was established to support academic support in the Learning Commons. This cost-effective innovation was previously funded through ESSR funds (no longer available).

Classroom Assistant: A classroom assistant role was established to support the Saber Flex program. This position will free up credentialed staff to take on courses. The classroom assistant will be paid an additional \$2 per hour.

Retirement Notice Timeline: The retirement notification timeline changed from January 1 to November 1 (of the year preceding their final year). This date change will help budget development.

9. What will be the cost of this agreement on the Warrant? The cost for the first year (FY25) of the warrant is \$439,838, which translates to a \$0.15/1000 tax impact for Amherst and \$0.21/1000 for Mont Vernon. The cost for the second and third years of the agreement is below:

FY26: \$432,555

FY27: \$439,305

10. *What happens if the community does not support this article?*

The current policy stays in place. Teacher compensation would remain the same. The instructional time and changes in health insurance would not take place. The teachers and the board would re-enter negotiations.

Message from the Chair of the Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee:

As Chair of the 2023-2024 Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee (SAFC) I would like to thank our volunteer committee members for their dedication and hard work in providing important citizen/taxpayer oversight into the proposed fiscal year 2025 budget for the Souhegan Cooperative School District.

The role of this committee is to provide independent due diligence into the budgeting process and outcomes to ensure that all costs are reasonable and justified and all options for the delivery of a quality education expected by the citizens of Amherst and Mont Vernon are thoroughly evaluated. All of our work is designed to enable the taxpayers of Amherst and Mont Vernon to feel confident that the budget has been thoroughly reviewed and that our recommendation is trusted.

Given that the SAFC plays a fiduciary role to ensure that public resources are spent responsibly and transparently, our key focus is to evaluate the budget consistent with the vision and stated policy as communicated by the administration and school board consistent with the Souhegan Constitution and Mission Statement and to inform the community of its findings and recommendations.

The Committee would like to recognize the engagement, support and patience of the administration in answering numerous questions over several drafts of the budget and participating in the SAFC Committee meetings. Special recognition goes to Amy Facey, Business Administrator, Michael Berry, Superintendent, Steve Chamberlain, Assistant Superintendent as well as the SAU office, Souhegan principal, Dana Curran, and department heads within Souhegan - all of whom were forthcoming in answering the multitude of questions. And we would be remiss in not acknowledging the help and support provided by Chelsea Borden for managing the coordination and scheduling of meetings which helped keep our process running smoothly. Finally, we further acknowledge the role of the Souhegan Cooperative School Board who engaged with this Committee in a collegial and cooperative manner.

The process began a bit earlier this year which gave us all adequate time to do our work. We also were presented over time with three drafts that were altered as the process went on. In addition, the Souhegan School Board formally included a time on each agenda for the Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee to comment or report. We also found it especially helpful to have the Business Administrator and representatives from the Board attend each of our meetings so that questions could be answered on the spot. The Souhegan Board also provided us an in-depth report on the details of the proposed teacher contract so we could make an informed vote.

Members of the Advisory Finance Committee were paired with the board members to meet with the department heads to dig deeply into each function of the budget. Each of our members prepared a detailed report on their findings. These detailed reports can be found on the SAU website under Committees and Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee.

https://www.sau39.org/committees/finance_committees/souhegan_cooperative_school_district-advisory

The Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee (SAFC) worked diligently to scrutinize the proposed budget line by line but also looked beyond the surface to understand any new initiatives. We were committed to not only vet the proposed budget numbers but also to look deeper at what those dollars were being spent on and whether they were an efficient use of tax dollars toward improving teaching and learning.

We found the year over year budget increase of 1.2% to be minimal and justified and agreed unanimously that we could support the budget as a whole. The vote of support was 7 to 0. In addition, after carefully reviewing the Proposed Teacher/Support Staff Contract (PPC Agreement) and its tax impact, we all felt it was a well crafted and fair compromise that we could unanimously support. The vote to support was 7 to 0.

In addition, we unanimously voted to support each of the warrant articles being presented by the Board for the following reasons: 1) these articles meet the recommendations that have historically been made by the SAFC that the administration and Board create long term plans to meet the needs for upkeep and maintenance of the facilities as well as to start a fund to replace aging technology and expand our internal transportation system in order to save transportation costs and 2) the board has chosen to fund these items with the unassigned fund balance so as not to burden the taxpayers further. The additional warrant articles are as follows:

Article 4 – School Maintenance Fund

Article 5 – Turf Field Replacement Fund

Article 6 – Technology Fund

Article 7 – Vehicle Fund (small vans for transporting students)

The vote to support for each was 7 to 0.

In conclusion, what stands out this year was a respectful collegiality that continues between the Souhegan School Board and Souhegan Advisory Finance Committee that resulted in a final budget that reflects many of our recommendations and that we feel is something we can confidently recommend to the taxpayers for their support.

A more detailed reporting on our conclusions, observations, and recommendations follows below:

SAFC Final Conclusions, Observations, and Recommendations on the proposed SCSD FY25 budget:

- The budgeting process for Souhegan was slightly different this year in that the Superintendent asked everyone involved to use zero based budgeting, which requires starting from zero and building from the ground up to determine what you need vs. starting from last year's budget and making adjustments. The proposed FY25 Operating Budget of \$20,617,059 is a \$248,368 increase or a 1.2% increase from the current year budget. We felt the resulting year-over-year increase of 1.2% was reasonable and well justified.
- The major driver of the increase was a 21.8% increase the Health Insurance rate and a 4.7% increase in the Dental Insurance rate --- something over which Boards have no control.

The FY25 Budget addresses key priorities:

- Continues efforts to address the condition of the buildings, consistent with a long-term maintenance plan.
- A continued effort to plan ahead by asking the voters to support the use of surplus funds to fund the Turf Replacement Fund, the Technology Fund, and the new Vehicle Fund (which is designed to save transportation costs).

- We believe there has been better articulation of the SAU strategic direction that was incorporated into the budgeting process such that stakeholders can make the connection on how the proposed budget implements the longer-term objectives for the district.
 - The budgeting process this year improved upon connecting future programming goals with staffing requirements and qualifications (student population continues to be aligned with staffing needs).
 - The proposed operating budget supports the core objective to improve student performance through improved classroom instruction. The budget reflects the goals of the Board to give students additional instructional time and to continue to provide teachers the time, support, and feedback to provide high quality instruction.
 - Increased focus on teacher proficiency in subject areas.
 - Improved professional development programming for faculty.
 - Ensuring that teachers are fairly and objectively evaluated according to district policy.
 - A focus on staffing to improve reading proficiency and math support and a state graduation requirement for a writing course and a personal finance course.
- Changes of note:
 - Transportation costs increased significantly due to an increased demand for special education transportation services as a result of a jump in special education students coming from the Middle School to Souhegan.
 - More use of vans to transport an increased number of students choosing CTE (Career Technical Education) programs that are offered at neighboring high schools.
 - A reduction in Souhegan's portion of the SAU budget because of 1) an effort by the Superintendent to reorganize the SAU Office to save money and 2) based on enrollment numbers used to calculate each district's portion.
 - A thorough review of the Special Services Program was done in order to find areas for savings.

Comments on the Proposed PPC Agreement (Teacher/Support Staff Contract) – Article 3

It should be noted that staff at Souhegan are not part of a union. Instead, there is a Personnel Policy Committee made up of staff and Board representatives that negotiate policy changes when creating contractual agreements. We believe that the agreement negotiated between the Personnel Policy Committee and the Souhegan Board fairly addressed the following priorities:

- 1) The addition of instructional time
- 2) Attract and retain employees
- 3) Review and make adjustments to the salary schedule
- 4) Eliminate a more costly insurance plan and increase the employee share of the premium

The final result after thoughtful negotiations among the stakeholders was that teachers and support staff would receive a 3.3% increase each year of the three year agreement. In addition, the teachers will receive an additional .54% to their individual retirement savings account and support staff will receive an additional .27%. The Board and PPC agreed to add four instructional days and one professional development day over the term of this policy/agreement.

In conclusion, the SAFC supports the goals that the Souhegan Board has established to focus on high quality instructional time as a way of improving achievement and student success. The SAFC continues to support a high-level, multi-year forecast as critical in assessing the current year budget and informing voters on the adequacy of the current year budget. We continue to encourage the Board and Administration to survey all the stakeholders on a regular basis in order to identify areas for improvement.

Respectfully,

Jeanne Ludt, Chair 2023-2024 SAFC
January 2024

SAFC 23 – 24 Members

Jeanne Ludt – Chair (Amherst)
Christine Grayson – Vice Chair (Amherst)
Mark Cheney – Secretary (Amherst)
Howard Brown – Member (Mont Vernon)
Nicole Christensen – Member (Amherst)
Paul LaVertu – Member (Mont Vernon)
Mary Lou Mullens – Member (Amherst)

**Souhegan Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting Warrant
February 6, 2024 and March 12, 2024
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 Souhegan High School, 412 Boston Post Rd., Amherst, NH in said District on the 6th day of February 2024 at 6:00 p.m. This session shall consist of explanation, discussion, and debate of warrant articles numbered 2 through 7. 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. An amendment that changes the dollar amount of an appropriation in a warrant article shall not be deemed 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, 2024, for official ballot voting on warrant articles numbered 1 through 7. 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: Mont Vernon Village School from 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

IMPORTANT NOTE ON WARRANT ARTICLE NUMBERS: To avoid confusion caused by warrant articles with the same number, Souhegan Cooperative School District warrant articles are numbered one (1) through ten (10), Amherst School District warrant articles are numbered eleven (11) through nineteen (19), and Town of Amherst warrant articles are numbered twenty-one (21) and above.

Article 1. Election of Officers (voting by official ballot March 12, 2024)

To the following school district offices:

- a. To choose one (1) School Board Member from Amherst 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 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 twenty million six hundred seventeen thousand fifty nine dollars (\$20,617,059)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be twenty million three hundred sixty thousand seven hundred seventy three dollars (\$20,360,773), which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous

**Souhegan Cooperative School District
Annual Meeting Warrant
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Amherst and Mont Vernon, New Hampshire**

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 (7-0)

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

Estimated tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.26 per thousand for Amherst and \$0.69 per thousand for Mont Vernon.

Estimated tax impact of not passing this article is: \$0.17 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.*

Article 3.

Shall the Souhegan Cooperative School District vote to approve the cost items included in the agreement between the Souhegan Cooperative School Board and the professional and support staff of Souhegan High School which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at current staffing levels:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Estimated Increase</u>
2024-2025	\$439,838
2025-2026	\$432,555
2026-2027	\$439,305

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$439,838 for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be payable at current staffing levels? **Majority vote required.**

Recommended by the Souhegan Cooperative School Board (7-0)

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

Estimated new tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.15 per thousand for Amherst and \$0.21 per thousand for Mont Vernon.

Article 4.

Shall the Souhegan Cooperative School District raise and appropriate the sum of up to three hundred sixty five thousand dollars (\$365,000) to be added to the Souhegan School Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund previously established in March 2005? This sum to come from the June 30, 2024 unassigned fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2024. No amount to be raised from new taxation. **Majority vote required.**

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Recommended by the Souhegan Cooperative School Board (7-0)

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

Estimated new tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.00 per thousand for Amherst and \$0.00 per thousand for Mont Vernon.

Estimated new tax impact of not passing this article is: -\$0.13 per thousand for Amherst and -\$0.18 per thousand for Mont Vernon.

Article 5.

Shall the Souhegan Cooperative School District raise and appropriate the sum of up to seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000) to be added to the Souhegan Recreation Revolving Fund previously established in March 2016? This sum to come from the June 30, 2024 unassigned fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2024. No amount to be raised from new taxation.

Majority vote required.

Recommended by the Souhegan Cooperative School Board (7-0)

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

Estimated new tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.00 per thousand for Amherst and \$0.00 per thousand for Mont Vernon.

Estimated new tax impact of not passing this article is: -\$0.02 per thousand for Amherst and -\$0.03 per thousand for Mont Vernon.

Article 6.

Shall the Souhegan Cooperative School District raise and appropriate the sum of up to fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to be added to the Technology Capital Reserve Fund previously established in March 2023? This sum to come from the June 30, 2024 unassigned fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2024. No amount to be raised from new taxation.

Majority vote required.

Recommended by the Souhegan Cooperative School Board (7-0)

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

Estimated new tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.00 per thousand for Amherst and \$0.00 per thousand for Mont Vernon.

Estimated new tax impact of not passing this article is: -\$0.02 per thousand for Amherst and -\$0.02 per thousand for Mont Vernon.

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Article 7.

Shall the Souhegan Cooperative School District establish a Vehicle Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 198:20-c, V for the purpose of purchasing new vehicles, replacing existing vehicles, and for vehicle repairs and to raise and appropriate the sum of up to twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) to be placed in this fund? Further, to name the Souhegan Cooperative School Board as agents to expend from said fund. This sum to come from the June 30, 2024 unassigned fund balance (surplus) available for transfer on July 1, 2024. No amount to be raised from new taxation.

Majority vote required.

Recommended by the Souhegan Cooperative School Board (7-0)

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

Estimated new tax impact of passing this article is: \$0.00 per thousand for Amherst and \$0.00 per thousand for Mont Vernon.

Estimated new tax impact of not passing this article is: -\$0.01 per thousand for Amherst and -\$0.01 per thousand for Mont Vernon.

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Annual Meeting Warrant
February 6, 2024 and March 12, 2024
Amherst and Mont Vernon, New Hampshire

Given under our hands as said Amherst, New Hampshire, on the 28 day of January, 2024.

Stephanie Grund

Stephanie Grund, Chair

Christine Peters

Christine Peters, Vice Chair

Anna Goulet-Zimmerman

Anna Goulet-Zimmerman, Secretary

Sonny Daniels

Sonny Daniels

John Glover

John Glover

Stephen S. O'Keefe

Stephen O'Keefe

Dan Veilleux

Dan Veilleux

Signature Certificate

Reference number: ZVWKJ-ZMJXD-BMPSI-3GY5N

Signer	Timestamp	Signature
Christine Peters Email: cpeters@sau39.org Sent: 26 Jan 2024 16:29:13 UTC Viewed: 26 Jan 2024 16:33:10 UTC Signed: 26 Jan 2024 16:33:37 UTC Recipient Verification: ✓ Email verified 26 Jan 2024 16:33:10 UTC		 IP address: [Redacted] Location: [Redacted] United States
Stephanie Grund Email: sgrund@sau39.org Sent: 26 Jan 2024 16:29:13 UTC Viewed: 26 Jan 2024 16:38:53 UTC Signed: 26 Jan 2024 16:39:17 UTC Recipient Verification: ✓ Email verified 26 Jan 2024 16:38:53 UTC		 IP address: [Redacted] Location: [Redacted] United States
Dan Veilleux Email: dveilleux@sau39.org Sent: 26 Jan 2024 16:29:13 UTC Viewed: 26 Jan 2024 16:59:16 UTC Signed: 26 Jan 2024 16:59:33 UTC Recipient Verification: ✓ Email verified 26 Jan 2024 16:59:16 UTC		 IP address: [Redacted] Location: [Redacted] United States

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Anna Goulet-Zimmerman Email: agoulet-zimmerman@sau39.org Sent: 26 Jan 2024 16:29:13 UTC Viewed: 26 Jan 2024 17:03:14 UTC Signed: 26 Jan 2024 17:03:45 UTC Recipient Verification: ✓ Email verified 26 Jan 2024 17:03:14 UTC		 IP address: [REDACTED] Location: [REDACTED] United States
Stephen O'Keefe Email: sokeefe@sau39.org Sent: 26 Jan 2024 16:29:13 UTC Viewed: 26 Jan 2024 17:14:42 UTC Signed: 26 Jan 2024 17:15:15 UTC Recipient Verification: ✓ Email verified 26 Jan 2024 17:14:42 UTC		 IP address: [REDACTED] Location: [REDACTED] United States

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