

**Souhegan Cooperative High School Advisory Finance Committee  
Report to the Souhegan Cooperative School District  
FY19 Budget Deliberative Session**

**Advisory Finance Committee Members: Sue Birchard, Ian Corcoran (MV), Lisa Eastland, Martin Goulet, Ellen Grudzien, Peg Harris, and Jane King (MV)**

**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 seventeen million, eight hundred and nine thousand, three hundred and one dollars (\$17,809,301)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be seventeen million , six hundred and fifty-two thousand, eight hundred and ninety-seven dollars (\$17,652,897), 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

**Advisory Finance Committee Vote: Supported 7-0**

**Commentary:** The Souhegan Finance Advisory Committee unanimously recommends the budget as presented. We believe this budget responsibly balances the Souhegan commitment to a high standard of education with the containment of costs impacting Amherst and Mont Vernon tax payers. We appreciate the transparency of the Souhegan officials who met with committee members as we reviewed and recommended changes and we applaud those officials for identifying savings for a total decrease of 2.0% over FY18.

**Article #3** "Shall the Souhegan Cooperative School District vote to approve the costs included in the agreement between the Souhegan Cooperative School Board and the professional and support staff of Souhegan Cooperative High School which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at current staffing levels: Fiscal Year Estimated Increase 2018-2019 \$225,671 2019-2020 \$168,053 and further to raise and appropriate the sum two hundred and twenty five thousand, six hundred and seventy-one dollars (\$225,671) for the 2018-2019 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those that would be paid at current staffing levels?" Majority vote required.

**AFC Vote: Supported 7-0**

**Commentary:** When taking into consideration the varying levels of pay, the AFC realized, for many teachers, this raise will be below the national inflation level. In the future, we do strongly recommend the SCSB research comparative, like-for-like pay scales for SHS and other NH teaching professionals to better evaluate future salary increase proposals.

**Article #4**

Shall the Souhegan Cooperative School District raise and appropriate one hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) for architectural and engineering fees to upgrade the learning environment and to increase the energy efficiency at Souhegan High School including the HVAC systems, lighting, building finishes, security and classroom design?" Majority vote required.

**AFC Vote: Supported Unanimously 7-0**

**Commentary:** The AFC recognizes there are many aspects of an education that lie outside the purview of teaching. Included in this is the condition of the classrooms, in terms of air quality, environment, and design. We find it to be prudent to receive a well-thought out blueprint to use moving forward so we can spend our money judiciously and effectively.