

To support and engage an individual's unique gifts, passions and intentions.

Souhegan High School

Community Council By-Laws

Article I - Name

The name of this organization shall be the Souhegan High School Community Council.

Article II - Purpose

The purpose of the Community Council is to govern all school affairs, consistent with Souhegan Cooperative School Board policy, state policy, and administrative regulations established with the Superintendent of Schools. The Community Council shall serve as a link between the students and faculty/staff of Souhegan High School; the Souhegan Cooperative School Board; and the communities of Amherst and Mont Vernon.

Article III – Authority

The authority of the Community Council is derived from and delegated by the Souhegan Cooperative School Board. The Community Council shall operate under the guidelines set forth in the Community Council By-Laws. The Community Council is entitled to act on and make decisions and create procedures on issues of importance to the Souhegan community. If the Community Council disagrees with a decision made by any of the parties listed in Article II, the Community Council has the right to discuss the decision with that party.

Article IV – Membership

The Community Council shall consist of forty-seven (47) voting members and 1 non-voting member (the Moderator). The term of membership for Sophomore, Junior, and Senior grade representatives will be from the last day of school the year they are elected, to the last day of school the following year. The term for At-Large and Freshmen grade representatives will be from the time of their election in the Fall to the last day of school that year. The term for Community Members and Faculty representatives will be from the time of their Fall election to the time of elections for those positions in the following year. The term for the new moderator shall be determined by the existing Executive Council when they set the calendar. Adults on the Community Council shall serve as associate members and therefore shall not be able to run for Community Council offices (Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Communicator). The breakdown of the Community Council positions is as follows:

Ninth Grade Representatives 5

Tenth Grade Representatives 5

Eleventh Grade Representatives 5

Twelfth Grade Representatives 5

Faculty/Staff Representatives 10 (CC advisor is included and automatically a member)

Dean of Students' Seat 1

Community Representatives 5 (Town representation to closely reflect school population)

School Board Member 1

At-Large Representatives 10 (Students, faculty/staff, and/or members of the community)

- A. Candidates for Grade Representative must obtain twenty-five signatures from the corresponding grade. Candidates who do so successfully shall be given a reasonable amount of time to campaign. An assembly shall be held for each grade where each candidate shall be introduced and will be asked questions by the meeting facilitator at the discretion of the executive council. It will be left to the executive council to decide whether questions should be previewed by the candidates. Candidates shall give a brief speech, and grade members shall vote on Election Days. Elections shall take place over a two day period. The five candidates in each of the four grades who receive the most votes shall be awarded Grade Representative positions. If a newly elected Representative cannot serve, the candidate who received the next highest amount of votes will be the grade representative. The election process shall be reviewed periodically. The names of the candidates will be placed on a ballot along with a blank space for write-in candidates. Write-in candidates can win the class election. If they choose not to accept, the person with the next highest number of votes will be offered the position.
- B. Candidates for At-Large Representative must submit an application to the Community Council the Friday after the Freshmen elections. Candidates must give a speech to the Community Council or, in the rare event a candidate cannot attend, give a written statement to be read by a representative. Alternatively, they may provide a recording of their speech to be played in front of the council. Candidates are then subject to questioning by the Council. Before the voting takes place the Council will discuss the candidates. The Community Council will then vote. At-large members may be students, faculty/staff, and/or members of the Souhegan, Amherst, and/or Mont Vernon communities. The ten candidates who receive the most votes shall be awarded At-Large Representative positions. Executive positions may only be held by those Council members who have already been elected to Council for the following school year and therefore cannot obtain an at-large position, with the exception of School Board

Representative.

- C. The School Board Member position shall be held by a current Souhegan Cooperative School Board member and shall be selected in a manner that is determined by the Souhegan Cooperative School Board.
- D. Candidates for Community Representative must submit a letter of interest to the Souhegan Cooperative School Board. The Souhegan Cooperative School Board shall select five Community Representatives. Amherst versus Mont Vernon representation amongst Community Representatives shall closely reflect the student population of Souhegan High School. When a vacancy occurs, it shall be posted on the school website and in local newspapers. Two Community members shall serve a one-year term that is renewable upon re-election by the Souhegan Cooperative School board. Three Community members shall serve a two-year term that is renewable upon re-election by the Souhegan Cooperative School Board
- E. Candidates for Faculty/Staff Representatives shall declare their intent to run for election by submitting their names to the Community Council advisor(s) in the fall. Candidates will be voted upon by the full faculty and those with the highest number of votes shall be elected to a one year term.
- F. All elections/selections shall take place in the spring of each school year, with the exceptions of Ninth Grade Representative, At-Large Representative, School Board Representative and Faculty elections which shall take place in the Fall of each school year.

Article V – Removals, Vacancies, and Attendance

- A. Community Council member may be removed from the Community Council for the following reasons:
 - 1. An unacceptable number of absences. All Community Council members must abide by the Attendance Policy. [See Article V - E]
 - 2. Unacceptable conduct (conduct that is not in keeping with the standards of the Souhegan community).

3. Not fulfilling a job for which that Community Council member is responsible.
- B. If a member of Community Council exceeds the amount of unexcused absences allowed, as written in section E, or is not fulfilling a job for which that member is responsible, the Executive Council shall have a discussion with the Community Council member and determine whether the Community Council member in question will remain on Council. If a Community Council member is found to have engaged in unacceptable conduct, the Dean of Students shall decide if a consequence of this behavior is removal from Community Council. Either decision can be appealed to the Community Review Board if the student chooses.
- C. An Executive Council member may be removed from the Executive Council for the following reasons:
1. An unacceptable number of absences from Executive Council meetings.
 2. Unacceptable conduct (conduct that is not in keeping with the standards of the Souhegan community).
 3. Not fulfilling a job for which that Executive Council member is responsible.
 4. A petition by a Community Council member can be submitted to the Executive Council with the support of at least 10 other Community Council members requesting discussion for removal. The Executive Member in question will be suspended from all duties related to Community Council. There will be two Community Council discussions regarding the petition for removal. The Executive member in question will be absent from the first meeting but present for the second in order to respond to the petitioners. If removed from Executive Council by a 2/3 vote they will retain their original seat on Community Council. A replacement for that position will be voted on by the Community Council.
- D. In the event that a Community Council member must be removed, that Community Council member shall be replaced by the candidate with the next highest number of votes for that respective position. If no such candidate exists, a special election will be held for that position following the procedures put forth in Article IV. If the removed Community Council member is a student, Student Services shall be notified, and that student shall not be allowed to put Community Council (for the year of removal) on their transcript, resume for college, or any other type of award/recognition.
- E. A Community Council member who earns two unexcused absences within one semester

shall receive a warning from the Executive Council. A Community Council member who earns three unexcused absences within one semester may be removed from the Community Council. This also applies to students who have five absences in a row, excused, or unexcused. An unexcused absence is one that has not been reported to the Moderator or Clerk prior to the missed meeting. In the event of an emergency, an unexcused absence may be excused after the missed meeting with a simple majority vote by the Executive Council.

Article VI – Executive Council

Members of the Executive Council shall serve a one-year term. Nomination and election of Moderator shall take place prior to grade representative elections in the spring. Nominations and elections for Clerk, Treasurer, Communicator, Student Activities Committee Coordinator and Vice Coordinator shall take place after the grade representative elections in the spring. Their term will conclude at the end of the following school year. Executive positions with the exception of moderator and School Board Representative may only be held by those council members who have already been elected to Council for the following school year, and multiple positions cannot be held by one person. Newly elected Community Council members are eligible for these positions; however the current Council shall nominate and vote. Nomination and election for the remaining Executive Council members shall be held in the fall, after At-Large elections. Their term will conclude at the end of the current school year. If positions cannot be filled in the spring, elections will be held the following fall. A school-wide election for School Board Representative shall be held in the fall. The winning candidate must acquire a simple majority vote of the student body. The School Board Representative's term will conclude one day prior to the graduation ceremony in the spring (RSA 194:23-f)."

A. The Executive Council shall consist of a:

Moderator
Clerk
Treasurer
School Board Representative
Communicator
Extra Executive Student Representative
Dean of Students
Extra Executive Faculty/Staff Representative
Student Activities Committee Coordinator
Vice Student Activities Committee Coordinator

Community Council Advisor(s)

B. The Executive Council shall meet prior to Community Council meetings in order to conduct all administrative duties including but not limited to: setting the agenda, deciding which committees shall be formed, continued, or disbanded, establishing the Community Council's calendar for the year and more.

C. Members of the Executive Council shall participate in all Community Council meetings and serve on Committees.

D. The Executive Council shall have the right to make emergency decisions on issues that require a decision before a Community Council meeting is able to be called. The Moderator, as in Community Council meetings, shall not have a vote. In the event of a tie, the moderator shall vote to break the tie.

Article VII– Moderator

A. A Moderator shall be elected by the Community Council for the purpose of running all meetings, planning the agendas for all meetings, and interpreting the Community Council By-Laws. The Moderator shall also be a member of the Executive Council.

B. The Moderator shall serve a one-year term and shall be a student member. Candidates for Moderator must first be nominated by another Community Council member. Candidates must have been members of the Community Council for at least one year (prior to the term for which they are running) in order to be eligible for Moderator. Candidates must give a speech to the Community Council or, in the rare event a candidate cannot attend, give a written statement to be read by a representative. Alternatively, they may provide a recording of their speech to be played in front of the council. The Community Council shall vote for the Moderator prior to the Community Council elections in the Spring.

C. The Moderator shall be a non-voting member. The Moderator shall vote only in the event of a tie, in which case the Moderator shall vote to break the tie.

D. In the event of a question concerning the Moderator's interpretation of the Community Council By-Laws, a motion may be made to the Community Council to vote for a review. If the vote for a review passes with a simple majority, the question shall be brought to the full Community Council for review. A discussion will follow with Community Council and a vote will be taken on the interpretation. The clerk will preside during the discussion and vote.

E. If a proposal is brought forth by the Moderator, the Moderator shall not preside during those discussions. The Clerk shall replace the Moderator for those proceedings. If the Clerk is absent the Treasurer will preside.

F. In the event that the Moderator is absent or presenting a proposal, then the acting Moderator

shall not have a vote. If the Moderator is not presiding then they will have a vote.

Article VIII – Clerk

A. The Clerk shall be elected by the Community Council for the purpose of taking minutes and recording attendance at all meetings. The Clerk shall also be a member of the Executive Council.

B. The Clerk shall serve a one-year term and shall be a student member of the Community Council. Candidates for Clerk must first be nominated by another Community Council member. Candidates must give a speech to the Community Council or, in the rare event a candidate cannot attend, give a written statement to be read by a representative. Alternatively, they may provide a recording of their speech to be played in front of the council. The Community Council shall vote for the Clerk after the Community Council elections in the spring. Newly elected members are eligible to run for Clerk, however the current Council will nominate and vote.

C. The Clerk shall forward the minutes of all meetings to all Community Council and Souhegan Cooperative School Board members, Souhegan Administration, and the Superintendent of Schools.

D. The Clerk shall maintain Community Council records.

Article IX– Treasurer

A. The Treasurer shall be elected by the Community Council for the purpose of maintaining and reporting at each meeting the finances of the Community Council. The Treasurer shall serve on the Executive Council and will chair the Funds Committee.

B. The Community Council is a non-profit organization and shall raise and distribute funds only to programs and items related solely to the school and its functions.

C. The Treasurer shall serve a one-year term and shall be a student member of the Community Council. Candidates for Treasurer must first be nominated by another Community Council member. Candidates must give a speech to the Community Council or, in the rare event a candidate cannot attend, give a written statement to be read by a representative. Alternatively, they may provide a recording of their speech to be played in front of the council. The Community Council shall vote for the Treasurer after the Community Council elections in the spring. Newly elected members are eligible to run for Treasurer, however, the current Council will nominate and vote.

Article X – School Board Representative

A. The School Board Representative shall be elected by a simple majority vote of the student body to serve as a non-voting member of the Souhegan Cooperative School Board and a member of the Community Council. If the student that is elected School Board Representative is not already a member of Community Council, the Community Council shall elect 9 At-Large

Representatives that fall, rather than 10.

B. The School Board Representative shall serve on Executive Council. Candidates for School Board Representative must first be nominated by 25 students. Candidates shall give a speech to the the student body or, in the rare event a candidate cannot attend, give a written statement to be read by a representative. Alternatively, they may provide a recording of their speech to be played in front of the student body. There is no grade level restriction;

C. The School Board Representative shall attend all meetings of the Souhegan Cooperative School Board, Executive Council, and the Community Council. The role of the School Board Representative is to ensure communication between both parties. The School Board Representative shall be present for the duration of the School Board meeting. In the event that the School Board Representative is unable to attend it will be their responsibility to find a replacement from the Community Council student membership.

Article XI – Communicator

A. One Communicator shall be elected by the Council for the purpose of communicating all Community Council business to the communities of Souhegan High School, Amherst, and Mont Vernon. The Communicator shall serve a one-year term and shall be a student member of the Community Council. The Communicator shall serve on the Executive Council, and will chair the Communications Committee. Candidates for Communicator must first be nominated by another Community Council member. Candidates must give a speech to the Community Council or, in the rare event a candidate cannot attend, give a written statement to be read by a representative. Alternatively, they may provide a recording of their speech to be played in front of the council. The Community Council shall vote for the Communicator in the spring following the Community Council elections in the spring.

B. The Communicator shall share meeting minutes and advertise any upcoming Community Council events including location, time, and agenda. The Communicator shall work closely with the Clerk to disseminate Community Council business and activities.

C. The communicators shall coordinate with the grade representatives in establishing their agenda for the class forums. The communicators shall attend the grade level class forums established by the grade representatives.

Article XII – Student Activities Committee Coordinator and Vice Coordinator

A. One Student Activities Committee (SAC) Coordinator and Vice Coordinator shall be elected by the Council for the purpose of planning activities at Souhegan High School. The SAC Coordinator and Vice Coordinator (hereafter referred to as “The Coordinators”) shall serve a one-year term and shall be student members of the Community Council. The Coordinators shall serve on the Executive Council, and will chair the Student Activities Committee. Candidates for

the Coordinators must first be nominated by another Community Council member. Candidates must give a speech to the Community Council or, in the rare event a candidate cannot attend, give a written statement to be read by a representative. Alternatively, they may provide a recording of their speech to be played in front of the council. The Community Council shall vote for the Coordinators in the spring following the Community Council elections. The first place winner will be the SAC Coordinator, and the runner up will be the Vice Coordinator.

B. The Coordinators will chair the Student Activities Committee, which is open to any student at Souhegan High School. The Coordinators are responsible for recruiting students to join the SAC, setting meeting times, locations, and agendas for these meetings, and facilitating these meetings.

C. The Coordinators will plan events and other activities that are enriching for the Souhegan community

D. In the event that Coordinators disagree with each other, the final decision will be made by the SAC Coordinator.

Article XIII – Meetings

A. The Community Council shall meet weekly. The time and location of the meetings shall be communicated to the public. Additional meetings or cancellations are left to the discretion of the Moderator.

B. Meetings shall be run according to the Procedure for Community Council Discussions. [See Article XVIII].

C. All Community Council meetings are open to the public; however, only Community Council members are allowed to vote and/or make motions.

D. All proposals must be submitted in writing to the Executive Council for consideration prior to being added to the agenda.

E. The meeting shall be run, in the order of old business before new business, by an agenda established beforehand by the Executive Council. Anyone who wishes to add an item to the agenda must make a request to the Moderator. The Clerk shall publicly post an agenda for the meeting.

F. The minutes of all meetings shall be forwarded to all Community Council and Souhegan Cooperative School Board members, Souhegan Administration, and the Superintendent of Schools. Minutes shall be posted publicly.

G. While visitors are always welcome at the meetings of the Community Council their role may be limited to that of an observer by the moderator. Time permitting; an opportunity for new business and “Public Time” can be enabled at the conclusion of meetings.

H. In the event that the Moderator is not present at a meeting, a substitute Moderator will be appointed based on this order of succession:

1. Communicator
2. School Board Representative
3. Treasurer
4. Extra Executive Student Representative
5. Student Activities Committee Coordinator
6. Clerk

Article XIV – Voting

Voting shall take place in the following manner:

A. A simple majority of Community Council members ($\frac{1}{2}$ plus 1) must be present at the meeting.

B. A proposal must be discussed at a minimum of two meetings before voting may occur, and must be discussed at least 5 minutes during the second meeting to be motioned to vote. No Votes on proposal shall be taken after the proposed end time.

C. All votes shall be hand votes unless presented otherwise in the motion or deemed necessary by the Moderator.

D. In the event that an emergency vote needs to be taken, the issue may be discussed and voted on at the same meeting. Discretion for the use of an emergency vote is left to the Moderator who may confer with Executive Council members.

E. On all motions with exception of votes on proposals, the moderator may decide on sight that the majority is in favor/opposed by a show of hands with no formal count. If any member of council disagrees with the moderator, they may call for a formal vote on the motion to be counted

F. After a vote has been made by council on a proposal, those who represent the minority on the Community Council will have the option to draft a minority report so that their opinions may still be heard by the School Board and the outside community. This minority report must be submitted to and approved by the Executive Council prior to the nearest school board meeting.

Article XV – Appeals

Appeals to Community Council decisions may be made in the following manner:

A. An appeal must be presented to a member of the executive council in writing within FIFTEEN calendar days of the minutes being posted on the SHS website. Any appeal must have a minimum of twenty-five signatures to be considered by the Community Council.

B. The Executive Council shall hear the appeal statement and decide within two weeks of receipt if a hearing before the Community Council is warranted. If so, the appeal shall be discussed by the Community Council according to the Procedure for Community Council Discussions [See Article XVIII] and a vote on the appeal shall be taken.

C. If the appealing party is dissatisfied with the Community Council's decision on the appeal, a further appeal may be made to the Souhegan Cooperative School Board using the process described in Parts A and B of Article XIII. Review by the Souhegan Cooperative School Board shall be the final method of appeal.

Article XVI – Committees

Committees shall be formed as needed by the Moderator and/or the Executive Council. Standing Committees shall be formed for annual or recurring events. Standing committees shall include, but are not limited to, the Communications Committee and the Funds Committee.

Article XVII – Amendments

Amendments to the Community Council By-Laws may be made at any time. Proposed amendments must be submitted in writing to the Executive Council for consideration prior to being discussed and voted on by the Community Council. A two-thirds majority is needed from the Community Council in order for amendments to pass.

Article XVIII – Class Forums

The Communicator and Grade Representatives on the Community Council are responsible for holding a Class Forum, for the purpose of gathering ideas, discussing issues, and expressing concerns from their respective class regarding our Community. The Communicator and Grade Representatives will be responsible for setting the agenda, and taking the minutes of the forum. The Grade Representatives shall deliver a summary of the forum to the full Community Council. The forums shall also enable the Communicator and Grade Representatives to report Community Council business to the Class.

Article XIX – Procedure for Community Council Discussions

A. A proposal is presented to the Community Council.

B. The floor shall be opened for clarifying questions. The Moderator or person serving as the Moderator for the meeting may institute a time limit on any discussion/question times. Clarifying questions shall be controlled by a speaker list. The Moderator shall call on speakers from the list.

C. When Clarifying questions are done, or when they are asked with reasonable infrequency, the floor shall then be opened for discussion. Discussion shall be controlled by the speaker list. The Moderator shall call on speakers from the list.

Possible outcomes from discussion:

- A motion is made and seconded to close discussion for the purpose of voting on the proposal. If the vote to close discussion fails, the floor shall be reopened for further discussion. If the vote to close discussion passes with a two-thirds majority, then there shall be a vote of the proposal. If the vote on the proposal passes with a simple majority, the proposal shall be enacted and the Community Council shall move on to the next item on the agenda. If the vote on the proposal fails, the proposal shall not be enacted and the Community Council shall move on to the next item on the agenda.

- During discussion of any proposal, amendments can be made through the following process. The amendment must be written and handed to the clerk/moderator. An amendment to the proposal is proposed and seconded. The floor shall then be opened for clarifying questions about the amendment only. Clarifying questions shall be controlled by a new speaker list. The Moderator shall call on speakers from the list. When clarifying questions are done, or when they are asked with reasonable infrequency, the floor shall then be opened for discussion on the amendment only. Discussion shall be controlled by the speaker list. The Moderator shall call on speakers from the list. When a motion to close discussion (for the purpose of adding the amendment to the proposal) is made, there shall be a vote to close discussion that requires a two-thirds majority to pass. If the vote to close discussion passes, there shall be a vote to add the amendment to the proposal that requires a simple majority to pass. If the vote to add the amendment to the proposal passes, the amendment shall be added to the proposal, and the floor shall be opened for discussion on the amended proposal. If the vote to add the amendment fails, the floor shall be reopened for further discussion on the original proposal.

- During discussion of any proposal, a member of the community council may propose what they term a 'friendly amendment' to the proposal. These amendments do not substantially change the proposal. If it appears to the Moderator that an amendment is uncontroversial, the Moderator will ask if there is any objection to adopting the amendment. If no objection is made, the Moderator may declare the amendment adopted. If even one member objects, however, the amendment is subject to clarifying questions, discussion, and vote like any other amendment, regardless of

whether its proposer calls it ‘friendly’ and regardless of whether the maker of the original motion endorses its adoption.

- A motion to table discussion is made and seconded. There shall be a vote to table discussion that requires a two-thirds majority. If the vote to table discussion passes, the discussion shall be tabled. If the vote to table discussion does not pass, the floor shall be reopened for further discussion.

- The following Points may be made at any time if someone raises a hand and says:

“Point of Order”: This may be used if the person making the Point notices that someone is not following the guidelines set forth in the Community Council By-Laws.

“Point of Clarification”: This may be used if the person making the Point is confused about or does not understand any aspect of the current discussion.

“Point of Information”: This may be used if the person making the Point has new, specific information or facts relating directly to the current discussion.

ARTICLE XX- OTHER COUNCIL ELECTED POSITIONS

A) PTSA Liaison, Community Review Board, and Judiciary Board elections will take place in the fall following extra/faculty executive elections. The elections procedure for these positions will follow that of the by-laws established by these bodies.

B) Constitutional Interpretation Committee member election shall take place in the Spring alongside the Clerk, Treasurer, Communicator, and Student Activities Committee Coordinator and Vice Coordinator and School Board Representative elections.