

# The Southern Way

## SYCSD 2019-2020 Proposed Final Budget

*Changing the lives of our students ... one Warrior at a time!*



### Proposed Budget Approval – Summary

The Southern York County School District Board of Education approved a proposed \$57.9 million budget for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. The proposed budget includes an assumption of no increased state funding, \$1.5 million use of fund balance, and we are pleased to report does not include a real estate tax increase.

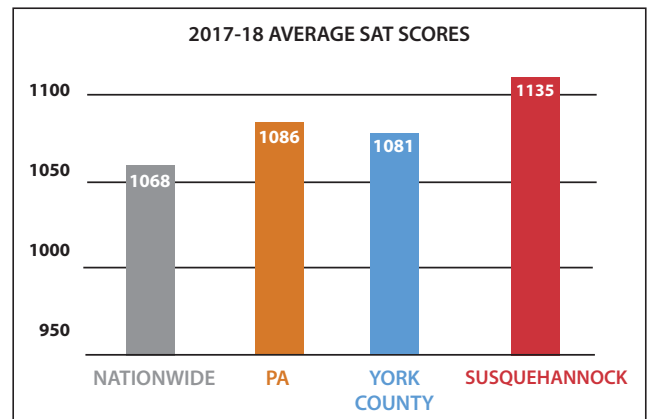
The proposed budget approved by the Board of Education on April 18, 2019, is based upon the priorities of providing an excellent educational program to prepare our students to be career or college and life ready while maintaining our outstanding facilities at a level our community supports. To meet these priorities, the budget includes restoration of several teaching positions, curriculum additions, long-range planning for technology device replacement, and a phase-in of debt service for building renovations.

Dr. Sandra Lemmon, Superintendent stated, “The Board and Administration worked collaboratively to prepare a budget, which will provide students with the highest quality education and we are pleased to report there is no proposed tax increase for 2019-2020.”

### Fiscal Responsibility – Return on Investment

A primary responsibility of the School Board and Administration is to ensure that public funds are spent in a responsible and cost effective manner. The District’s cost effective operations show a high degree of accountability to our community, with the expectation of a high rate of return. We have an impressive rate of return, especially considering our low tax rate and high student achievement, in comparison to other York County

school districts. We pay careful attention to the proper use of all resources and implementation of the highest accounting and reporting standards. Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Sandra Lemmon stated, “We challenge our students by including passion, teamwork and collaboration, risk taking, problem solving, and student voice and choice in our daily school day. We are very proud of the accomplishments of our students including SAT scores that are above the state and York County average. These scores are a good indicator of the outstanding student learning opportunities from kindergarten through senior year.”

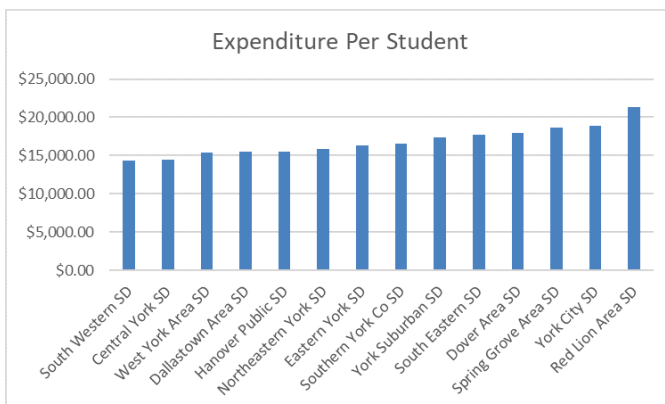


As Susquehannock students performed well beyond the national, state, and York County averages on the SAT, the District’s most recent cost per student is below the average cost per student in the County and the State.

### 2019-2020 Budget at a Glance

Funding of public education continues to be the most volatile issue in Pennsylvania politics, and we are affected just as any other school district across the Commonwealth. State and federal revenues fund less than one-third of the cost of education requiring the majority of the cost to be funded at the local level. However, for 2019-2020, we are able to balance the budget without a real estate tax increase.

Compared to other York County school districts in the Lincoln Intermediate Unit, our real estate tax rate is the lowest. Our “site-based” budgeting process and extensive process to prioritize needs continues to be an effective way to control our expenditures. This approach requires annual review of every budgeted expenditure.



There has been much discussion in recent years about property tax reform and the role of real estate taxes. It is important to note that school real estate taxes assessed in Southern York County School District go directly to the District to fund the education of the community's students.

| DISTRICT                     | MILLAGE |
|------------------------------|---------|
| York City                    | 33.7361 |
| Northeastern                 | 26.2500 |
| West York                    | 24.2238 |
| Eastern                      | 23.9800 |
| Dallastown                   | 23.6600 |
| York Suburban                | 23.1815 |
| Spring Grove                 | 23.0891 |
| Hanover                      | 22.6200 |
| Dover                        | 22.3730 |
| Red Lion                     | 22.2791 |
| South Eastern                | 22.2503 |
| Central                      | 19.9300 |
| South Western                | 19.8300 |
| Southern                     | 19.3900 |
| Southern 19-20 0% (Proposed) | 19.3900 |

### Revenues

As noted, the majority of the revenue is from local sources, specifically real estate taxes. Growth in the real estate tax base is estimated at 0.61%. There is also expected growth of approximately 2% in earned income tax revenue. Earnings on temporary investments are increased due to the rise in interest rates over the last few years. All other local revenue is basically unchanged for 2019-2020.

The Board and administration seriously consider the impact an increase in taxes has on its community members. While many districts adhere to a policy of raising taxes to the allowable index each year, that is not the policy at Southern. While there are still unfunded needs, it is understood that the tax burden must be factored into the decision. For the 2019-2020 school year, the District is able to continue to provide a high quality education without imposing a tax increase.

The budgeted amounts for state basic education subsidy, special education subsidy, and accountability grants are based upon the estimates for the 2018-2019 school year. While a state budget is not approved for 2019-2020, the Governor's estimates for Southern showed only minor increases. State retirement subsidy reflects a 4.76% increase. This is because the state pays 50% of the district's expense and this expense has increased as the rate increased from 33.43% of payroll to 34.29% of payroll.

Federal funding is budgeted at the allocations for 2018-2019, which is level funded.

### Expenditures

The 2019-2020 budgeted expenditures are \$739,937 or 1.29% higher than 2018-2019. The 2019-2020 budget focused on the restoration of necessary professional and support staff positions, restoration of programs and allocations district-wide, as well as state-mandated retirement rate increases, and increases in other purchased services. The District has seen a significant reduction in health insurance costs, which has allowed for the restoration of these needed items.

The budget priorities include:

1. Continue to build an outstanding educational program
2. Maintain overall teacher to student ratio
3. Maintain all educational programs, including co-curricular and extra-curricular activities
4. Continue to offer Advanced Placement educational programs for secondary students
5. Infuse technology into the educational program
6. Maintain outstanding physical plant and meet new safety code requirements
7. Restore staff and supplies/equipment where most needed

Based upon the budget priorities, changes were made to the budget including, restoring two professional staff positions, restoration of a full-time custodial position, and the addition of two personal assistants to meet individual student needs. With the addition of the one teaching position and a professional staff enrollment position, there will be 227 professional positions for 2019-2020 compared to 248 in 2009-10.

Other budget additions include lease costs for elementary technology devices, the implementation of a math program at Southern Middle School, a reading diagnostic and intervention program, increases to building and department budgets, funding for Susquehannock High School students to attend specific certification courses, payments for student academic placements, and increases in cyber charter school costs.

The budget also includes 0.20 mill for future debt service payments to be used to fund long term facility needs and updates. This will allow us to continue to maintain our beautiful facilities for the use of generations to come.

### Additional Information

As a partner with our families and community, and stewards of our citizens' tax dollars, the Board of Education and the administrative team of the Southern York Coun-

ty School District embrace the importance of open, thorough, and regular communication with our citizens. A detailed copy of the budget is on our website at [www.sycsd.org](http://www.sycsd.org). Please contact the School District at 717-235-4811, extension 7278 or [susan.green@sycsd.org](mailto:susan.green@sycsd.org) if you have any questions, concerns, or would like additional information related to the budget.

### Excellence In and Outside the Classroom

Learning is a lifelong process that includes not only the intellectual but also the social, emotional, cultural, and physical development of the learner. For an amazing list of student accomplishments, please visit the District website at [www.sycsd.org](http://www.sycsd.org) to view the District Annual Report.

### SYCSD Calendar

- May 7..SYCSD Elementary School Board Recognition Night at SHS 7:00 p.m.
- May 8.....SMS Orchestra Concert 7:00 p.m.
- May 8....SYCSD Art & Technology Fair at SHS 5:00 p.m.
- May 9.....Grade 6 Band & Orchestra Concert 7:00 p.m.
- May 11.....SHS Percussion Festival 6:00 p.m.
- May 13-24 ..... Keystone Exams at SHS
- May 13.....FES Spring Concert 7:00 p.m.
- May 14.....ShES Curriculum Fair 6:00 p.m.
- May 15....SYCSD Foundation Scholarship Awards Program 6:30 p.m.
- May 16.....SMS Spring Concert 7:00 p.m.
- May 17.....6th Grade Party at SMS 4:00 p.m.
- May 20.....FES Field Day
- May 21.....Elementary Band & Orchestra Concert at SHS 7:00 p.m.
- May 22.....ShES Field Day
- May 22.....SMS Band Concert 7:00 p.m.
- May 23.....School Board Meeting 7:00 p.m.
- May 24.....SES Field Day
- May 24..SMS 8th Grade Formal Dance 7:00 p.m.
- May 27.....Holiday - Schools Closed
- May 31.....School in Session Full Day, grades K-12
- May 31.....Commencement 7:00 p.m.
- June 3, 4, & 5.....School in Session grades K-11
- June 5 ..... Early Dismissal, Last Day of School K-11