

**Bamberg County School District**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Bamberg County School District Office**  
**January 8, 2024**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**Members present:** Board Chair Janeth Walker, Vice Chair John L. Hiers, Secretary Tonie A. Holman, Trustee Gwendolyn D. Bamberg, Trustee Beverly Bonaparte, Trustee Naomi Eckels, Trustee Cynthia “Cindy” F. Hurst, and Trustee Blossom Thompson (Via Google Meet)

**Absent:** Trustee Harriet Coker.

1. **Call meeting to order:** Board Chair Janeth Walker called the meeting to order.

**Notice to Media:** In accordance with the S. C. Code of Laws of 1976, as amended, Section 30-4-80(E), The Times and Democrat Newspaper, The Bamberg County Leader, WIIZ 97.9 FM, WBSC-LP 102.3 FM, and the Bamberg County School District website have been notified of the time, date, place and agenda of this meeting.

2. **Pledge of Allegiance/Moment of Silence**  
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited and a moment of silence was observed.
3. **Approval of Agenda**  
**Trustee Cynthia Hurst moved and Secretary Tonie Holman seconded to approve the agenda as presented.** The motion passed 8-0.
4. **Approval of Minutes for December 4, 2023**  
**Trustee Beverly Bonaparte moved and Secretary Tonie Holman seconded to accept the December 4, 2023 meeting minutes as presented.** The motion passed 8-0.
5. **Bamberg County School District FY 2022-2023 Audit – Neal Crider, McGregor & Company, L.L.P.**  
Mr. Neal Crider, auditor, noted the District received a “clean opinion” on the financial statements. There were no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies related to internal control over financial reporting. Mr. Crider stated for fiscal year 2022, the District met the criteria for qualifying as a low risk auditee which reflects the good job the District has done with its internal controls. Mr. Crider advised that this allows the auditors to put more reliance on the District’s internal controls over financial reporting and compliance and reduce the amount of testing over major programs. However, there was one compliance finding with CDL post-accident and alcohol testing. Mr. Crider stated the finding has been addressed to prevent further findings in the future.

Mr. Crider advised both programs, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and Elementary and Secondary Schools Emergency Relief (ESSER), were tested and were issued a “clean opinion” on compliance. There were no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies related to internal control over financial reporting and no major compliance findings on the major programs tested.

Mr. Crider went over the financial analysis for the district and advised they assisted with the consolidation of the two prior districts' ending balance sheets by proposing a journal entry to form the beginning balance sheet for the new consolidated district. For FY 2023, the overall district brought in a grand total of \$39,630,061.00 in revenues and spent \$36,855,743.00, leaving an excess of \$2,774,318.00.

The General Fund finished with an increase in Fund Balance of \$889,681.00 which brings the total accumulated general fund balance to \$8,934,246.00. Mr. Crider states the district has a healthy fund balance.

The total assets totaled \$132,581,078.00, most of which was capital assets, cash and receivables. Total liabilities and deferred inflows totaled \$151,362,000.00, most of which is long term debt, net pension liability, and net post-employment benefits. The residual net position has a deficit of \$18,780,922.00 which is primarily the result of having to book the net pension liability and post-employment liability, which sends government entities into this deficit.

Overall, the District had another solid year.

6. **2024 School Board Recognition – Review of the Ethical Principles**

The board was presented with the South Carolina School Board Association's 2024 Ethical Principles for review. Each Board member took their turn and shared in the reading of the ethical principles, followed by the signing of the 2024 Ethical Principles poster to reiterate their pledge as a school board member.

7. **School Reports: Mandy Edwards, Denise Miller, Jordan Smith, Rhonda Ray, Patricia Moultrie-Goldsmith, and Deonia Simmons. Hand-outs: School Reports (Reviewed by Principals/Assistant Principals)**

- Richard Carroll Elementary School – Interim Principal Mandy Edwards
- Bamberg-Ehrhardt Middle School – Principal Denise Miller
- Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School – Principal Jordan Smith
- Denmark-Olar Elementary School – Principal Rhonda Ray
- Denmark-Olar Middle School – Principal Patricia Moultrie-Goldsmith
- Denmark-Olar High School – Principal Patricia Moultrie-Goldsmith in the absence of Principal Deonia Simmons

8. **Truancy Report/Update: Denise Robinson-Crosby**

Truancy Officer Denise Robinson-Crosby reviewed the truancy report as presented for Bamberg County School District. [Board Packet Enclosure]

9. **Athletic Reports: Robert Williams**

Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School Principal Jordan Smith reviewed the athletic report as presented for Bamberg County School District in the absence of Athletic Director Robert Williams. [Board Packet Enclosure]

10. **Student/Staff Recognition and Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Brown noted the following:

- a) Dr. Brown recognized January as being SCSBA's Board Recognition Month with the theme being "In It to Win It". Dr. Brown expressed appreciation to the board members for their dedication and continued service.

Dr. Brown further recognized Trustee Blossom Thompson for serving 25 years as a school board member. Dr. Brown advised that all board members would be recognized for their achievements at SCSBA's Annual Convention in February.

- b) Dr. Brown continued with a summary of the enrollment data as of January 6, 2024, advising the total number of student enrollment across the district was 1,760.

11. **Request for Out of State/Overnight Trips:**

Richard Carroll Elementary School Safety Patrol – Youth Leadership Day/Carowinds – Charlotte, NC – April 12, 2024 (Jazmyn Medlin, Safety Patrol Advisor)

Following a review of the request for an out of state/overnight trip, **Vice Chair John Hiers moved and Secretary Tonie Holman seconded to approve the request from Richard Carroll Elementary School Safety Patrol Advisor, Jazmyn Medlin, for the RCES Safety Patrol to attend Youth Leadership Day/Carowinds in Charlotte, NC, April 12, 2024.** The motion passed 8-0. [Board Packet Enclosure]

12. **Monthly Financial Report**

Finance Director Devon Furr presented the Financial Report for Bamberg County School District for FY 2023-2024 as of December 2023, for review. [Board Packet Enclosures]

Ms. Furr gave brief updates on the construction projects. Ms. Furr stated the cosmetology building was moving along and should be completed by April 2024.

The board members commended Ms. Furr on having a good audit.

**Trustee Beverly Bonaparte moved and Secretary Tonie Holman seconded to accept the Financial Report for December 2023, as presented.** The motion passed 8-0.

13. **Visitors' Comments**

None.

14. **Executive Session**

**Board Chair Janeth Walker called for a motion to enter Executive Session. Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg moved and Secretary Tonie Holman seconded to enter Executive Session.** The motion carried 8-0.

Board Chair Janeth Walker noted that the Board would be moving into Executive Session to discuss Employment/Personnel: Personnel Recommendations for Hire, Personnel Recommendations for Resignation, Discussion of Release of Students, and Contractual Matters Regarding: Incidental to Potential Sale of Property.

Trustee Blossom Thompson ended her Google Meet attendance and exited the meeting.

**Open session: Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg moved and Trustee Naomi Eckels seconded for the Board to come out of Executive Session and return to the regular session of the meeting.** The motion carried 7-0.

15. **Action on Executive Session Items**

**Vice Chair John Hiers moved and Trustee Beverly Bonaparte seconded to approve Agenda Item 14 (a) (2) Personnel Recommendations for Resignation for employee a and Agenda Item 14 (b) Discussion of Release of Students for students a, b, and c.** The motion passed 7-0.

There was no action taken on Agenda Item 14 (a) (1) Personnel Recommendations for Hire, Agenda Item (a) (3) Discussion of Personnel Matters, and Agenda Item 14 (c) Contractual Matters Regarding: (1) Incidental to Potential Sale of Property as there were no recommendations at this time.

16. **Adjourn**

**Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg moved and Secretary Tonie Holman seconded to adjourn the meeting.** The motion passed 7-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Minutes approved:

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Janeth Walker, Board Chair

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Tonie A. Holman, Secretary