

**Bamberg County School District**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Bamberg County School District Office**  
**July 10, 2023**  
**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 Harriet Coker, Trustee Naomi Eckels, and Trustee Cynthia “Cindy” F. Hurst.

**Absent:** Trustee Blossom Thompson.

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 Harriet Coker moved and Secretary Tonie Holman seconded to approve the agenda as presented.** The motion passed 8-0.
4. **Approval of Minutes for June 12, 2023**  
**Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg moved and Secretary Tonie Holman seconded to accept the June 12, 2023 meeting minutes as presented.** The motion passed 8-0.
5. **Reading Buddy Program (Presented by Sharon Carter)**  
Ms. Sharon Carter presented the Reading Buddy Program, advising the program was being implemented in 42 of the 46 counties across South Carolina. Ms. Carter advised studies have shown participants of the program have shown an increase in reading comprehension. Ms. Carter informed the program is a volunteer, one-on-one program that focuses on 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students. Ms. Carter stated the program provides a mentor to an assigned student and will read to their student for at least 30 minutes a week.

Following the presentation, Board Chair Janeth Walker advised they would discuss the program with Superintendent Dottie Brown further and someone would be in touch regarding the District’s interest and possible participation in the program.

6. **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 Jordan Smith in the absence of Principal Denise Miller
- Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School – Principal Jordan Smith
- Denmark-Olar Elementary School – Principal Rhonda Ray
- Denmark-Olar Middle School – Principal Patricia Patricia Moultrie-Goldsmith
- Denmark-Olar High School – Principal Deonia Simmons.

7. **Athletic Reports: Robert Williams**

Athletic Director Robert Williams reviewed the athletic report as presented for Bamberg County School District. [Board Packet Enclosure]

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

In the absence of Superintendent Dottie Brown, Assistant Superintendent Dennis Ulmer noted the following:

- a) Mr. Ulmer updated the board with the most recent vacancy numbers from each school in the district. Mr. Ulmer advised several positions have been filled and interviews are still being conducted.
- b) Mr. Ulmer shared Ms. Latitia Dowling's gratitude to the Board for use of Denmark-Olar High School's football field for the youth camp held on June 17, 2023.
- c) Mr. Ulmer, on behalf of Dr. Brown, extended appreciation to the custodial staff throughout the district for their hard work in getting the buildings ready for the new school year. Mr. Ulmer further expressed Dr. Brown's appreciation to the administration, faculty, and staff for their patience in having to navigate around all of the construction being performed across the district.

9. **State Board Instructional Waiver Request**

Mr. Ulmer presented the board with a request to have an instructional waiver approved to submit to the SC Department of Education to allow for 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade certified teachers the ability to exceed the maximum 1,500 minutes per week set by the state department. Mr. Ulmer advised this would help with instructional and career readiness needs.

**After a brief discussion, Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg moved and Secretary Tonie Holman seconded to accept the Assistant Superintendent's recommendation to seek a waiver from the SC Department of Education to allow 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> classes to exceed the state required 1,500 minutes per week to meet instructional and career readiness needs, to include 2023-2024 school year as well as the 2024-2025 through 2028-2029 Strategic Renewal Plan five-year cycle. Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg further moved, seconded by Secretary Tonie Holman that, to facilitate the District's participation, the Board should authorize the Superintendent or his/her designee to request waivers from the State Board of Education with regards to South Carolina Regulation 43-205 (IV)(B)(3)(b): A teacher must not be permitted to teach more than 1,500 minutes per week, as presented. The motion passed 8-0.**

10. **Second Reading – BCSD Policies – Section G – Personnel**

a. GCCAC/GDCC – Paid Parental Leave

Assistant Superintendent Denny Ulmer presented policy GCCAC/GDCC for second reading.

**Vice Chair John Hiers moved and Trustee Beverly Bonaparte seconded to approve for second reading of Policy GCCAC/GDCC – Paid Parental Leave.** The motion passed 8-0. [Board Packet Enclosure]

11. **Approval of the 2023-2024 District Budget**

**Handout:** FY 2023-2024 Budget

Chief Financial Officer Devon Furr presented the 2023-2024 Budget for final reading. Ms. Furr advised after several public notices, the public hearing was held with no attendance.

**Trustee Beverly Bonaparte moved and Trustee Naomi Eckels seconded to approve for approval of the 2023-2024 Budget.** The motion passed 8-0.

12. **Visitors' Comments**

None.

13. **Executive Session**

**Board Chair Janeth Walker called for a motion to enter Executive Session. Trustee Cynthia Hurst moved and Trustee Harriet Coker 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, and Discussion of Release of Students.

**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 8-0.

14. **Action on Executive Session Items**

**Vice Chair John Hiers moved and Trustee Beverly Bonaparte seconded to approve Agenda Item 13 (a) (1) Personnel Recommendations for Hire for employees a, b, c, and d, Agenda Item 13 (a) (2) Personnel Recommendations for Resignations for employee a, and Agenda Item 13 (b) Discussion of Release of Students for students 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.** The motion passed 8-0.

15. **Adjourn**

**Trustee Harriet Coker moved and Trustee Naomi Eckels seconded to adjourn the meeting.** The motion passed 8-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:54 p.m.

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Minutes approved:

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Janeth Walker, Board Chair

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Tonie A. Holman, Secretary