

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

**Members present:** Board Chair Janeth Walker, Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte, Secretary Naomi Eckels, Trustee Gwendolyn D. Bamberg, Trustee Harriet Coker, Trustee John L. Hiers, Trustee Tonie A. Holman, 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 Cynthia Hurst moved and Trustee Harriet Coker seconded to approve the agenda as presented.** The motion passed 8-0.

4. **Approval of Minutes for May 29, 2024 and June 10, 2024**

**Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte moved and Trustee Cynthia Hurst seconded to accept the May 29, 2024 and June 10, 2024 meeting minutes as presented.** The motion passed 8-0.

5. **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)**

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

Assistant Superintendent Dennis Ulmer presented all school reports in the absence of principals.

6. **Athletic Reports: Robert Williams**

Assistant Superintendent Denny Ulmer reviewed the athletic report as presented for Bamberg County School District in the absence of Athletic Director Robert Williams.  
[Board Packet Enclosure]

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

Assistant Superintendent Ulmer noted the following:

- a) Mr. Ulmer presented a recent memo from the South Carolina Department of Education regarding the use of cell phones in school and anticipated policy development. Mr. Ulmer further advised updated cell phone policies would be forthcoming from the South Carolina School Boards Association.
- b) Mr. Ulmer advised other items to be presented under the Superintendent's report for this meeting would be presented by the district's legal counsel, Mr. Charles Boykin of Boykin & Davis, LLC.
- c) Mr. Charles Boykin briefly mentioned changes with Title IX Regulations that prohibit sex-based discrimination in school or any other education program that received funding from the federal government. Mr. Boykin advised the federal government has come down with its' own instructions regarding Title IX and, more specifically, the transgender question. In response, the General Assembly entered a proviso that states certain things will be prohibited and if a school district decides to do those things, they could lose up to 25% of their funding which can be contrary to what the federal government is saying. It is Mr. Boykin's advisement for the district to comply with any and all laws involving the school district. Mr. Boykin stated he would discuss the Title IX changes further in executive session.

8. **Second Reading – BCSD Policy Updates – Section B:**

- a. **BBB – Board Membership/Elections**
- b. **BBBE – Unexpired Term Fulfillment/Vacancies**

Assistant Superintendent Ulmer presented policies BBB and BBE for second reading.

After brief discussion, **Trustee John Hiers moved and Trustee Naomi Eckels seconded to approve for second reading of Policies BBB – Board Membership/Elections and BBBE – Unexpired Term Fulfillment/Vacancies.** The motion passed 8-0. [Board Packet Enclosures]

9. **Second Reading – BCSD Policy Updates/New Policies – Section E:**

- a. **EBCB – Safety Plans and Drills**
- b. **EBCB-R – Safety Plans and Drills**
- c. **EBCB-E(1) – Monthly Self-Assessment**
- d. **EBCB-E(2) – School Fire Drill Report**

Assistant Superintendent Ulmer presented policies EBCB, EBCB-R, EBCB-E(1), and EBCB-E(2) for second reading.

- a. After brief discussion, **Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte moved and Trustee Cynthia Hurst seconded to approve for second reading of Policies EBCB – Safety Plans and Drills, EBCB-R – Safety Plans and Drills, EBCB-E(1) – Monthly Self-Assessment, and EBCB-E(2) – School Fire Drill Report – Board Membership/Elections and BBBE**

– **Unexpired Term Fulfillment/Vacancies.** The motion passed 8-0. [Board Packet Enclosures]

10. **House Bill 5231 Regarding 2024 Election of Board of Trustees**

Mr. Charles Boykin elaborated further on House Bill 5231 regarding Bamberg County first formal election for Bamberg County School District, which will be handled by the local election commission. He advised the nine-member board would remain and that all terms end this year. He advised five seats are up for election this year (seats 1, 4, 5, 7, and 8) and four are up for appointment by the delegation legislation (seats 2, 3, 6, and 9).

Mr. Boykin explained the filing process would open at 12:00 p.m. on August 1<sup>st</sup> and would close at 12:00 p.m. on August 15<sup>th</sup>. A candidate must reside in the district for which they run. He further advised the election will take place on November 5, 2024 and one week after certification of the election, a member may be sworn in. Mr. Boykin advised anyone interested should contact the election commission directly about the process.

Mr. Boykin further advised Bamberg County School District does not have anything to do with the election other than paying for the Notice of Election advertisement. The district does not pay for candidate filing fees, signs, etc.

11. **Approval: 2024-2025 Budget**

**Handout:** FY 2024-2025 Budget

Chief Finance Officer Devon Furr advised the public hearing was held for the 2024-2025 with no attendees. Ms. Furr advised there were still no final numbers from the state and her budget was based on the number from the first budget work session. Ms. Furr advised amendments will have to be made once the final numbers come out.

After a review of the 2024-2025 Budget and the information presented, **Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg moved and Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte seconded to approve the 2024-2025 Budget with the understanding there will be future amendments.** 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 Legal Advice Regarding Title IX Based on Varying Guidance by Federal and State Entities, Employment/Personnel: Personnel Recommendations for Hire, Personnel Recommendations for Resignation, Discussion of Release of Students, and Discussion of Superintendent Evaluation.

**Open session: Trustee Cynthia Hurst moved and Trustee Harriet Coker 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**

**Trustee John Hiers moved and Trustee Cynthia Hurst seconded to approve Agenda Item 13 (b) (1) Personnel Recommendations for Hire for employees a, b, c, and d; Agenda Item 13 (b) (2) Personnel Recommendations for Resignation for employees a and b; and Agenda Item 13 (c) Discussion of Release of Students for students 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.** The motion passed 8-0.

There was no action taken on Agenda Item 13 (a) Legal Advice Regarding Title IX Based on Varying Guidance by Federal and State Entities and Agenda Item 13 (d) Discussion of Superintendent Evaluation.

15. **Adjourn**

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

The meeting was adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

Minutes approved:

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Janeth Walker, Board Chair

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Naomi Eckels, Secretary