

**Bamberg County School District
Board of Trustees Meeting
Bamberg County School District Office
July 7, 2025
6:00 p.m.**

Members present: Vice Chair Naomi Eckels, Secretary Cynthia “Cindy” F. Hurst, Trustee Gwendolyn D. Bamberg, Trustee Jeni Bunch, Trustee Harriet H. Coker (Via Zoom), Trustee David Corder, Trustee Tonya A. Sanders-Govan, and Trustee Cathy Ayer Griffin.

Absent: Board Chair Janeth Walker.

Others present: Charles Boykin and Anyah Barber, Legal Counsel with Boykin & Davis, LLC.

1. **Call meeting to order:** Vice Chair Naomi Eckels 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**

Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg seconded to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed 8-0.

4. **Approval of Minutes for May 28, 2025; May 29, 2025; June 2, 2025; June 11, 2025; and June 18, 2025.**

Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee David Corder seconded, to accept the May 28, 2025; May 29, 2025; June 2, 2025; and June 11, 2025 meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed 8-0.

Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Cathy Griffin seconded, to approve the June 18, 2025, meeting minutes with a revision to Item #3, changing the wording from “the board was unable to secure a candidate for the position” to “a final agreement was not established.”. The motion passed 8-0.

5. **School Reports: Mandy Edwards, Denise Miller, Jordan Smith, Dr. Shannon Johnson, Dr. Patricia Moultrie-Goldsmith, Dr. Deonia Simmons . Hand-outs: School Reports (Reviewed by Principals/Assistant Principals)**

- Richard Carroll Elementary School – Principal Mandy Edwards
- Bamberg-Ehrhardt Middle School – Principal Denise Miller
- Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School – Principal Jordan Smith
- Denmark-Olar Elementary School –Principal Dr. Shannon Johnson
- Denmark-Olar Middle School – Principal Dr. Patricia Moultrie-Goldsmith

- Denmark-Olar High School Principal – Principal Dr. Deonia Simmons

Interim Superintendent Denny R. Ulmer, Jr. presented all school reports in the absence of principals.

6. **Athletic Reports: Robert Williams**

Interim Superintendent Dennis R. Ulmer, Jr. 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**

Interim Superintendent noted the following:

- a) Mr. Ulmer announced that Bamberg County School District will hold its annual Substitute Workshop on July 8, 2025, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. at Richard Carroll Elementary School. Attendance at this workshop is mandatory for individuals seeking to be added to the district's substitute list for the 2025–2026 school year.
- b) Mr. Ulmer reported that the Denmark Police Department, Bamberg Police Department, and Bamberg County Sheriff's Office are partnering to sponsor the Bamberg County Community Back-to-School Supply Giveaway. The event will take place at two separate locations on July 26, 2025, from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.
- c) Mr. Ulmer further reported that the Bamberg-Barnwell Adult Education business office has been relocated to the District Office in Denmark. This move was necessitated by the requirement to vacate their previous facility by the end of June. In accordance with district obligations, appropriate space has been designated to support the continuation of their operations. At this time, the duration of this transition remains uncertain, as efforts to secure a suitable location in Barnwell have, thus far, been unsuccessful.
- d) Mr. Ulmer concluded by reporting that improvements and construction at the Bamberg District Office are nearing completion. District office staff have begun the relocation process, with the goal of having all personnel moved in prior to the start of the new school year.

8. **Approval: 2025-2026 Budget**

Chief Finance Officer Devon Furr reported that the 2025–2026 budget has not yet been finalized, as she requires more specific guidance from the board regarding the actions they wish to take to achieve a balanced budget. She noted that the motion made by the board at the previous meeting was too broad and lacked clear direction.

Ms. Furr also distributed a copy of the audit engagement letter from McGregor & Company, explaining that it is a standard form letter outlining the procedures for the upcoming audit.

No action was taken on the approval of the 2025–2026 budget. The board agreed to work collaboratively with Ms. Furr to finalize the budget.

9. **Visitors' Comments**

None.

10. **Executive Session**

Vice Chair Naomi Eckels called for a motion to enter Executive Session. Trustee David Corder moved, and Trustee Jeni Bunch seconded, the motion to enter Executive Session. The motion carried 8-0.

Vice Chair Naomi Eckels noted that the Board would be moving into Executive Session to discuss Employment/Personnel Matters Related to: Interim Superintendent, Personnel Recommendations for Hire, Personnel Recommendations for Resignation, and Matters Related to Release of Students.

Open session: Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg moved, and Secretary Cynthia Hurst seconded, the motion for the Board to come out of Executive Session and return to the regular session of the meeting. The motion carried 8-0.

11. **Action on Executive Session Items**

Trustee Jeni Bunch moved, and Trustee David Corder seconded, the motion under Agenda Item 10(a)(1) Interim Superintendent to confirm the appointment of Mr. Dennis R. Ulmer, Jr. as Interim Superintendent and to authorize the district's legal counsel to proceed with drafting a contract. The motion passed 8-0.

Trustee David Corder moved, and Secretary Cynthia Hurst seconded, the motion to accept and approve Agenda Item 10 (a)(2) Personnel Recommendations for Hire for employees a, b, c, d, e, and f. The motion passed 8-0.

With respect to Agenda Item 10 (a)(3) Personnel Recommendations for Resignation there was no action taken. However, Vice Chair Naomi Eckels formally acknowledged the resignation of Board Chair Janeth Walker, effective June 25, 2025, resulting in an immediate vacancy in both a board seat and the office of Board Chair, requiring action.

As a result, Interim Superintendent Dennis R. Ulmer, Jr. presided over the election of a new Board Chair by opening the floor to nominations.

Trustee Harriet Coker nominated Trustee David Corder for the position for Board Chair, and the nomination was seconded by Secretary Cynthia Hurst. No other nominations were made. Therefore, Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg seconded, the motion to elect Trustee David Corder as Board Chair. The motion passed 8-0.

Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Cathy Griffin seconded the motion to accept and approve Agenda Item 10(b) Matters Related to Release of Students for students 1 and 2. The motion passed 8-0.

12. **Adjourn**

Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Cathy Griffin seconded, the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 8-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:59 p.m.

Minutes approved:

David Corder, Board Chair

Cynthia Hurst, Secretary