

**Bamberg County School District**  
**Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**Bamberg County School District Office**  
**August 22, 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, Trustee Blossom Thompson, and Trustee Cynthia “Cindy” F. Hurst

**Absent:** None.

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 Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte seconded to approve the agenda as presented.** The motion passed 9-0.

4. **Approval of Minutes for July 8, 2024**

**Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte moved and Trustee Harriet Coker seconded to accept the July 8, 2024 meeting minutes as presented.** The motion passed 9-0.

5. **School Reports: Shannon Johnson, Patricia Moultrie-Goldsmith, Deonia Simmons, Mandy Edwards, Denise Miller, and Jordan Smith. 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 – Principal Mandy Edwards
- Bamberg-Ehrhardt Middle School – Principal Denise Miller
- Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School – Assistant Superintendent Denny Ulmer in the absence of Principal Jordan Smith

6. **Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School Presentation by Principal Jordan Smith**

Assistant Superintendent Denny Ulmer advised the presentation would not be held at the board meeting. Principal Jordan Smith presented Ms. Ladovia Washington with a certificate, tassel, program, and diploma cover for Jha’Mauri Montrell McCreary earlier in the week.

7. **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]

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

Superintendent Brown noted the following:

- a) Dr. Brown remembered Ms. Angela Pressey, Denmark-Olar High School Teacher Aide who passed unexpectedly. Dr. Brown asked everyone to please remember Ms. Pressey and her family in their prayers, as she will be greatly missed.
- b) Dr. Brown commended all Bamberg County School District employees for their hard work over the summer in getting the facilities prepared for the new school year and further thanked the School Improvement Councils and Parent Teacher Organizations for their roles and their continued support.
- c) Dr. Brown recognized Board Member Harriet Coker for reaching Level 2 status in SCSBA's Boardmanship Institute.
- d) Dr. Brown briefly discussed the South Carolina School Board Association's Accidental Death and Dismemberment Policies and advised if anyone had any beneficiary changes/updates to please advise.
- e) SCSBA Delegates for 2024 Delegate Assembly -- December 7, 2024  
Dr. Brown reviewed the SCSBA's Delegate Assembly information and requested a delegate be sent from Bamberg County School District. The board agreed to send Secretary Naomi Eckels as the delegate with Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte as the alternate.
- f) Dr. Brown advised district test scores are now unembargoed and that the principals would present their individual school results at the September meeting.

Dr. Brown summarized the district level scores:

- SC Ready ELA scores for Richard Carroll Elementary School and Denmark-Olar Elementary School increased in three out of six grade levels and showed a slight decrease in the other three grade levels.
- SC Ready math scores for both elementary schools showed an increase in four out of six grade levels.
- SC Pass Science scores for fourth and sixth grades were not being reported due to it being a field test year.
- End of Course testing at Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School showed a gain in three out of the four subject areas, but emphasized they still had some work to do.
- Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School's Career Readiness testing represented an increase in those students scoring a level 3 or higher.

- Bamberg-Ehrhardt Middle School's End of Course scores for eighth grade showed 100% passage rate with a C or higher.

g) Dr. Brown concluded with a summary of the enrollment data as of August 22, 2024 advising the total number of student enrollment across the district was up to 1,825.

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

- a. Denmark-Olar High School Juniors & Seniors – CSRA College Night – Augusta, GA – September 12, 2024 (Sherry Hughes, Guidance Counselor)

Following a review of the request for an out-of-state trip, **Trustee John Hiers moved and Secretary Naomi Eckels seconded to approve the request of guidance counselor, Sherry Hughes, for the Denmark-Olar High School Juniors & Seniors to attend the CSRA College Night in Augusta, GA, September 12, 2024.** The motion passed 9-0. [Board Packet Enclosure]

10. **Discussion of 2024-2025 Calendar (Action if Needed)**

Superintendent Brown introduced proposed calendar changes due to school closures as a result of Hurricane Debby. The new proposed calendar changes included changing October 10<sup>th</sup> and October 11<sup>th</sup> from fall break to make-up weather days and also making April 18<sup>th</sup>, Good Friday, the third make-up day. Dr. Brown also asked the board to consider having both Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School and Denmark-Olar High School's graduations on Friday, May 30, 2024, at the request of both high school principals. [Board Packet Enclosures]

After a brief review, **Trustee Harriet Coker moved and Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte seconded to approve and adopt the proposed changes to the 2024-2025 Calendar.** The motion passed 9-0.

11. **Monthly Financial Report**

Finance Director Devon Furr presented the Financial Report for Bamberg County School District for FY 2024-2025 as of July 2024, for review. [Board Packet Enclosures]

Ms. Furr made note of the audit engagement letter from McGregor & Company included in the board packet. Ms. Furr stated this is a standard form letter that goes into detail regarding the upcoming audit process.

Ms. Furr further advised the board that an insurance adjuster visited all locations in the district to inspect the damage caused by leaks from Hurricane Debby.

**Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte moved and Trustee Cynthia Hurst seconded to accept the Financial Report for July 2024, as presented.** The motion passed 9-0.

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 Blossom Thompson seconded to enter Executive Session.** The motion carried 9-0.

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 Discussion of Superintendent Evaluation.

**Open session: Vice Chair Beverly Bonaparte moved and Trustee Cynthia Hurst seconded for the Board to come out of Executive Session and return to the regular session of the meeting.** The motion carried 9-0.

14. **Action on Executive Session Items**

**Trustee John Hiers moved and Trustee Harriet Coker seconded to approve Agenda Item 13 (a) (1) Personnel Recommendations for Hire for employees a, b, c, d, e, and f; Agenda Item 13 (a) (2) Personnel Recommendations for Resignation for employee a; and Agenda Item 13 (b) Discussion of Release of Students for students 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12.** The motion passed 9-0.

There was no action taken on Agenda Item 13 (c) Discussion of Superintendent Evaluation.

15. **Adjourn**

**Trustee Cynthia Hurst moved and Trustee Harriet Coker seconded to adjourn the meeting.** The motion passed 9-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Minutes approved:

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Janeth Walker, Board Chair

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Naomi Eckels, Secretary