

**Bamberg County School District
Board of Trustees Special Called Meeting
Bamberg County School District Office
June 11, 2025
6:30 p.m.**

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

Absent: None.

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

Pre-Meeting Announcement: Prior to the official call to order, it was announced and discussed that Secretary Cynthia Hurst and Trustee Harriet Coker would be permitted to attend Executive Session virtually. This arrangement was agreed upon and documented for transparency and compliance with applicable governance protocols.

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**

Trustee David Corder moved, and Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg seconded to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed 8-0. [Board Chair Janeth Walker was not present at the time of the vote.]

[Board Chair Janeth Walker arrived at the meeting at 6:33 p.m.]

4. **Discussion: 2025-2026 Budget**

Handouts: Proposed 2025-2026 Budget, 2025-2026 Budget Work Session PowerPoint Presentation, and Excerpt from the South Carolina Department of Education’s Funding Manual

During the budget work session, Chief Financial Officer Devon Furr presented an overview of the proposed 2025–2026 budget. She began by providing a brief explanation of how to read financial account codes, with specific attention to the fund, function, object, and location codes. Ms. Furr also offered a high-level summary of the budget development process.

Key factors impacting the upcoming fiscal year's budget were highlighted, including:

- An increase of \$1,500 per cell in the teacher salary scale
- A 4% increase in employer insurance costs
- Challenges presented by the new state funding formula, which may not benefit all districts equally
- Elevated bus driver salaries, which continue to be a budgetary concern

Ms. Furr noted that she is currently in the process of consulting with other districts to explore strategies for addressing the bus driver compensation issue.

The Board was reminded that \$1.7 million from the district's fund balance was used in the current fiscal year. Additionally, the current proposed budget includes funding for a new Gifted & Talented teaching position.

Ms. Furr reviewed the district's revenue sources, noting that:

- 26% of revenues come from local sources
- 61% from state funding
- 1% from federal funding
- Remaining from other miscellaneous resources

She also advised that approximately 84% of the district's budget is allocated to salaries and benefits, in addition to operational and pupil-related expenditures.

5. **Executive Session**

Board Chair Janeth Walker called for a motion to enter Executive Session. Vice Chair Naomi Eckels moved, and Trustee Jeni Bunch seconded, the motion 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 Personnel – Budget 2025-2026 and Employment/Personnel Matters Related to Superintendent Search.

Open session: Trustee Jeni Bunch 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 9-0.

6. **Action on Executive Session Items**

There was no action taken on Agenda Item 5(a) Personnel – Budget 2025-2026.

Trustee David Corder moved, and Trustee Cathy Griffin seconded the motion to approve entering into contract negotiations with the superintendent candidate discussed in Executive Session, as referenced in Agenda Item 5(b) Employment/Personnel Matters Related to Superintendent Search. The motion passed 5-4. Voting in Favor: Trustees Bunch, Corder, Griffin, Coker, and Hurst. **Voting Against:** Board Chair Walker, Vice Chair Eckels, Trustees Bamberg, and Sanders-Govan.

7. **Adjourn**

Vice Chair Naomi Eckels moved, and Trustee David Corder seconded, the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 9-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:43 p.m.

Minutes approved:

Naomi Eckels, Vice Chair

Cynthia Hurst, Secretary