

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

Members present: Board Chair David Corder, Vice Chair Naomi Eckels, Secretary Cynthia “Cindy” F. Hurst, Trustee Gwendolyn D. Bamberg, Trustee Adrienne C. Blume, Trustee Jeni Bunch, Trustee Tonya A. Sanders-Govan, and Trustee Cathy Ayer Griffin.

Absent: Trustee Harriet H. Coker.

1. **Call meeting to order:** Board Chair David Corder 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 Cathy Griffin seconded to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed 8-0.
4. **Approval of Minutes for September 8, 2025; September 17, 2025; and September 25, 2025**
Vice Chair Naomi Eckels moved, and Trustee Cathy Griffin seconded, to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2025, September 17, 2025, and September 25, 2025 meetings as presented. During discussion, Trustee Tonya Sanders-Govan requested a minor correction on page 3, item I, changing the word “Secretary” to “Vice Chair.” Vice Chair Naomi Eckels subsequently withdrew her original motion and moved to approve the minutes of the September 8, 2025, meeting as amended. Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously, 8-0.
5. **School Reports: Mandy Edwards, Denise Miller, Jordan Smith, Dr. Shannon Johnson, Harriet Davis, and Dr. Deonia Simmons.** [Board Packet Enclosures]
 - 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 Harriett Davis
 - Denmark-Olar High School Principal – Principal Dr. Deonia Simmons
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Interim Superintendent Dennis R. Ulmer, Jr. presented all school reports in the absence of principals.

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6. **Truancy Report/Update: Denise Robinson-Crosby**
Interim Superintendent Dennis R. Ulmer, Jr. reviewed the truancy report as presented for Bamberg County School District in the absence of Truancy Officer Denise Robinson-Crosby. [Board Packet Enclosure]
7. **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]
8. **Student/Staff Recognition and Superintendent's Report**
Interim Superintendent Ulmer noted the following:
 - a) Mr. Ulmer congratulated Mrs. Vanessa Glover-Robinson on being selected as Bamberg County School District's 2025–2026 District Teacher of the Year.
 - b) Mr. Ulmer recognized Secretary Cynthia Hurst for achieving Level 3 status in the South Carolina School Boards Association (SCSBA) Boardmanship Institute for the 2024–2025 year.
 - c) Mr. Ulmer provided a brief update on the 2025 district and school report cards, noting that they remain embargoed until October 15 and cannot be publicly released at this time. He advised that a detailed review and discussion of the results will be presented at a future meeting following the release of the embargoed information.
 - d) Mr. Ulmer concluded his report with an update on district enrollment, noting a total of 1,775 students as of October 1, 2025.
9. **District High School Elective Textbook Selections (Action Needed)**
Mr. Ulmer presented the Board with a proposed textbook selection for the following high school elective course. He explained that this recommendation was being brought forward following the previous board meeting, after it was determined that the prior, approved selection was no longer included among the state-approved textbook offerings.
 - **Course: *Theater 1***
Textbook: Basic Drama Projects, 9th Edition -- Author: Perfection Learning, ISBN-13: 9780789188977

After reviewing the high school elective textbook selection, **Vice Chair Naomi Eckels moved, and Trustee Cathy Griffin seconded, to accept the recommended high school elective textbook selection.** The motion passed 8-0.
10. **Second Reading – BCSD Policies – Section A – Foundations and Basic Commitments:**
 - a. **AC – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity**
 - b. **ACE – Service Animals (Public)**

Mr. Ulmer presented policies AC and ACE for second reading.

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Following a brief discussion, **Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg seconded, the motion to approve the second reading of Policies AC – Nondiscrimination/Equal Opportunity and ACE – Service Animals (Public).** The motion passed 8-0. [Board Packet Enclosures]

11. Second Reading – BSCD Policy – Section B – School Board Governance and Operations:

a. BEA – Livestreaming of Board Meetings

Mr. Ulmer presented policy BEA for second reading.

Following a brief discussion, **Vice Chair Naomi Eckels moved, and Secretary Cynthia Hurst seconded, the motion to approve the second reading of Policy BEA – Livestreaming of Board Meetings.** The motion passed 8-0. [Board Packet Enclosure]

12. Second Reading – BCSD Policy – Section D – Fiscal Management

a. DKC-R – Expense Authorization/Reimbursement

Mr. Ulmer presented policy DKC-R for second reading.

Following a brief discussion, **Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg seconded, the motion to approve the second reading of Policy DKC-R – Expense Authorization/Reimbursement.** The motion passed 8-0. [Board Packet Enclosure]

13. Second Reading – BCSD Policies – Section G – Personnel:

- a. GBA – Open Hiring/Equal Employment Opportunity**
- b. GBAA-R – Sexual Harassment and Retaliation (Staff)**
- c. GBAC-R – Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Staff)**
- d. GBGAA – Service Animals (Staff)**
- e. GCLE – Unencumbered Time**
- f. GCLE-R – Unencumbered Time**

Mr. Ulmer presented policies GBA, GBAA-R, GBAC-R, GBGAA, GCLE, and GCLE-R for second reading.

Following a brief discussion, **Trustee Cathy Griffin moved, and Secretary Cynthia Hurst seconded, the motion to approve the second reading of Policies GBA – Open Hiring/Equal Employment Opportunity, GBAA-R – Sexual Harassment and Retaliation (Staff), GBAC-R – Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Staff), GBGAA – Service Animals (Staff), GCLE – Unencumbered Time, and GCLE-R – Unencumbered Time.** The motion passed 7-0. [Board Packet Enclosures] [Trustee Jeni Bunch stepped out momentarily and was not present at the time of the vote.]

14. Second Reading – BCSD Policies – Section J – Personnel

- a. JB – Equal Educational Opportunity/Nondiscrimination**
- b. JIAA-R – Sexual Harassment and Retaliation (Students)**
- c. JIAB – R – Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Students)**
- d. JJAB – Limited Open Forum**

e. JLCDD – Service Animals (Students)

Mr. Ulmer presented policies JB, JIAA-R, JIBA-R, JJAB, and JLCDD for second reading.

Following a brief discussion, **Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Cathy Griffin seconded, the motion to approve the second reading of Policies JB – Equal Educational Opportunity/Nondiscrimination, JIAA-R – Sexual Harassment and Retaliation (Students), JIAB – R – Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Students), JJAB – Limited Open Forum, JLCDD -- Service Animals (Students).** The motion passed 7-0. [Board Packet Enclosures] [Trustee Jeni Bunch stepped out momentarily and was not present at the time of the vote.]

[Trustee Jeni Bunch returned to the meeting.]

15. First Reading – BCSD Policy – Section I – Instruction

a. IJND – Artificial Intelligence Responsible Use

Mr. Ulmer presented policy IJND for first reading.

Following extensive discussion, **Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg seconded, the motion to approve the first reading of Policy IJND – Artificial Intelligence Responsible Use.** The motion passed 8-0. [Board Packet Enclosure]

16. First Reading – BCSD Policies – Section K – School – Community – Home Relations

a. KF – Community Use of School Facilities

b. KF-E(1) – Community Use of School Facilities

Mr. Ulmer presented policies KF and KF-E(1) for first reading.

Following a brief discussion, **Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg seconded, the motion to approve the first reading of Policies KF – Community Use of School Facilities and KF-E(1) – Community Use of School Facilities.** The motion passed 8-0. [Board Packet Enclosure]

17. Monthly Financial Report

Chief Financial Officer Devon Furr presented the Financial Report for Bamberg County School District for FY 2024-2025 as of September 2025, for review. [Board Packet Enclosure]

Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg moved, and Trustee Adrienne Blume seconded the motion to accept and approve the Financial Report for September 2025, as presented. The motion passed 8-0.

18. Visitors' Comments

None.

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19. **Executive Session**

Board Chair David Corder called for a motion to enter Executive Session. Vice Chair Naomi Eckels moved, and Secretary Cynthia Hurst seconded, the motion to enter Executive Session. The motion carried 8-0.

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

Open session: Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg moved, and Trustee Cathy Griffin 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.

20. **Action on Executive Session Items**

Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg seconded, the motion to accept and approve Agenda Item 19(c) To Discuss Matters Related to Release of Students for students 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8. The motion passed 8-0.

With respect to Agenda Item 19(a) To Discuss Interim Superintendent Evaluation, Agenda Item 19(b)(1) To Discuss Personnel Recommendations for Hire, and Agenda Item 19(b)(2) To Discuss Personnel Recommendations for Resignation, there was no action taken.

21. **Board Member Comments**

- Trustee Adrienne Blume stated that it was a very informative first meeting. She shared that she felt she had “gotten her feet wet” and expressed appreciation to her fellow board members for their support as she becomes acclimated to her new role.
- Trustee Jeni Bunch congratulated Mrs. Vanessa Glover-Robinson on being selected as District Teacher of the Year and thanked her for her dedication and service to the students of the district.
- Trustee Cathy Griffin welcomed Trustee Adrienne Blume to the Board, noting that there is much to learn and that she would find herself very busy as she becomes familiar with board operations.
- Vice Chair Naomi Eckels also congratulated Mrs. Vanessa Glover-Robinson, expressed her enjoyment in participating in the Denmark-Olar Homecoming Parade, and hoped everyone had a wonderful time. She further thanked all students, organizations, and athletic teams supporting Breast Cancer Awareness Month.
- Secretary Cynthia Hurst welcomed Trustee Adrienne Blume, congratulated Mrs. Vanessa Glover-Robinson, and thanked her fellow board members for the open discussion held during Executive Session.
- Trustee Tonya Sanders-Govan congratulated Mrs. Vanessa Glover-Robinson, noted the success of Denmark’s Homecoming, and shared her hopes and prayers for a successful Bamberg Homecoming as well.
- Board Chair David Corder also congratulated Mrs. Vanessa Glover-Robinson, adding humorously that he had “raised her from a pup.” He expressed appreciation to all principals in recognition of National Principals Month, acknowledging the challenges of their roles and encouraging them to “keep on trucking.” Mr. Corder also thanked Mr. Ulmer for his continued hard work, noted that the district had successfully

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completed the first quarter of the school year, and remarked that it has been a positive year thus far.

22. **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 8:18 p.m.

Minutes approved:

David Corder, Board Chair

Cynthia Hurst, Secretary