

**Bamberg County School District
Board of Trustees Meeting
Bamberg County School District Office
March 2, 2026
6:00 p.m.**

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

Absent: Trustee Jeni Bunch

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.

Prior to moving forward with the meeting, Band Director Miranda Michelle introduced the Board to the Bamberg-Ehrhardt Red Raider Band, who performed *The Star-Spangled Banner* seamlessly for all in attendance.

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 Adrienne Blume seconded, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed 8-0.
4. **Approval of Minutes February 9, 2026**
Trustee Cathy Griffin moved, and Vice Chair Naomi Eckels seconded, to accept the February 9, 2026 meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed 8-0.
5. **Denmark Technical College – Dual Enrollment Program Presentation by Ms. Mona Lisa Anderson, Director of Dual Enrollment**
Ms. Mona Lisa Anderson distributed dual enrollment information from Denmark Technical College. She explained that dual enrollment courses are available to Bamberg County School District students, allowing them to earn both high school and college credits simultaneously prior to graduation. Ms. Anderson noted that these opportunities help students save money by completing college-level coursework at no cost.

Ms. Anderson reported that a total of 79 Bamberg County School District students were currently enrolled in dual enrollment courses. She further outlined the programs of study offered by Denmark Tech, including Associate of Science and Associate of General Technology degrees; certificates in Building Construction, Electrical, General Studies, Plumbing, Pre-Med, and Welding; as well as career and technical education courses in barbering, cosmetology, and culinary arts.

The Board thanked Ms. Anderson for her presentation and expressed appreciation for the continued partnership with Denmark Technical College.

6. **School Reports: Dr. Shannon Johnson, Harriett Davis, Dr. Deonia Simmons, Mandy Edwards, Denise Miller, and Jordan Smith.** [Board Packet Enclosures]

- Denmark-Olar Elementary School –Principal Dr. Shannon Johnson
- Denmark-Olar Middle School – Principal Harriett Davis
- Denmark-Olar High School – Principal Dr. Deonia Simmons
- Richard Carroll Elementary School – Principal Mandy Edwards
- Bamberg-Ehrhardt Middle School – Principal Denise Miller
- Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School – Principal Jordan Smith

Interim Superintendent Dennis R. Ulmer, Jr. presented all school reports in the absence of the principals. During his report, Mr. Ulmer gave special recognition to the Denmark-Olar Elementary School Science Fair winners: King Shuler, 2nd grade, for the project titled “How to Clean Our Water”; Raelyn Butler, 5th grade, for “What Product Will Clean a Penny”; and Pro’Mize Ryant, 4th grade, for the project titled “Absorbent War.” He further expressed appreciation to Ms. Hortense Miller, Science Fair Chair, for her efforts in coordinating the event.

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 extended his congratulations to the coaches, players, parents, and fans of both Denmark-Olar High School and Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School for their outstanding basketball and wrestling seasons. He noted that the girls’ and boys’ teams represented their schools and community with excellence, achieving top regional finishes and advancing multiple rounds in the state playoffs. Mr. Ulmer expressed that he is extremely proud of their hard work, dedication, and accomplishments this season.
- b) Mr. Ulmer also expressed his gratitude to the students, staff, and administrators for their time, dedication, and effort in organizing exceptional Black History Month programs. He commended their commitment to honoring this important celebration.
- c) Mr. Ulmer concluded his report with an update on district enrollment, noting a total of 1,756 students as of February 25, 2026.

9. **Approval: 2026-2027 School Calendar**

Mr. Ulmer presented the 2026–2027 draft calendar for second reading. He highlighted that the calendar not only meets the minimum requirement for make-up days but also includes one additional inclement weather make-up day, based on the district’s experience with school closures in the past. He further noted that the calendar incorporates the required professional development days and retains both fall and winter breaks, provided those days are not needed for make-up. He advised that the proposed calendar reflects a teacher start date of July 27, 2026, and a student start date of August 3, 2026, with the last day of school

scheduled for May 25, 2027. Mr. Ulmer advised that the only change to the calendar from the Board's first reading is the high schools graduation date. In an effort to avoid conflicts with Wednesday evening church services, the high school principals agreed to move graduation ceremonies to Tuesday, May 25, 2027, with Denmark-Olar High School's ceremony scheduled for 2:00 p.m. and Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School's ceremony scheduled for 6:00 p.m.

In alignment with the calendar, Mr. Ulmer reminded the Board that district summer hours would begin the week of June 1, 2026. During this period, the district will operate on a four-day workweek, Monday through Thursday, from 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and will be closed on Fridays.

Additionally, Mr. Ulmer requested the Board's approval to close the district for the week of July 4 (June 29–July 3, 2026), consistent with the district's practice in previous years.

Trustee Harriett Coker moved, and Trustee Cathy Griffin seconded, to accept the 2026–2027 draft calendar for second reading as presented, and to approve the district's summer hours, as well as closure of the district for the week of June 29, 2026, through July 3, 2026. The motion carried 8-0. [Board Packet Enclosure]

Before moving to the next agenda item, Mr. Ulmer advised the Board that anyone in need of a graduation robe for the upcoming ceremonies, should notify the district before leaving the meeting so that robes can be ordered in a timely manner.

10. Request for Out of State/Overnight Trip

- a. Professional Development Request – National Association of Social Workers (NASW) National Conference – Washington, DC – June 10, 2026-June 13, 2026 (Jraquarie Washington, BCSD Social Worker)**

Following a review of the request for out-of-state and overnight travel, **Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Adrienne Blume seconded, to approve the attendance of BCSD Social Worker Jraquarie Washington at the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) National Conference in Washington, D.C., from June 10 through June 13, 2026. The motion passed 8-0. [Board Packet Enclosures]**

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

- a. DJ – Purchasing – Procurement Code Exemptions (Addendum to District Procurement Policy)**

Mr. Ulmer presented policy DJ for second reading.

Following a brief discussion, **Vice Chair Naomi Eckels moved, and Trustee Harriett Coker seconded, the motion to approve the second reading of Policy – DJ – Purchasing – Procurement Code Exemptions (Addendum to District Procurement Policy) as presented. The motion passed 8-0. [Board Packet Enclosure]**

12. **Second Reading – BCSD Policy – Section E – Support Services**
 - a. **ECAE – District Intellectual Property, Logos, Trademarks, and Mascots**
 - b. **ECAE-R – District Intellectual Property, Logos, Trademarks, and Mascots**

Mr. Ulmer presented policy ECAE and ECAE-R 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 – ECAE – District Intellectual Property, Logos, Trademarks, and Mascots and ECAE-R – District Intellectual Property, Logos, Trademarks, and Mascots, as presented.** The motion passed 8-0. [Board Packet Enclosure]

13. **Monthly Financial Report**

Chief Financial Officer Devon Furr presented the Financial Report for Bamberg County School District for FY 2025-2026 as of February 2026, for review. [Board Packet Enclosure]

Ms. Furr advised the Board that budget discussions have begun and principal meetings have been held; however, the district has not yet received any allocations from the state to schedule a Board budget workshop.

Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Cathy Griffin seconded, the motion to accept and approve the Financial Report for February 2026, as presented. The motion passed 8-0.

14. **Board Workshop Dates and Topics**

Board Chair David Corder informed the Board of the need to hold a workshop to review presentations from the Request for Proposals (RFPs) received for legal and custodial services and invited suggestions regarding potential dates and times. The Board also discussed other possible future workshops of interest, including one following the SC Department of Education's SCDE Edunomics: Education Finance Bootcamp, a meeting with Representative Bamberg to discuss pending legislation relevant to schools and districts, and general topics related to community engagement and how the Board can better address community concerns.

The Board agreed to schedule a workshop on March 27, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. to review the legal and custodial services RFPs.

15. **Visitors' Comments**

Denmark Chief of Police Bernard Holman, Jr. distributed a letter and discussed the reclassification of Denmark's campus, explaining how this decision has impacted state funding for an additional Officer/SRO position. He noted that the change would expand the duties of the current SRO, resulting in an increased workload with reduced funding, and outlined two possible options for how the school could support this effort. Board Chair David Corder thanked Chief Holman for his time and requested that he schedule a meeting to continue discussing these matters with Interim Superintendent Dennis Ulmer to possibly come up with a proposal to present at a future meeting.

16. Executive Session

Board Chair David Corder called for a motion to enter Executive Session. Vice Chair Naomi Eckels moved, and Trustee Harriet Coker 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 Employment/Personnel Matters Related to: Personnel Recommendations for Hire, Personnel Recommendations for Resignation, and Matters Related to Release of Students.

Open session: Vice Chair Naomi Eckels 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.

17. Action on Executive Session Items

Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Adrienne Blume seconded, the motion to accept and approve Agenda Item 16(a)(1) to Discuss Personnel Recommendations for Hire for employees a and b and Agenda Item (16)(b) to Discuss Matters Related to Release of Students for student 1. The motion passed 8-0.

With respect to Agenda Item 16(a)(2) to Discuss Personnel Recommendations for Resignation, no action was taken.

18. Board Member Comments

- Vice Chair Naomi Eckels congratulated all science fair students at Denmark-Olar Elementary School for a wonderful job and also recognized all student-athletes for their successful year.
- Trustee Harriett Coker echoed the Vice Chair's sentiments and thanked Miranda Michelle and the band for performing at the meeting, noting that research shows students involved in music often achieve higher academically. She also expressed her excitement that Ms. Michelle will serve as the band director for Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School.
- Secretary Cynthia Hurst thanked the teachers, food service staff, and social worker for all they do for the students and the district.
- Trustee Adrienne Blume seconded all of the preceding comments, stating that she felt the students, teachers, and staff are on a positive track. She also recognized the bus drivers for their outstanding work and encouraged them to "hang in there" as summer approaches.
- Board Chair David Corder encouraged students to finish the school year strong by completing classwork and homework and attending school regularly. He expressed appreciation for the efforts of everyone in the district, from custodians and lunchroom staff to bus drivers, teachers, and administration.

19. **Adjourn**

Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Vice Chair Naomi Eckels seconded, the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 8-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:46 p.m.

Minutes approved:

David Corder, Board Chair

Cynthia Hurst, Secretary