

**Bamberg County School District
Board of Trustees Meeting
Bamberg County School District Office
September 14, 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 Jeni Bunch, Trustee Harriet H. Coker, Trustee Tonya A. Sanders-Govan, and Trustee Cathy Ayer Griffin.

Absent: None.

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**

Trustee Adrienne C. Blume moved, and Secretary Cynthia Hurst seconded, to approve the agenda as presented. The motion passed 9-0.

4. **Approval of Minutes for August 3, 2026**

Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg moved, and Vice Chair Naomi Eckels seconded, to accept the August 3, 2026 meeting minutes as presented. After a brief discussion, Secretary Cynthia Hurst noted some changes and Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg amended her motion moved and Trustee Cathy Griffin seconded, to accept the August 3, 2026 meeting minutes as presented, with changes. The motion passed 9-0.

5. **School Reports: Mandy Edwards, Denise Miller, Jordan Smith, 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 K-12 – Principal Dr. Deonia Simmons

Each principal presented a detailed review of their respective school's enrollment, discipline, state testing scores, and new hires for the 2026-2027 school year.

The Board extended its appreciation for the hard work taking place across Bamberg County Schools.

6. **Truancy Report/Update: Denise Robinson-Crosby**

Truancy Officer Denise Robinson-Crosby reviewed the truancy report as presented for Bamberg County School District. [Board Packet Enclosure]

7. **Athletic Reports: Robert Williams**

Athletic Director Robert Williams reviewed the athletic report as presented for Bamberg County School District. [Board Packet Enclosure]

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

Interim Superintendent Ulmer noted the following:

- a) Mr. Ulmer commended Kelli Sanders of Richard Carroll Elementary School, Carroll Ulmer of Bamberg-Ehrhardt Middle School, Heather Palmer of Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School, and Nyeshia Crosby of Denmark-Olar K-12 School for being selected by their colleagues and peers as their respective schools' Teachers of the Year.
- b) Mr. Ulmer announced Kelli Sanders, Richard Carroll Elementary School Teacher of the Year, as the 2026-2027 District Teacher of the Year. He noted that the district is verifying if Ms. Sanders is eligible to be nominated for State Teacher of the Year. Mr. Ulmer explained that there are certain qualifications for the state program and that retirees are not typically eligible; however, information has been submitted to the South Carolina Department of Education, and the district is hopeful that Ms. Sanders will be permitted to participate. Mr. Ulmer noted that Ms. Sanders has served in the district for most, if not all, of her 28-year career.
- c) Mr. Ulmer reviewed the South Carolina School Boards Association's Death and Dismemberment Policy. A list of coverage and beneficiaries was included in each Board member's packet. Board members were asked to contact Caitlan Brown if any updates are needed.
- d) Mr. Ulmer reviewed district enrollment data as of September 9, 2026, reporting a total of 1,769 students. An increase of 15 students since last reported.
- e) Pursuant to the boards request, Mr. Ulmer ended by giving Superintendent highlights which included detailed professional development activities he has participated in as Interim Superintendent of Bamberg County School District. In August, he attended the 2026 Superintendents' Symposium in Columbia and the South Carolina School Boards Association Conference in Greenville. In September, he attended the Center for Executive Educational Leadership (CEEL) training, "Leading People Through Change," in Columbia. He is signed up for the remaining CEEL training classes.

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

- a. **Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School JROTC – Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum – Mr. Pleasant, SC – September 25, 2026-September 26, 2026 (Major McDonald, JROTC Instructor)**

Following a review of the request for out of state/overnight trip, **Trustee Cathy Griffin moved, and Trustee Harriet Coker seconded, the motion to approve the following request: Bamberg-Ehrhardt JROTC Instructor Major McDonald's request for Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School JROTC to attend the Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum in Mt. Pleasant, SC. The motion passed 9-0.**

10. **Visitors' Comments**

None.

11. **Executive Session**

Board Chair David Corder called for a motion to enter Executive Session. **Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Cathy Griffin seconded, the motion to enter Executive Session. The motion carried 9-0.**

Board Chair David Corder noted that the Board would be moving into Executive Session to discuss Interim Superintendent's Evaluation, Personnel – Budget 2026-2027, 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 Eckles moved, and Trustee Adrienne C. Blume 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.

12. **Action on Executive Session Items**

With respect to Agenda Item 11(a) To Discuss Interim Superintendent's Evaluation, **Board Chair David Corder commended Mr. Ulmer on behalf of the board for his exceptional evaluation for the 2025-2026 school year, adding that they are eager for the 2026-2027 school year accomplishments. The motion passed by a vote of 9-0.**

In relation to Agenda Item 11(b) To Discuss Personnel – Budget 2026-2027, **Trustee Adrienne C. Blume moved, and Secretary Cynthia Hurst seconded, the motion to approve the second reading of the district's 2026-2027 budget, totaling \$27,120,779.59. The motion passed by a vote of 9-0.**

Vice Chair Naomi Eckels moved, and Trustee Adrienne C. Blume seconded, the motion to approve Agenda Item 11(d) to Discuss Matters Related to the Release of Students, for students 1 through 6. The motion passed by a vote of 9-0.

With respect to Agenda Item 11(c)(1) to Discuss Personnel Recommendation for Hire, no action was taken.

13. **Board Comments**

Trustee Cathy Griffin welcomed the new teachers and expressed anticipation of the positive things they will accomplish with students. She thanked the teachers for choosing Bamberg County School District.

Trustee Adrienne C. Blume shared that she attended the Grandparents' Breakfast at Richard Carroll Elementary School. She commented on the strong turnout and commended the teachers, cafeteria staff, and everyone involved in the successful event.

Trustee Jeni Bunch congratulated the Teachers of the Year and thanked them for their hard work. She also recognized the work the teachers are doing throughout the district and welcomed the new teachers to the district.

Secretary Cynthia Hurst echoed Trustee Blume's comments regarding the Grandparents' Breakfast at Richard Carroll Elementary School. She expressed her appreciation for the faculty and staff's hard work and dedication to students, noting that their efforts are reflected in the students' test scores.

Vice Chair Naomi Eckels had no comment.

Trustee Tonya Sanders-Govan had no comment.

Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg echoed her colleague's sentiments and welcomed everyone back.

Board Chair David Corder had no comment.

14. **Adjourn**

Secretary Cynthia Hurst moved, and Trustee Gwendolyn Bamberg seconded, the motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed 9-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Minutes approved:

David Corder, Board Chair

Cynthia Hurst, Secretary