

Bamberg School District One
Minutes of Regular Meeting of Board of Trustees
Richard Carroll Elementary School
April 20, 2020
6:30 p.m.

Members present: Board Chair Janeth Walker, Vice Chair Gwendolyn Dianne Bamberg, Secretary Tony E. Duncan, Trustee John Hiers, and Trustee Julia “Kim” Berry.

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 following have been notified of the time, date, place and agenda of this meeting:

The Times and Democrat
The Advertizer-Herald

2. **Approval of Agenda**
Trustee Kim Berry moved and Vice Chair Gwendolyn Bamberg seconded to approve the agenda as written. The motion passed 5-0.

3. **Approval of Minutes**
Board Chair Janeth Walker noted that she wished to clarify that the comments that she made with regards to the March 16, 2020, meeting was specifically referring to the motion that was just made at that time. She wanted to clarify that so that it can go on record. [Page 6 – Agenda Item 11 - Action on Executive Session Items under **Agenda Item 10 (e) Legal Advice: Consolidation Legal Advice**]

Trustee Tony Duncan moved and Trustee John Hiers seconded to accept the March 16, 2020, meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed 5-0.

Trustee John Hiers moved and Trustee Kim Berry seconded to accept the April 6, 2020, called meeting minutes as presented. The motion passed 5-0.

4. **Student/Staff Recognition Superintendent’s Report**
Superintendent Schwarting noted that the Principals are not present at this meeting; however, all they could tell would be how pleased they were with the turn-out for those who picked up school work during the two times that it was done and for those who returned work.

a) Briefing: Coronavirus

Superintendent Schwarting noted that the State Department has been keeping the District informed with information as it occurs about the Coronavirus; such as the SAT, PRAXIS, State testing, and End of Course testing not given this year. If students took the End-of-Course test the first semester, their EOC score counts 20% of their class grade; however, if students took that course the second semester, they wouldn’t take the EOC and there is no 20%.

State Superintendent of Education Molly Spearman has indicated that the Governor will make an announcement this week as to what will happen during the remainder of the school year. Mrs. Spearman and the Governor have indicated that in a public school setting, social distancing can't be maintained.

Superintendent Schwarting noted that her concern now is what will be done for the seniors. A meeting with the staff at the high school will follow the Governor's announcement as to whether school will resume for any length of time or if we will not be returning. There is a strong possibility that in any event graduation will have to be held outside at the football stadium in order to maintain social distancing. It is being discussed now on the time of graduation, Class Night, the number of tickets a graduate can have, and streaming on virtual sites.

- b) Superintendent Schwarting presented a letter of support for the Bamberg County First Steps program as requested by Pauletta Plowden the director of the program. She noted that this was a standard letter that is done annually. Board Chair Janeth Walker noted that since this is a standard letter that is done annually, it does not require any action to be taken by the Board. She wanted, however, to make sure everyone had an opportunity to review the letter before she signs and send it out.

- c) Superintendent Schwarting reviewed a packet of information regarding "School and District Leaders" from Molly M Spearman, State Superintendent of Education, regarding COVID-19: Grade Reporting Guidance. Some of the things noted are as follows: Page 1 lists all the state tests that will not be administered such as SCReady, SCPASS, End-of-Course Examination Program, Prekindergarten Assessments, Literacy Screening, and Alternate Assessments. Some requirements under the "Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)" were also waived. Also, since schools won't receive a Report Card grade this year, schools will operate under the same category as last year. For example, Bamberg-Ehrhardt High School will remain Excellent, Bamberg-Ehrhardt Middle School will remain Good and Richard Carroll Elementary School will remain Average. Pages 2 and 3 indicates that during the semester, students should have an opportunity to: complete courses which they were currently enrolled; complete the courses in which they would have enrolled in during the fourth quarter; enroll in any credit recovery courses needed; demonstrate mastery in an effort to improve a course grade; and finalize dual credit courses offered jointly with higher education institutions. There will be only one final grade the second semester. Whatever the third quarter grade was, can be assisted by completing work that an instructor sent home; however, the grade that was awarded at the end of the second semester cannot be any lower than what was given the third semester. The Uniform Grading Policy will continue to be followed. Seniors will have to have all their work completed by May 15, 2020, and grades must be entered into PowerSchool by May 22nd. Dottie Brown, Director of Student Services, is on schedule with students who have IEPs. Page 4 outlines regulations for waivers; that is, for Grades 1-5 instruction in the subject areas shall be scheduled for each student for a minimum of 1800 minutes or 30 hours per week including lunch, or the equivalent time on a yearly basis. The school day must be at least six hours including lunch, or its equivalent weekly. The program for Grades 6-8, the instruction in the subject areas shall be

- scheduled for each student for a minimum of 1800 minutes or 30 hours per week including lunch, or the equivalent time on a yearly basis. The school day must be at least six hours including lunch, or its equivalent weekly. The program for 9-12 students are: must pass a high school credit course in science in which an end-of-course examination is administered; seek time to get a Carnegie Unit of 120 hours; and the length of the school day is 6 hours. Summer camps are on hold for now. However, if the situation warrants, there will be an ELA/Math summer camp for K-3 students. [Handout]
- d) Emails from Molly Spearman, State Superintendent of Education, regarding conference calls that she held were issued to the Board for review. [Handout]
 - e) Superintendent Schwarting sent the Advertiser-Herald Newspaper an updated news letter regarding the coronavirus. [Handout]
 - f) Consolidation of the school districts was discussed during a meeting that was held on July 23, 2019. It was stated that a Consolidation Plan had to be submitted to the State Department by August 1, 2019. A Plan was prepared and a copy given to each Board member. School districts were told to ask for anything that will be needed and this is what was done by this district. The district received a response regarding the Plan from Betsy Carpentier, Chief of Staff to Molly Spearman. Her response included the purpose that the money was needed for, the amount of money requested, the category it fell in, notes and requests. Also, included was the allowable and disallowable expenses along with comments. Bonded Indebtedness (\$15 million) and a District Office (\$8 million) were deleted from the Plan. On March 16, 2020, the Board voted to move forward with consolidation with Bamberg School District Two. A meeting was held in Denmark on the March 18, 2020 with Dr. Thelma Sojourner, Rodney Anderson, Michelle Nimmons, Beverly Boneparte, Ricky Padgett, Devon Furr, Board Chair Janeth Walker, and Superintendent Phyllis Schwarting to determine which things to cut from the Plan. Devon Furr is, however, still working on the Plan. There has been some give and take from both school districts. Both districts are moving forward with the Plan which was approved by the Board from both districts (Bamberg and Denmark). The next Plan is due August 1, 2020, and it will be brought back to this Board before being submitted. Things will be done the right way and we will move forward.

Board Chair Walker noted also that at the last meeting, it was stated that Devon would be taking another look at the figures to try narrowing some things down to \$3 million. The next meeting is scheduled for April 29, 2020, in Denmark.

Trustee John Hiers questioned the number of meetings that our Representatives have attended. Also, he noted that during one meeting they told us to ask for the “pie in the sky” and that got shot down. We were told that there is money out there for the schools but now we see where the \$12 million is down to \$3 million. Superintendent Schwarting responded by stating that Senator Brad Hutto and Representative Justin Bamberg attended one of their closed meetings in Denmark and a meeting in Bamberg which was opened to the public. Also, she noted that the administration was

told to talk with our representatives because sometimes the Plan that Districts turn in don't go with the Plan that Legislators have in their minds. Board Chair Walker noted that the anticipation of being able to meet with the representatives (Bamberg and Hutto) sort of got derailed because of the coronavirus that hit in March. She had anticipated following the vote (consolidate) to make arrangements to meet with the Legislators, not just the Board, but with the community; however, due to the coronavirus that hit in March it sort of derailed them from coming.

Board Chair Walker and Superintendent Schwarting announced that the meeting that was scheduled this week with Doretta Elliott on millage was cancelled due to the coronavirus.

5. **Draft: 2020-2021 School Calendar**

As requested by Superintendent Schwarting regarding the approval of the draft copy of the 2020-2021 Calendar, Trustee Tony Duncan **moved and Trustee John Hiers seconded to approve the 2020-2021 School Calendar with the understanding that there might be some changes to be made to it at a later date.** The motion carried 5-0. [Board Packet Enclosure]

6. **Monthly Financial Report**

Finance Director Devon Furr presented the Financial Report for March 2020, for review.

Trustee John moved and Trustee Kim Berry seconded to approve the March 2020, Financial Report as presented. The motion carried 5-0.

At the request of Ms. Devon Furr, Trustee John Hiers moved and Trustee Tony Duncan seconded to continue to use the FY 2019-2020 General Fund Operational Budget into FY 2020-2021 until the FY 2020-2021 Budget is adopted by the State Legislators due to COVID-19. The motion carried 5-0.

7. **Visitors' Comments**

Board Chair Walker noted that there are no visitors present due to COVID-19 matters; however, if there are any questions regarding items on the agenda, they may be submitted in writing to the District Office and a response will be given at a time that is appropriate.

8. **Executive Session**

Board Chair Janeth Walker called for a **motion to enter Executive Session.** Trustee Tony Duncan **moved and Vice Chair Gwendolyn Bamberg seconded to enter the Executive Session.** The motion carried (5-0).

The purpose for entering executive session was to discuss:

- a. Personnel Recommendation(s) for Resignation / Employment
- b. Student Transfer Request(s)

Open session: Trustee Tony Duncan **moved and Trustee John Hiers seconded for the Board to come out of Executive Session and return to the regular session of the meeting.** The motion carried 5-0.

9. **Action on Executive Session Items**
Trustee Kim Berry moved and Vice Chair Gwendolyn Bamberg seconded to accept Agenda Item 8 (a) Personnel Recommendation(s) for Resignation / Employment for employee #1, #2, and #3 as presented. The motion carried 5-0.

No action was taken on **Agenda Item 8 (b) Student Transfer Request(s)**

10. **Adjourn**
Trustee Kim Berry moved and Trustee John Hiers seconded to adjourn the meeting.
The motion passed 5-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Minutes approved:

Janeth Walker, Board Chair

Tony E. Duncan, Secretary