

MINUTES
SPECIAL CALLED BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING
Denmark-Olar Board Room
Bamberg County, South Carolina
July 30, 2019 – 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Beverly Bonaparte, Chairman
Blossom Thompson, Vice Chairman
Loretta P. Goodman, Secretary
Tonie Holman
Larry Bias

Also Present: Thelma Sojourner, Superintendent
Charles Boykin, Boykin and Davis, LLC

CALL TO ORDER

Mrs. Bonaparte called the special meeting to order. In accordance with the SC Code of Laws, 1976, section 30-480(e) as amended, the following had been notified of the time, date, place and agenda of the meeting: WIIZ Radio Station, Barnwell; *The Advertiser-Herald*, Bamberg; and *The Times and Democrat*, Orangeburg.

ROLL CALL

Roll Call was conducted with attendance as recorded above.

MOMENT OF SILENCE

A moment of silence was observed.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The meeting agenda was unanimously approved as written without objection.

SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION PLAN APPLICATION

Following review of the preliminary school consolidation plan application for Bamberg School Districts One and Two (Attachment 1), Mrs. Goodman moved that the board approve the plan to be submitted to the State Department of Education by August 1, 2019. Mr. Bias seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Dr. Sojourner announced that a public meeting regarding the consolidation of the districts would be held August 8, 2019 at Bamberg-Ehrhart High School from 6:30-7:30 p.m. with Senator Brad Hutto and Representative Justin Bamberg scheduled to attend.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The board did not hold Executive Session discussions.

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BOARD OF TRUSTEES
JULY 30, 2019 – 6:30 P.M.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned without objection at 7:00 p.m.

Submitted by,

Shretta P. Godwin

Approved:

Toni A. Salzman

Quincy P. Benoit

Blaine J. Thompson

Darryl Bus

Prepared by:

Deborah M. Anderson



**Board of Trustees Meeting
District Office Board Room
SPECIAL CALLED TRUSTEES MEETING
TUESDAY, JULY 30, 2019 - 6:30 P.M.**

AGENDA

CALL TO ORDER OF SPECIAL CALLED MEETING

ROLL CALL

APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA *(Action)*

SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION PLAN APPLICATION *(Action)*

EXECUTIVE SESSION

- Employment/Personnel Recommendations/Matters
- Student Personnel Matters
- Contractual Matters
- Legal Matters/Counsel

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

ACTION ON EXECUTIVE SESSION ITEMS

- Employment/Personnel Recommendations/Matters
- Student Personnel Matters
- Contractual Matters
- Legal Matters/Counsel

ADJOURNMENT

Bamberg School Districts 1 and 2 Preliminary Plan for Consolidation

To maximize the educational and career opportunities of the children of Bamberg County, South Carolina, the Boards of Bamberg School District 1 and Bamberg School District 2 have each voted to approve this preliminary application for the consolidation of our school districts. Our approval of consolidation is subject to fulfillment of the enumerated conditions and funding of the enumerated items shown below:

Consolidation Vision

- Bamberg 1 and Bamberg 2 envision a county-wide school district that will be able to improve efficiency and provide students with increased educational opportunities by having a larger base of students to support additional educational programming.
- Bamberg 1 and Bamberg 2 envision a reduced county-wide debt service millage that will make the county more attractive to businesses considering investing in Bamberg County. Increased economic development will increase educational and employment opportunities for the students of Bamberg County.
- Fulfilling this vision will require a significant investment from the State of South Carolina to achieve these goals.
- Without significant investment from the State, consolidation will be a net cost burden to the citizens of Bamberg County, resulting in decreased educational investment and decreased economic development potential for the County, resulting in decreased opportunity for the students of Bamberg County.

Consolidation Overview

- The name of the new school district would be Bamberg County School District.
- The new District would begin full operation on July 1, 2021 or July 1, 2022. This latter date is considered the best for students in both districts, given the opening of a new school facility in Bamberg 2 at the start of the 2020-21 school year. The earlier date could be accommodated.
- The new District would be governed by a five to nine-member Board of Trustees elected from districts in a manner to be determined.

- The existing schools in Bamberg 1 and Bamberg 2 would remain in operation in the new district because the school facilities are in good condition and there is not sufficient classroom space in either district's schools to accommodate a significant number of students from another school.
- A new district administration office would be required because neither district currently has adequate district administration offices.
- Pre-consolidation school district zones would not need to be changed at consolidation because no schools would be closed and also to minimize student disruption resulting from consolidation.

Consolidation Plan Timeline and Contacts

- Bamberg 1 and Bamberg 2 propose a process for completing a consolidation plan that would have the administration of the two districts, with the assistance of counsel, work with the SC Department of Education to complete a final consolidation plan in the fall of 2019, per Proviso 1.88.
- The primary contacts for all aspects of the final consolidation plan would be the superintendents of the two districts, Superintendent Schwarting and Superintendent Sojourner. Contact information is shown below.
- The SC Department of Education would reimburse the districts for their additional costs of counsel assisting in completing the final plan.

Consolidation Process

- Bamberg 1 and Bamberg 2 would continue to operate as separate school districts until the date of consolidation.
- Once a final plan of consolidation is approved by the SC Department of Education, Bamberg 1 and Bamberg 2 would work with their legislative delegation through the process of securing legislative approval of the consolidation plan.
- After legislative approval, a Consolidation Planning Committee comprised of the Board Chairs and Superintendents of Bamberg 1 and Bamberg 2, and two staff members from each District selected by the Superintendents would govern all pre-consolidation activity, including approval of actions and expenditure of Pre-Consolidation New District funds.
- Election of board members for the new district would be held at the first regular date for school board elections in Bamberg County after legislative approval of the consolidation plan. The final plan may move school board elections from April to be held in November.

- New district board members would work with the Consolidation Planning Committee on pre-consolidation activities prior to the date of consolidation, but with the Consolidation Planning Committee retaining authority for pre-consolidation activities. The Consolidation Planning Committee would be dissolved upon consolidation.
- New district board members would assume office on the date of consolidation.

Funding Categories

Bamberg 1 and Bamberg 2 have worked together extensively to assemble the following projected costs associated with consolidation of the two districts, as outlined above.

A. Pre-consolidation Costs

1. Bonded Debt Reduction Costs

\$15.7 million for bonded debt reduction costs to reduce the consolidated district's bonded debt millage to 80 mils so that Bamberg County will be more attractive to businesses looking to invest in Bamberg County.

2. New District Administration Building Costs

\$8.5 million for a new district administrative office (approximately 15,000 square feet), including required land purchase. Neither of the current administrative offices of the two districts are sufficient to house administrative offices for the consolidated district.

3. *Facilities Improvements

\$565,000 total for facilities improvements in Bamberg 1, including \$200,000 to replace HVAC units that are "end of life," \$315,000 to install LED lights throughout the District for efficiency, and \$50,000 to renovate and update the current business lab at the high school.

\$162,000 total for facilities improvements in Bamberg 2, including \$75,000 in maintenance building upgrades, \$50,000 in HVAC upgrades/repairs, and \$37,000 for plumbing upgrades/repairs.

Total Facilities Improvements - \$727,000

4. *Technology Improvements

* These funds are also requested in the Proviso 1.88(B) applications submitted separately by Bamberg 1 and Bamberg 2 on or before August 1, 2019.

\$1,264,675 total for technology improvements in Bamberg 1, including \$534,675 for new interactive panels that are compatible with Bamberg 2, \$430,000 for 1-1 computing devices, and \$300,000 to equalize network infrastructure on the same platform in Bamberg 1 as Bamberg 2 (which includes \$183,000 to upgrade current Netgear switches to Cisco Meraki, \$84,000 to upgrade current Aerohive wireless access points to Cisco Meraki access points, and \$33,000 to upgrade UPS Power backups throughout the district).

\$678,000 total for technology improvements in Bamberg 2, including \$325,000 to pay for Chromebooks that are compatible with Bamberg 1 and to fully implement the 1-1 initiative, and \$353,000 for interactive panels.

Total Technology Improvements - \$1,942,675

5. *Health and Safety Improvements

\$202,500 total for health and safety improvements in Bamberg 1, including \$10,500 for fire alarms and \$192,000 to upgrade security cameras.

\$260,000 total for health and safety improvements in Bamberg 2, including \$215,000 to pay for a security fence at the Pre-K through 5 playground and \$45,000 to pay for emergency radio repeaters in the schools.

Total Health and Safety Improvements - \$462,500

6. Consolidation Planning Committee Costs

\$50,000 for costs of the operation of the Consolidation Planning Committee, though the members of the Committee would not be compensated for their work separately from the current compensation.

7. New District Staff Start-up Costs

\$300,000 for pre-consolidation costs of staff to be hired by the Consolidation Planning Committee to carry out required pre-consolidation functions, such staff to be determined.

8. New District Consultants Start-up Costs

\$300,000 for consultants required to carry out required pre-consolidation functions, such consultants to be determined (but may include technology consultants, financial consultants, CPAs, training, etc.)

9. Existing District Pre-consolidation Professional Services Costs

* These funds are also requested in the Proviso 1.88(B) applications submitted separately by Bamberg 1 and Bamberg 2 on or before August 1, 2019.

\$500,000 for professional services to work with the Consolidation Planning Committee, the Districts, SCDE, and other stakeholders to carry out pre-consolidation functions, including, but not limited to, legal services, auditing services, facilitator services, community relations services, etc., as needed.

10. New District Pre-consolidation Professional Services Costs

\$100,000 for professional services to work with the Consolidation Planning Committee, the Districts, SCDE, and other stakeholders to carry out pre-consolidation functions, including, but not limited to, legal services, auditing services, facilitator services, community relations services, etc., as needed.

B. At-consolidation Costs

1. Salary Equalization Costs

\$2 million for salary equalization over 5 years for all employee categories (teachers, administrators, staff, bus drivers, food service staff, and maintenance staff).

2. Severance Costs

\$150,000 for severance payments and/or other required separation costs for those losing their jobs because of consolidation.

3. Senior Administration Consulting Costs

\$300,000 for 2-year consulting contracts for senior administration officials who resign/retire/lose their jobs because of consolidation so that they continue to provide guidance and expertise to the consolidated district.

4. Technology Costs

\$92,500 total for technology costs, including \$50,000 for a new data center at the district level, \$20,000 for a new firewall at the new district office, \$15,000 for Docescan/Etrieve, and \$7,500 for SmartFusion/Harris.

5. PowerSchool Costs

\$20,000 for additional PowerSchool costs after consolidation.

6. IDEA Funding Loss Costs

\$1.275 million for IDEA shortfall over 5 years due to consolidation.

7. Other Program Costs for Title I

\$1.275 million for Title I and other federal program shortfalls over 5 years due to consolidation.

8. Equipment Costs

\$80,000 for maintenance vehicles for the new district, as neither district has adequate maintenance vehicles today.

9. Building Disposition Costs

\$150,000 for the cost of disposing of unused buildings for 3 years after consolidation.

10. Teacher Recruitment Fund Costs

\$400,000 for a teacher recruitment bonuses fund to assist the new district in attracting talent in its first 5 years.

11. Moving Costs

\$100,000 for the costs of moving to the new district offices after construction.

The total amount requested for consolidation is \$34,424,675. Unused funds in any category may be used to pay for additional funds needed in other categories.

C. Current-year Consolidation Funding Request

Bamberg 1 and Bamberg 2 are requesting \$3,382,175 in the current year to pay for the following:

Items 3, 4, and 5 under Pre-consolidation costs (above) and up to \$250,000 under item 9 under Pre-consolidation costs (above).*

* Items 3, 4, and 5 under Pre-consolidation costs are also requested in the Proviso 1.88(B) applications submitted separately by Bamberg 1 and Bamberg 2 on or before August 1, 2019.

Identifying Information

Item	Description
District 1:	Bamberg School District 1
Main Application Contact:	Phyllis Schwarting
Contact's Email:	Pschwarting @bamberg1.net
Superintendent:	Phyllis Schwarting
Board Chair:	Janeth Walker
Accountability-Testing Officer:	Jessica Moody
ADEPT Coordinator:	Denise Miller
CFO/Business Official:	Devon Furr
Chief Academic Officer:	Devon Furr
CTE Director:	Phyllis Overstreet
Federal Program Official(s) ¹ :	Phyllis Overstreet
Food Service Director:	Heather Zwiker
Personnel/HR Director:	Devon Furr
Technology Director:	Ricky Padgett
Legal Representation:	Halligan Mahoney & Williams
Audit Firm:	McGregor & Co.
District 2:	Bamberg School District 2
Main Application Contact:	Dr. Thelma F. Sojourner
Contact's Email:	tsojourner@bamberg2.org
Superintendent:	Dr. Thelma F. Sojourner
Board Chair:	Beverly Bonaparte
Accountability-Testing Officer:	Dr. Ruby J. Johnson
ADEPT Coordinator:	Dr. Ruby J. Johnson
CFO/Business Official:	Rodney Anderson
Chief Academic Officer:	Dr. Ruby J. Johnson
CTE Director:	Dr. Ruby J. Johnson
Federal Program Official(s):	Dr. Ruby J. Johnson
Food Service Director:	Heather Zwiker
Personnel/HR Director:	E. Michelle Nimmons
Technology Director:	Rodney Anderson
Legal Representation:	Boykin & Davis
Audit Firm:	McGregor & Co.

The contact information above may change

Certification

The chair of the local board of trustees and the superintendent for the districts listed in this application certify that the districts choose to consolidate, and – if approved – will utilize funds allocated according to the final plan to pursue and complete the consolidation.

Bamberg School District 1

Phyllis Schwartz Joseph Walker 07/30/19
Superintendent Board Chair Date

Bamberg School District 2

Helma L. Payne Sue P. Bragante 07/30/19
Superintendent Board Chair Date