

# RCS report indicates schools are on track

**BY DANIEL KENNEDY**

**RANDOLPH COUNTY** — A second-quarter report on its 2021-22 budget indicates that Randolph County Schools had an opportunity to add positions and assign more funding to its employees courtesy of the approval of a state budget this year.

Among their new allotments, RCS reports 35 K-5 enhancement program teaching positions for 2021-22, as well as four-and-a-half new school psychologist positions for 2021-22.

A total of \$41,650 has been used for digital learning and makerspace initiatives.

A few of the items in the budget were impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, including the fact that 62 Randolph County students are enrolled in virtual academies for this school year. Nevertheless, revenues exceed expenses by \$569,568, which staff said is satisfactory for this stage of the school year.

Other items that impacted the county budget included changes made at the state level. House Bill

159 recently prohibited assessing indirect costs that are more than 8% of a school nutrition program's annual budget per fiscal year. This legislation was met by disappointment from Randolph County staff.

"Legislation was pushed through to address some issues somewhere in the state, and I don't agree with that," RCS Superintendent Stephen Gainey said. "Those indirect costs are very important to us in our budget, and I'm not really sure I understood the ratio-

nale, other than that there were some issues in the state with some percentages being charged to child nutrition in some systems."

The school system's budgeted annual expenses sit at \$25.6 million. Its second quarter expenses were reported at \$11.4 million, or 45% of the budget. Year-to-date expenses were recorded as \$16.04 million (63% of the budget). November's monthly expenses were higher due to local supplements.

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RCS's second quarter energy expense was listed at \$776,592 (21% of the budget), and its year-to-date energy expense is \$1.6 million (43% of the budget).

Per the schools' balanced budget, allocated revenues were projected at \$25.6 million. Its year-to-date revenue was reported as \$12.1 million (47% of the budget).

Not everything was a bust at the state level this academic year, as teacher bonuses were

the most noteworthy, albeit not the only, advantage of seeing a state budget pass.

"We did get a lot of stuff out of that state budget," Gainey said. "When that state budget hit, as is typical, the storylines come out and then the details come later. I feel like we're in a good spot to have everything organized where it is. We will send out additional communication as needed to let people know what's coming."

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