School projects, supplement receive nod in approved budget

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ASHEBORO — The Randolph County Board of Commissioners on Monday approved an additional $450,000 for the Randolph County School System (RCSS) and an additional $121,356 for Asheboro City Schools (ACS) over the original proposed budget amounts presented by Assistant County Manager/Finance Officer William Massie at their May 30 meeting.

The total approved allocations in the county budget for local school systems is $18,806,987 for RCSS and $5,071,869 for ACS, with a combined total of $23,878,856. The increased amounts were calculated based on average daily membership (ADM) for each school system.

“I hope for the Randolph County Schools increase, that teachers will get some consideration toward their supplements in that addition,” Vice Chairman Darrel Frye, who represents district 2, said as he made the motion to approve the amendments to the proposed budget.

“I greatly appreciate the hard work of the county commissioners to support our school system with

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additional funding for the 2017-2018 fiscal year. As a result of their help, the school system will be able to raise the local supplement for all employees during the 2017-2018 fiscal year for the second consecutive year,” RCSS Superintendent Dr. Stephen Gainey said.

“Also, through the hard work of the county commissioners, a new middle school will be opened in the Archdale-Trinity zone in the next few years. I am very excited about the hard work of the county commissioners and the members of our Board of Education to help our school system continue to move forward. The positive relationship between these two groups of leaders will continue to produce great opportunities for our students, staff members, and the members of our surrounding community. As the superintendent of the Randolph County School System, I say ‘thank you’ to both groups of elected officials for their support and teamwork.”

**Capital projects**

Funding to begin work on capital projects was also approved at the meeting. For the Archdale-Trinity Middle School, $500,000 was approved for preliminary design and architectural work. ACS will also receive $500,000 for preliminary design and architectural work on an addition and upgrades to the high school.

The allocations support the approval of the capital improvement plan that prioritizes these projects beginning in 2018 and 2019, rather than pushing them forward to 2023 and 2024.

“We are so grateful to the Randolph County commissioners for their commitment to ensuring our facilities are well-maintained and updated to serve all of our students in Asheboro City Schools,” ACS Superintendent Dr. Terry Worrell said. “This partnership will continue our long tradition of excellence in Asheboro and Randolph County. With the average age of our facilities being over 56 years old, these funds will help us work with an architect to begin our capital improvement projects.”

The site for the addition to Asheboro High School has not yet been determined. Part of the design process will include working with an architect to determine the best site for the new structure.

To fund the construction, there are several options that may become available in the next year, including bills in this year’s General Assembly session to increase lottery funding, to allow counties to hold a referendum on another quarter-cent sales tax, and to authorize a statewide school bond referendum. Once decisions are made at the state level, the county will be able to decide on a strategy for budgeting construction funds.

The allocation for Randolph Community College (RCC) was approved at the originally proposed $100,000 increase for a total of $2,994,400. The allocation for Communities in Schools was approved at the proposed amount of $70,000.