ASHEBORO—New ventures will take place at two Randolph County School System schools for the 2015-16 school year.

A Cyberkids LEGO Robotics program will begin next school year at Farmer Elementary as an afterschool opportunity for fourth- and fifth-grade students. Information about it was shared with members of the Randolph County Board of Education at its Monday afternoon meeting.

The $9,200 program is possible with matching grants of $4,600 each from Cyberkids and The Timken Company. Farmer will be able to have four teams with eight students on each, providing 32 fourth- and fifth-graders an opportunity to participate. The rest of the school will have a secondary benefit from it, according to Catherine Berry, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction.

Each team will work together to design and build a custom robot, working together to solve missions and conduct research on a topic selected at the beginning of the school year.

Board members hope the opportunity will be available at other schools in upcoming years. Berry said she anticipates it will grow to other schools with additional partnership opportunities.

At Trinity High School, an Academy of Hospitality and Tourism will start for the 2015-16 school year after a year of planning for it as part of an affiliation with the National Academy Foundation. As part of its consent agenda Monday, the membership agreement with the foundation was approved. Initial costs will be covered through the Career and Technical Education budget as well as the annual $1,000 membership fee. The academy is expected to be selfsustaining after the first year and the program could be expanded to other schools with an interest in it or a similar academy experience.

Another informational item on the agenda was possible membership in the N.C. School Boards Action Center which is beginning its second year of operation as an “additional muscle for support of the legislative agenda” of the N.C. School Boards Association.

Randolph County was not a first-year member. Board members, during Monday’s discussion, asked about its accomplishments; Board Chair Todd Cutler said he would find out further information before possible action at the July meeting.

About half of the 115 school boards in the state have joined; Linda Cranford of the Asheboro City Board of Education is serving as a board member for the action center. Randolph’s contribution would be $6,000. The county belongs to the state association which costs $24,765 for its three-year membership.

The approved consent agenda also included the first reading of 13 revised board policies and final approval of three revised policies related to discretionary admission, school assignment and transfer and residency requirements for high school athletic participation; statement of assurances and certifications related to Title I, Title II and Career and Technical Education programs, and a 201516 interim budget, based on last year’s amount until local, state and federal allotments are finalized.

The board also held a closed session on personnel after its 27-minute open session.

The county school board meeting had an earlier time than normal, at 4 p.m., so school board members and school officials could attend Monday night’s county commissioners meeting when the 201516 local budget was approved.