

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Randolph County Commissioners invest in Early Childhood

RPC to receive \$300,000 in strategic plan funds

ASHEBORO, N.C. (October 29, 2021) — On Monday, October 25, the Randolph County Commissioners voted to fund \$300,000 for two early childhood projects that will run through Randolph Partnership for Children (RPC).

RPC originally submitted a proposal in collaboration with Randolph County Public Library, Randolph County Public Health, and Randolph County Department of Social Services for American Rescue Plan (ARP) funds. The proposal included three years of funding to place three “navigator” positions in local libraries to bridge the gap between families in need and services available. At Monday night’s meeting, the Commissioners voted unanimously to move the application to its strategic plan budget and approve one year of the three-year project at \$250,000.

In that same motion and unanimous approval, RPC’s application for \$50,000 for a Randolph County early childhood landscape study, which RPC submitted in collaboration with the Children’s Home Society, was also approved under the strategic plan budget.

The library navigator project is a system of care approach which is intended to provide a safety net for families who need services. By placing social worker-type positions in libraries based in communities, families will have direct access to someone who can assist them overcome obstacles and access the services that can have a positive impact on their lives. RPC will contract with Randolph County Public Library to staff this project.

“Sometimes, despite our best efforts, the path to services is too unclear, too bureaucratic, and too complicated,” Executive Director Lisa Hayworth said. “This project will help families navigate the paths, being intentional about anticipating questions, circling back to answer questions, and to clear the hurdles.”

The landscape study is a six-month project that will begin in January 2022. The study will identify community assets, gaps in services, the “ratio” of prevention services to intervention services, families’ ability to find and follow through with services, and community dynamics that directly influence things like buy-in, stigma, funding, and potential for future innovation. RPC will contract with the Children’s Home Society Institute for Family to conduct the study.

“My job was easy—to advocate for families and children, and workers who work tirelessly and passionately, and use funds wisely. Voices of parents like Sharee [Pemberton] and Jamee [Tate] have been heard and, for the very first time Randolph County is helping fund programs for our youngest children,” Commissioner Hope Haywood said in an email response to the RPC Board



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of Directors after the announcement. “I am proud our commissioners have shown they value children and families. Together we can have an impact. I look forward to seeing what our next chapter holds.”

Budget amendments will be made at the Nov. 1 Commissioners meeting, after which the funding will be available through the County for these projects.

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About the Randolph Partnership for Children: Since 1999, the Randolph Partnership for Children (RPC), a non-profit organization, has positively impacted the lives of Randolph County’s young children. As the community’s lead organization for young children and their families, RPC works with and through diverse agencies, individuals, organizations, and communities to ensure all children enter school healthy and ready to succeed in school and life. RPC is a United Way agency. For more information, visit www.randolphkids.org.

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