



# Archdale-Trinity News

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## Gainey, school board celebrate first day

BY DANIEL KENNEDY

**RANDOLPH COUNTY** — For the first time in more than 150 days, students in Archdale and Trinity made their way back to elementary, middle and high school campuses across Randolph County on Monday.

A historic lull in the physical presence of children on educational properties — many appearing much like ghost towns throughout portions of the spring and summer — came to an end. Though differences were stark and normalcy might be a bridge too far at this point,

Stephen Gainey, superintendent of RCSS, was excited Monday evening when he told school board members that children were taking steps toward it.

"Today was a special day," Gainey said. "Five months later, we had our first day of school."

Gainey said his spirits were lifted by the sight of students adhering to mandates, trying to ensure the safety of their classmates and teachers. Those efforts are necessary, he said, to promote the atmosphere crucial to moving forward.

"I had a chance to visit

some places today, saw students wearing cloth face coverings, cooperating, doing what we need to do," Gainey said. "As I told some students the other day, 'We want you back, but the only way we can stay back is if we all follow the parameters.'"

RCSS Board Chairman Gary Cook was effusive in his praise of the way teachers bounced back from a challenging several days of preparation last week. He offered that the unprecedented hurdles they had to clear to be ready for Monday were the source of great consternation.

"They were overwhelmed

with what they were hit with," Cook said. "There were teachers crying, saying they don't think we can do it. I called Dr. Gainey and asked if we had put too much on them. Can we make it happen? Can they do it? He said, 'I have all the confidence in the world.' Each day, it got a little better.

"I was so impressed with what they did last week and how they came together."

Cook also addressed the unique graduation wherein students and families were socially distant outdoors for commencement ceremonies last month. He was proud of

the ability for RCSS to have that day of closure for seniors from the Class of 2020.

Having closed the book on the 2019-20 school year, Gainey began looking forward this month to the return of employees, which came the first week in August. He made contact with a number of employees, including several bus drivers.

Gainey said that of the aspects pertaining to providing education in Randolph County, getting kids to school is one that doesn't cause him to worry, thanks to those in

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charge of RCSS transportation.

"I had a chance last Wednesday, Thursday and Friday to do what I try to do each year," Gainey said. "I try to get back and see some of the employment groups that are coming back. I talked with bus drivers

at ... Trinity Elementary, Trindale Elementary, Archdale Elementary and Archdale-Trinity Middle. I just want to say a big thank-you to our bus drivers.

"I always have great comfort knowing those individuals are behind the wheel."

Staff writer Daniel Kennedy can be reached at 336-888-3578, or at [dkennedy@atnonline.net](mailto:dkennedy@atnonline.net).