

Catawba County Schools board member Leslie Barnette dies one day after stepping down. **PAGE A2**



Thursday, August 28, 2025

hickoryrecord.com

MOVE-IN DAY



COURTESY OF LENOIR-RHYNE UNIVERSITY

Lenoir-Rhyne University students and their parents move luggage into the dorms on move-in day.

Lenoir-Rhyne sees largest group of new students move in since COVID-19

AMANDA SMITH
Lenoir-Rhyne University

Lenoir-Rhyne University welcomed its largest group of new students since the COVID-19 pandemic during move-in day on Friday.

The incoming first-year class includes 347 students living on campus. Of those students, 169 are female and 178 are male. The freshmen represent 24 states, with the largest groups from North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. The fresh-

man class has 16 international students who hail from 11 countries, including Canada, France, Kenya, Mexico and the United Kingdom.

The largest group of new students moved into campus dorms since the COVID-19 pandemic consisted of 827 students.

“Move-in day is one of my favorite days of the year,” Lenoir-Rhyne Dean of Students Harry Titus said. “Our campus comes alive with energy, excitement and curiosity. Our Residential Life and Student

Affairs team works tirelessly to make the start of the semester smooth and welcoming for students, and it’s incredible to see it all come together.”

Students bring a wide range of academic interests, with top intended majors including exercise science, nursing, business administration and sports management. An additional 27 students were undecided on their intended majors.

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Hickory City Schools wants another study on merger

BILLY CHAPMAN
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Hickory City Schools is requesting a study about merging Catawba County’s three school districts.

The study the school system is requesting differs from one Catawba County expects to receive at the end of September about projected enrollment and capacity

in Hickory City Schools.

At Monday night’s school board meeting, the Hickory City Schools Board of Education unanimously passed a non-binding resolution requesting a study on the impact of federal and state funding if school systems in the county consolidate.

“The board of education recognizes its responsibility to advocate for accurate in-

formation and data-driven decision-making before any significant structural changes to public education governance are considered,” a line from the resolution presented at Monday night’s meeting said.

Hickory City Schools Superintendent Jennifer Griffin said the study was needed to look at factors beyond school construction costs.

“The resolution is an effort to make sure that when we’re considering the financial implications of a merger, we’re looking at everything,” Griffin said before the meeting. “Not just the impact on capital dollars, but the recurring funding from the state and federal government.”

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Plug-in solar is gaining traction in the US. **LIVELY, D1**

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Weather
Mainly cloudy
High 77
Low 56
FORECAST • A10



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