



CONCORD — This feels like the year of community colleges, even though there's no money, said Carol Spalding, president of Rowan-Cabarrus Community College, at the board of trustees meeting on Monday.

Spalding and board members learned that enrollment has increased dramatically for the fall semester, but there are reductions from the college's budget for this year.

After receiving the state's budget allotments, Robert Keeney, RCCC's chief financial officer, told the board the budget is still being finalized. The final version will be presented later in the month.

The total reversion and reduction the college must give to the state is \$2.5 million, Keeney said.

"The state budget has been hit hard, but we believe we'll continue with minimal impact on our students," Keeney said. "It's not a pretty picture, but it's not a surprise. I expected worse than this."

Despite reductions, the construction projects for Building 400 on the North Campus and the North Carolina Research Campus building will continue, Keeney said. Also continuing are updates on the radiography program in Building 600 on the North Campus and renovations in Buildings 1000 and 2000 on the South Campus.

Keeney said the college will also expect an increase in sales at the bookstore and in vending with the increased enrollment this semester.

As of Monday, the headcount of students was 7,062, said Gaye McConnell, vice president of student services. At this point last year, there were 5,868 students, so there was a 20.3 percent increase in headcount enrollment, she said.

McConnell also said there are more than 2,900 students enrolled full-time for this semester, compared to last fall's more than 2,200.

"That's an increase of 26 percent," McConnell said. "Our students are taking more full-time loads."

Students are also taking more classes in biotechnology, automotive, cosmetology and other areas.

Also at the board meeting, the college accepted a contribution of more than \$237,000 from Duke Energy, which will go toward purchasing new equipment for expansions to the machining technology program.

The board also approved for Ray Paradowski to continue his role as chairman, for Cyndie Mynatt to remain as vice chairman and for Spalding to continue as the secretary.

The board will meet again on Sept. 28.