



# Fayette County Public Schools

## Executive Summary Fayette County Public Schools Board Meeting Agenda Item

**MEETING:** Regular

**DATE:** 12/18/2025

**TOPIC:** Multi-Year Program Recommendation for The Stables

**PREPARED BY:** Demetrus Liggins

**Recommended Action on:**

Action Item for Vote (REGULAR MEETING)

**Superintendent Prior Approval:** Yes

**Recommendation/Motion:** A motion is in order to support for The Stables to either identify alternative funding for the program or close the program as it currently exists after the 2026-27 school year and begin serving students from The Stables in other schools, programs, and locations during the 2027-28 school year.

**Background/Rationale:** The Stables opened during the 2012-13 school year in conjunction with Central Kentucky Riding for Hope and is housed in their facility at the Kentucky Horse Park.

Initially, Central Kentucky Riding for Hope worked with the FCPS special education department's employment training program to provide work-based experiences and equine therapy for students with disabilities. The success of that partnership led to the idea of an educational program where students would spend their school day exclusively at Central Kentucky Riding for Hope, receiving academic instruction in addition to work-based learning, and equine therapy.

Although originally envisioned to exclusively enroll students who receive special education services, The Stable now serves students in grades eight through 12 both with and without an Individualized Education Program.

The non-traditional school setting is designed to meet the needs of students who often struggle in large school programs, need counseling supports daily, and can benefit from animal care to develop independence, confidence, and graduation goals.

Enrollment over the past five years has fluctuated between 50 during the 2021-22 school year and 37 students this year. The Stables has a total program cost of \$1.1 million including transportation, staffing, and the contract with Central Kentucky Riding

for Hope.

Recent and ongoing school construction will add capacity for roughly 2,000 additional students in rapidly growing neighborhoods while overall student enrollment in FCPS remains relatively unchanged as the number of families moving into Lexington-Fayette County has slowed. With more schools and programs than school districts of comparable size, budgetary constraints, and rezoning on the horizon, Superintendent Liggins established the Right Size, Bright Future initiative to evaluate the maximization of resources at all schools and programs and identify potential efficiencies and economies of scale to be gained to ensure the highest possible return on investment.

As part of this effort, consideration was given to closing The Stables in its current form and providing services to students currently enrolled in other ways. Discussion included the unique nature of the program, the therapeutic services students receive, and whether those needs could be met in different ways. This scenario was brought forward as an initial consideration because time would be a factor in renegotiating a contract with Central Kentucky Riding for Hope if needed.

After review, two equally important and not necessarily mutually exclusive priorities are clear:

- Continuing the supports and opportunities students at The Stables receive.
- Providing opportunities for students in a fiscally responsible and sustainable way.

The following multi-year recommendation would achieve both objectives:

2025-26:

- Work with community partners to explore opportunities for sponsorships, donations, and funding to help offset the current annual cost of \$1.1 million as well as sustainable revenue for future years.
- Assess services and supports students receive at The Stables.
- Continue the work of the Right Size, Bright Future initiative to maximize resources and identify efficiencies and economies of scale to ensure the highest possible return on investment.

2026-27:

- Continue The Stables in its current form.
- Identify funding stream for long-term sustainability or determine alternate service models for students currently enrolled.

2027-28:

- Either continue The Stables with a new funding model or provide services for students from The Stables in other schools, programs, and locations.

**Strategic Priority:**

- ☒ Student Achievement    ☒ Unity, Belonging & Student Efficacy
- ☐ Highly Effective, Culturally Responsive Workforce
- ☐ Outreach & Engagement    ☒ Organizational Health & Effectiveness

**Data Considerations:** Student achievement and post-secondary readiness data

**Policy:** 01.11 General Powers and Duties of the Board

**Fiscal Impact:** potential savings

**Attachments(s):** none