

Creating Opportunities for Success

Foundation is designed to enhance the mission of the Fayette school district

BY LORIE HAILEY

In early 2020, a group of diverse constituents in Lexington created the Fayette Education Foundation to serve as a link between Fayette County Public Schools (FCPS) and the community. After months of planning by a grassroots steering committee, the foundation relaunched in November 2020. It is now led by Carrie Boling, an executive with more than 25 years of experience in nonprofit administration and fundraising, and a community board of directors that includes numerous business leaders. Acting school superintendent Marlene Helm serves as an ex-officio member, and two FCPS students serve on the board.

The nonprofit operates independently of FCPS but works to cultivate innovations that benefit students and staff and to enhance the mission of the school district.



fayettefoundation.org
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“In the last six months, I’ve led the diverse, all-volunteer foundation board through everything from mission creation to database building and strategic planning to fundraising,” said Boling, who has

worked for the United Way of the Bluegrass, YMCA of Central Kentucky, Kentucky Children’s Hospital and others.

“My passion is education,” Boling said. “A teacher by training, I taught elementary school in Fayette and Nelson counties. I am also a FCPS alumni, having attended first through 12th grades in the district, as well as a FCPS parent.”

Members of the foundation’s board of directors’ executive committee include: Lexington businessman Alan Stein (chair); Jeff Koonce, market president for WesBanco (vice chair); Art Salomon, owner of Salomon & Co. (treasurer); Lauren Lovely, of Central Bank & Trust; Herb Miller, president (retired) of Columbia Gas; and Mary Ann Vimont, University of Kentucky College of Education professor.

Fayette Education Foundation exists to promote equity for all students, Boling said. Its goals include providing opportunities for individuals, businesses and the community to invest in the educational needs of FCPS;



supporting the school district’s commitment to equitable access to opportunities and resources for all students; and working to fulfill unmet educational needs and removing barriers to opportunities, she said.

Over the next three years, the foundation will focus on three areas: classroom and schools; students and families; and the future. Among its objectives are broadening access to resources for all students, increasing access to out-of-school support for students and families – including strengthening “last-mile” broadband access for all FCPS students – and expanding access to career exploration, supporting career and technical education.

“Education has seen its seams pulled this year—some ripped wide open. The pandemic didn’t create gaps in education or opportunity; it brought them to the forefront. What works for some children doesn’t work for others. Look at the number of learners who actually thrived working from home virtually,” Boling said. “Over the past year, many parents realized what other families have known for years—one size education does not fit all. Our goal

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Fayette Education Foundation**

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To learn more about the foundation, or to find volunteer and mentor opportunities, sign up for email updates on the foundation’s website, fayettefoundation.org. ■

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