EDUCATING THE Whole Person
Cura Personalis

SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
In 1925, the Saint Louis University School of Education proudly opened its doors and has served educated thousands of teachers and school leaders rooted in excellence, integrity, and respect for every person. As Dean, I am motivated by this history and by our noble mission to work with my colleagues to support the formation of the next generation of educators.

The communities we serve need passionate educators who will shatter barriers, build bridges, and spark innovation. I came to Saint Louis University in 2018 as someone drawn to a mission to develop educators dedicated to excellence in all academic pursuits and making a difference within their institutions and their communities. Grounded in our Catholic Jesuit tradition, this commitment to excellence inspires me to grow our outreach by interacting with our friends and colleagues to support our community broadly, with a focus on those historically underserved.

We are called to be thoughtful and intentional in our work. Who do we serve? Where do we serve? Why do we serve? As reflective practitioners ourselves, my colleagues and I have redoubled our commitment to creating educational opportunities for every student, working toward social justice in our communities. This also prompted us to evaluate what we are teaching our students and how we guide them to be advocates for their own students.

Over the past several years, we have reconfigured our undergraduate teacher education curriculum to enhance focus on molding equity-minded teachers who meet the needs of their students where they are, in and beyond the classroom. This innovative curriculum brings intentional field experiences, rigorous coursework, and community needs together — giving our undergraduate students a well-rounded learning experience to prepare them for their careers.

At the Saint Louis University School of Education, we motivate our students, faculty, and staff to share their gifts beyond teaching in a classroom by supporting student growth outside the framework of a lesson plan. The growth and achievements I have witnessed here only reaffirm my belief that the School is more than teaching others to teach. Our responsibility — indeed, our privilege — is to equip our students with opportunities in research, continued education, and real-world field experiences.

As we celebrate 100 years of tradition and excellence, I am proud of the seeds we have planted and the impact we have delivered for our students and our communities. The Saint Louis University School of Education shapes educators for tomorrow — supporting them in their practice and inspiring their passion to mold young minds and strengthen communities.

Sincerely,

Gary Ritter, Ph.D.
Dean, Saint Louis University School of Education
The Saint Louis University School of Education embraces the next generation of teachers, leaders, and scholars in our city, our region, and beyond. Through its on-going work of developing and assessing its strategic plan, the School commits to continuous growth for its students, faculty, administrators, and the greater community.

Critical to this commitment is confirming our shared core values.

Each one enhances the impact the School has on its students, the dedication it has to the community, and its ability to shape the future of education.

We affirm the heart of our work is care for the whole person: students, faculty, staff, alumni, and community. Individual and communal well-being, as well as a sense of belonging, are critical to the collective work of the School of Education.

We believe that all persons can flourish when trust is cultivated. We engage in ongoing communication as a School of Education with humility, openness, and empathy as individuals and in community with one another.

We regard advancing equity-minded transformation as a collective moral imperative. We endeavor to examine our own biases and the ways in which our words and actions impact others and direct our gifts and opportunities to advance racial and socioeconomic equity in our communities and beyond.

We commit to the development of the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to transform society through education. Through the synergy between scholarship, service, teaching, research, and leadership for the purpose of transforming education, now and in the future, for the greater good.

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We seek to embody the University’s motto of a higher purpose for the greater good in every class, project, and partnership. From offering evening courses to women in the 1920s, to studying learning disabilities in the 1940s, to more actively recruiting and welcoming a diverse body of students today, we celebrate our past and embrace our ambitious future.

Today, we renew our commitment to provide a high-quality education for the whole person as a student, teacher, leader, and community member. With our dedication to social justice, community growth, and innovation, we enter our second century of service to the profession with energy and optimism.

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A New Era in Undergraduate Education

On Redesigning the Curriculum for the Undergraduate Program

In Fall 2022, the Saint Louis University School of Education implemented a redesigned undergraduate curriculum to meet the needs of its future teachers, prospective students, and the community. Grounded in the Jesuit tradition, the curriculum has a goal of preparing equity-minded teachers with early and frequent field experiences and coursework dedicated to help them achieve their Missouri state certifications.

Assistant professor Merlene Gilb, Ed.D., explained the program transforms the School’s model of teacher preparation by expanding focus on social justice and dedication to the community.

“We created this revised curriculum to stand the test of time. It will be able to respond to the rapid changes of society, develop student character, and align with the innovations of the new University Core curriculum for all undergraduate students.”
— Merlene Gilb, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor

Consisting of 48 intentionally designed courses interwoven with their new five compass themes, the program allows students to pursue an undergraduate degree in education with concentrations in early childhood, elementary, middle school, secondary, or special education. It also integrates them into Teacher Learning Communities (TLCs) to provide moments of reflection on all coursework and field experiences throughout the program. TLCs model professional learning communities for the graduates’ futures as educators.

Praxis
Purpose
Identity
Inquiry
Content

“We had a rigorous program with a practical approach. Students immerse themselves in the literature and research to learn how to apply it to their careers as educational leaders.”
— Sally Beth Lyon, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor of Educational Leadership

Many students enter the program with full-time careers in educational leadership. Because the program is delivered in a cohort format, students share issues they come across, learn from others’ experiences, and build impactful faculty relationships. With an authentic approach to learning, doctoral students are prepared for a life of service, leadership, and building strong learning communities in their schools.

Higher Purpose
Greater Good

Associate Dean Molly Schaller, Ph.D., explained the program was intentionally formed with each student’s developmental trajectory as a teacher, leader, and advocate in mind.

“It is designed to be a developmental progression that fosters communication, personal growth, and student learning.”
— Molly Schaller, Ph.D.
Associate Dean

“Through the single track design, intentional course sequences, and in-classroom student teaching, the new curriculum connects students of all certification areas and expands their holistic formation as future teachers.

“Once our students decide their certification path, the undergraduate curriculum provides an intentional education journey to become that type of teacher,” she said.

“Our goal with our new undergraduate curriculum is to form reflective scholar-practitioners who will go out into the world as teachers, leaders, and advocates for all.”
— Molly Schaller, Ph.D.
Associate Dean

Where Coursework and Real Experiences Meet

Educational Leadership & Community

The Doctor of Education Program in Educational Leadership prepares students to be expert leaders for the communities and institutions they serve. Sally Beth Lyon, Ed.D., assistant professor of educational leadership, explained the program puts scholarly practice into real life.

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Reflection on the Billiken Teacher Corps

The Billiken Teacher Corps (BTC) prepares the next generation of Catholic educators through faith-filled service. Its members come together to live in an intentional faith community for two years. By teaching full-time in underserved Catholic schools, members earn their Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) degree with full tuition-remission. Members also earn Missouri teaching certification via the alternative route, if they are not already certified.

Through shared experiences with their cohort, members bond together as aspiring teachers and receive guidance from the School of Education faculty through mentorship and coursework. Karen Tichy, Ed.D, MAT program director, explained the School’s comprehensive support for BTC members.

“For our members to become teachers on day one without any prior teaching experience, it can be overwhelming,” she said. “Their commitment to education is so edifying, and they receive academic, spiritual, and personal support from university supervisors and school leaders during and beyond their two years.”

The BTC members bring unique gifts and a commitment to educate and serve their students, families, and schools. BTC Director Angela Moret said the members enter their classroom teaching with boundless energy and embrace learning moments where their students teach them.

“Our motto is ‘Teach Me.’ Each member has an opportunity to experience many lessons from their students that will form them as a teacher in Catholic Education. If they open their hearts to both teaching and learning, the effect is life-changing on their vocation.”

— Angela Moret
BTC Director

The Billiken Teacher Corps actively recruits teachers to make a difference and be the future of Catholic education for the community.
A Service to Meet the Needs
The Interdisciplinary Center for Autism Services
The Saint Louis University School of Education formed the Interdisciplinary Center for Autism Services in July 2010. The Center is designed to address autism services and provide families with resources for educational transitions and meetings on their rights in the education system. The Center provides parents with resources and guidance in the IEP process, assists parents in accessing educational resources, and provides support to families that may be overwhelmed by an Individualized Education Program. Following this, the Center also offers support to parents in accessing educational resources, as well as guidance in the IEP process. The Center provides support to parents in accessing educational resources, as well as guidance in the IEP process.

The Interdisciplinary Center for Autism Services


The Center provides in-depth autism evaluations for school-aged children and has recently begun evaluating high school students. The Center employs a team of experts including physicians, occupational therapists, speech therapists, and social workers to provide families with support and guidance in the IEP process.

A Pipeline for Educators
The Grow Your Own Teacher Program
When Saint Louis University School of Education leaders spoke with urban district superintendents, there was one consistent sentiment: Greater St. Louis area districts and we especially need teachers who represent our community in our schools. In Fall 2013, the Grow Your Own Teacher (GYOT) Program was created to invest in local students to build a diverse pipeline of teachers for their urban schools. As the School’s program coordinator for community projects, Ryan Wilson, M.Ed., writes to raise funds and grow the GYOT program, recruit aspiring teachers and connect them to positions in their own communities. In an effort to break down barriers for students who have a high need for assistance, GYOT students receive scholarships to attend the School of Education. By starting early, the program menstruates students interested in an education degree and equips them with the tools to succeed.

“After four years at SLU, those students know they want to teach and love to teach. We are excited to have the opportunity to put into our community’s schools and talk to students about pursuing a career in education.”

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The American superintendent/CEO of Ferguson-Florissant School District and Distinguished Fellow, Ritter, Ph.D., to develop opportunities in education for underserved students. Exuding an enthusiasm for education and bringing a desire to do good within his community, he works with SLU School of Education Dean Gary Art McCoy, Ph.D., recognized from a First Distinguished Fellow in the St. Louis community, he works with SLU School of Education Dean Gary Art McCoy, Ph.D., to develop opportunities in education for underserved students.

Building Bridges
First Distinguished Fellow

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Christa Jackson, Ph.D., prepares her students to teach mathematics and science courses with integrated classroom experiences. She dedicates in-studio an appreciation for mathematics and the sciences and builds an excitement for learning among her students. Through writing children’s books about diverse STEM subjects in their lives, she teaches an appreciation for mathematics and the sciences and encourages others to see the beauty of these STEM subjects in their lives.

“Takako Nomi, Ph.D., believes graduate students will have the best experience when they have a sense of curiosity and a desire to learn more than the content. As an associate professor in the School of Education, she leverages her passion for Saint Louis University to guide her students to make visible impacts with data and conduct careful research that will benefit education and society.

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From working as a doctoral student to now serving as an assistant professor of educational leadership, Jaime Welborn, Ph.D., leverages her passion for Saint Louis University to impact students. Her work in Cultural Proficiency spans over her time on a grant from the Saudi Arabian Cultural Mission, Building Leadership for Change through School Immersion, and lead in the Executive Director of the MidWest Collaborative for Cultural Proficiency. She also published her first book in 2022 to educate teachers and school leaders on the Cultural Proficiency framework and tools to use in the classroom. Welborn seeks to increase equity, diversity, and access in education, and encourages her students to walk through doors to find their own life-changing opportunities.

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“We need people who see humanity for what it is, as one humanity, even though we have some different aspects. There’s so much joy and beauty involved in science. I tell my students that even if they come into my class with a total disregard for mathematics, their thoughts and fears into an appreciation for mathematics.”

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Using Data to Further the Mission

A Conversation with PRiME Center Director, Evan Rhinesmith, Ph.D.

In 2019, the Saint Louis University School of Education opened the Policy Research in Missouri Education (PRiME) Center and cemented its commitment to bringing research and evidence into education policy discussions to benefit all Missouri students. The Center provides educators and leaders with critical data to build strong and equitable education systems throughout the state.

Evan Rhinesmith, Ph.D., has led the PRiME Center as director for research and evaluation since its inception. He and his team conduct research and analyze data that provides evidence on education to inform key stakeholders entrusted with important education decisions in Missouri.

"Much of our work endeavors to better understand the characteristics of schools that are truly fostering student growth," he said. "Our goal is to inform conversations and highlight those schools and efforts that help students improve and grow year-to-year."

The PRiME Center's work does not stop with the curation and distribution of data. It continues through developing relationships with educators, lawmakers, families, and other community groups. By working directly with its partners, the Center strives to be a trusted voice for Missouri education — providing research and evidence around pertinent questions in education such as school funding, student success rates, and enrollment trends.

The PRiME Center strives to expand its voice throughout Missouri and generate conversations in education that serve the greater community.

Cameron Anglum, Ph.D., came to Saint Louis University to make a difference in education policy. As an assistant professor of educational studies and a PRiME Center researcher, his research passions lie in education finance and the intersection between school funding and teacher labor markets. His work seeks to inform Missouri policymakers on issues related to teacher salaries, turnover, and equitable teacher resources in order to inspire reforms and better policies.

"We don’t motivate a student to pursue a particular research interest," he said. "They come to us brimming with motivation and passion for research, and it is our job to harness their analytic capabilities so they can unleash their research passions to affect positive change."

— Evan Rhinesmith, Ph.D.

Director of Research and Evaluation of the PRiME Center

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— Jonathan Turk, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Higher Education

With a refreshed curriculum, opportunities to expand their research, and access to faculty who support their growth, Turk and the School of Education give students the chance to come together to share and create knowledge that will meaningfully transform higher education.

— Jonathan Turk, Ph.D.

Assistant Professor of Higher Education

The study of higher education gives its students opportunities to challenge perspectives and make contributions to change. Jonathan Turk, Ph.D., shares his extensive experiences in higher education to prepare graduate students to be the next generation of scholarly leaders on and off college and university campuses. Through his research to advance college student success and strengthen community colleges, he seeks to prepare professionals to be effective leaders who are champions for students and drivers for more-equitable higher education.

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A Role Model for Young Minds

A Student Story with Sophomore Cammy Fuller

Our first encounters with education lie within the doors of our pre-k and kindergarten classrooms. Teachers of these young children strive to instill passion and positivity for their students’ first school experience.

Like many of us, sophomore Cammy Fuller has fond memories of her kindergarten teacher and how she supported her. As a future teacher, Cammy seeks to be a role model for her students.

“When I was younger, I never saw teachers of color until I entered high school,” she said. “As a future kindergarten teacher, I want other children of color to see and know they have someone who understands them at that side.”

Fuller’s journey to the School of Education was different than most. Originally planning to obtain her degree in social work, she always knew she wanted to work with children. But, one day, she heard a student presentation about choosing a major in college that changed her trajectory and pushed her to pursue her passion for teaching.

Since her first education classes, she knew she found her career path. While the content of her coursework challenged her, she also made valuable connections with faculty members who shared knowledge, asked deep questions, and emulated joy in their work in order to prepare her for the classroom.

“Leading by Example

A Student Story with Senior Desiree Jason

Recruiting and retaining prospective students takes enthusiasm, confidence, and current students who believe in your mission. Senior Desiree Jason serves the Saint Louis University School of Education as both an aspiring teacher and a passionate advocate through its ambassador program.

Her role as one of the first faces a prospective student encounters on a tour increases her leadership skills and helps recruit future teachers.

“Being an ambassador has been one of my favorite experiences at SLU. I have designed career presentations for 8th grade students and have spoken to high school juniors and seniors about my experiences as a student in the undergraduate program.”

— Desiree Jason

SLU School of Education Class of ’23

Jason became an ambassador to help other young students understand how the SLU School of Education provides a degree and much more. She highlights the family atmosphere of the School that is devoted to the growth and success of every aspiring teacher.

“SLU has a phenomenal education program,” she said. “If you pursue your degree here, you will meet students and professors that change your life. They care for you and will support you with advice, career opportunities, and compassion long after graduation.”

As Jason prepares to embark on her teaching career, her passion for attentiveness and acceptance will inspire her students to learn, develop, and create in and out of her classroom.

“Fostering Talent and Joy

A Student Story with Senior Grace Hoover

When Grace Hoover arrived at Saint Louis University, she had three goals: graduate from an academically rigorous Jesuit university, make a difference in the community, and serve as a bilingual teacher. Now, as a senior undergraduate student, she reflects on her growth and accomplishments within the Schools of Education, and her commitment to placing her in classrooms to increase her Spanish fluency.

“Four years ago, I came in without additional college credits, but I had a dream to pursue an education degree with a minor in Spanish. I am so grateful to SLU for putting me in schools as early as my first semester freshman year and accommodating my desire to work in a bilingual school.”

— Grace Hoover

SLU School of Education Class of ’23

As Hoover prepares for student teaching and graduation, she highlights the School of Education’s commitment to each student and the support provided to each student throughout their entire career.
As a Catholic school principal and superintendent in Texas, Darbie Saford, Ed.D., recognizes the greatest need for its schools lies in leadership. Among her colleagues and peers, she hears countless stories of classroom frustrations, questions that need answers, and a desire to motivate change for the faith, formation and education of young Catholics. In 2015, Saint Louis University created a Catholic educational leadership cohort in the Diocese of Dallas that met the needs of principal and Catholic education leaders who wanted to pursue their doctorate. Students participated in courses taught by visiting SLU professors on weekends at Jesuit College Preparatory School of Dallas — without leaving their home state. Students and other leaders to gain their leadership degree while actively working in Catholic education.

“I was very interested in Dallas’ Catholic education,” she said. “I wanted to learn about it, feel it, study it...so I could be a leader in it.”

Professor Saford had already completed her master’s degree at Saint Louis University, and had a strong sense of calling to pursue her doctorate, partly because of her experiences working in the Archdiocese of St. Louis with SLU professors on weekends. “I was very interested in Dallas’ Catholic education,” she said. “I wanted to learn about it, feel it, study it...so I could be a leader in it.”

TLA School of Education Alumnus

“Since her graduation, additional cohort programs in Houston and San Antonio have formed alongside Dallas, and other leaders to gain their leadership degree while actively working in Catholic education.”

Darbie Saford, Ed.D.

SLU School of Education Alumna

Superintendents and Principals of all superintendents in St. Louis and the surrounding counties have one or more degrees from Saint Louis University. Thirty percent of superintendents from the state of Missouri have one or more degrees from Saint Louis University. Fourty percent of all superintendents in St. Louis and the surrounding counties have one or more degrees from Saint Louis University. Fifty percent of superintendents in the state of Missouri have one or more degrees from Saint Louis University.

The program helps others grow as leaders in the classroom and for the faith,” she said. “If you seek to grow as a leader in Catholic education, look to Saint Louis University to develop both your skills and your faith as you go forth to teach and lead.”

Darbie Saford, Ed.D.

SLU School of Education Alumna

“This program reaffirmed my calling of serving as an administrator in education,” he said. “The program teaches on matters like facility planning and curriculum audits that I would not have learned while working for my district. The degree you receive from the School of Education is incredibly valuable for leading any school administration wish to directly apply his skills and hear of advanced job opportunities from his professors. One of those opportunities turned into his current role as the Chief Financial Officer of the Riverview Gardens School District. Sometimes, in education, certain administrative roles are downplayed. Saint Louis University emphasized that no matter what position you serve in at a school, it matters to your school’s educational environment and success.”

Lavon Singleton, Ed.D.

SLU School of Education Alumnus

As a Career, Laureate, Larry Green, Ph.D., proudly stated to his entire family that he would go to college and become a teacher. Now, his dedication to his profession has impacted not only his students, but also his family’s outlook on higher education opportunities.

“The program helped me to expand my horizons,” he said. “I have a singular goal for myself to earn my degree as anyone else who could use it, and ‘have’ a singular goal for myself to earn my degree as anyone else who could use it. This program provided an avenue for principals, superintendents, and other leaders to gain their leadership degree while actively working in Catholic education.”

Larry Green, Ph.D.

SLU School of Education Alumnus

The Value Beyond a Degree

A conversation with Lavon Singleton, Ed.D.

Before Lavon Singleton, Ed.D., came to Saint Louis University to pursue his doctorate in educational leadership, he never anticipated the breadth of knowledge and connections he would develop. Singleton worked in a variety of business administration and financial roles throughout his career and explained that the pursuit of his education degree has driven him to excel as an administrator.

Sometimes, in education, certain administrative roles are downplayed. Saint Louis University emphasized that no matter what position you serve in at a school, it matters to your school’s educational environment and success.”

Lavon Singleton, Ed.D.

SLU School of Education Alumnus

Beyond a Degree

A conversation with Larry Green, Ph.D.

As a Career, Laureate, Larry Green, Ph.D., proudly stated to his entire family that he would go to college and become a teacher. Now, his dedication to his profession has impacted not only his students, but also his family’s outlook on higher education opportunities.

“This program reaffirmed my calling of serving as an administrator in education,” he said. “The program teaches on matters like facility planning and curriculum audits that I would not have learned while working for my district. The degree you receive from the School of Education is incredibly valuable for leading any school administration wish to directly apply his skills and hear of advanced job opportunities from his professors. One of those opportunities turned into his current role as the Chief Financial Officer of the Riverview Gardens School District.

As he looks back on his experience, he believes the program and the School’s expectation places its doctoral students at the top of any school administration wish to directly apply his skills and hear of advanced job opportunities from his professors. One of those opportunities turned into his current role as the Chief Financial Officer of the Riverview Gardens School District.

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A teacher’s impact stretches beyond the classroom lessons and the textbooks. They shape our minds, care for our hearts, and serve the greater community.

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