



Association of Teacher Educators
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Dr. Valerie Wright Begins Presidency of the Association of Teacher Educators for 2026-2027

Manassas, VA – March 3, 2026 — The Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) proudly announces **Dr. Valerie Wright as President for the 2026–2027** term. A distinguished educator, scholar, and national leader in teacher preparation, Dr. Wright brings more than 38 years of experience in education and a deep, sustained commitment to advancing the teaching profession.

Dr. Wright serves as Department Chair of the Undergraduate Education Program at Saint Leo University, where she has taught graduate and undergraduate students since 2002. A Professor in the College of Arts, Sciences & Allied Services, she specializes in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis in Reading and Language Arts. Her work centers on preparing future educators to meet the evolving needs of diverse learners with skill, compassion, and purpose.

Throughout her career, Dr. Wright has demonstrated exemplary leadership at the national, state, and institutional levels. She currently serves as Executive Secretary of the Southeast Regional ATE (SRATE) and Executive Director of the Florida Association of Teacher Educators (FATE). Her previous service to ATE includes roles as Council of Unit Presidents (CUP) Liaison to the ATE Board of Directors and Chair of the CUP Executive Board, reflecting her longstanding dedication to strengthening the Association’s state and regional partnerships.

At Saint Leo University, Dr. Wright has held numerous leadership roles, including Senate President, Chair of both the Undergraduate and Graduate Curriculum Committees, and member of the Promotion and Tenure Committee. She has also served as faculty advisor to student organizations such as Florida Future Educators of America (FFEA) and Delta Epsilon Sigma, mentoring many first-generation and non-traditional students as they pursued careers in teaching. In addition, she served as Union President for the United Faculty of Saint Leo University, advocating for faculty excellence and shared governance.

As President, Dr. Wright has selected the theme:

Building Bridges: Connecting Pedagogy, Passion, and Practice

This theme will guide both the 2026 Summer Conference in Seattle, Washington, and the 2027 Annual Meeting in Atlanta, Georgia. It reflects Dr. Wright’s belief that educators must harmonize their personal passion for teaching with research-based pedagogical practices while remaining grounded in their purpose to create meaningful and lasting impact in students’ lives.

President Wright’s agenda for the coming year emphasizes collaboration, innovation, and proactive leadership. She will focus on expanding connections among ATE’s national, state, and regional affiliates, noting:

“Our state units are the foundation of ATE, and I look forward to supporting them and helping them grow their membership over the coming year.”

She also plans to elevate the visibility and impact of ATE’s Special Interest Groups (SIGs), recognizing them as essential communities of practice that foster innovation, professional development, networking, and focused research around shared priorities.

In addition, President Wright will call for the formation of an ATE Commission on Preservice Teacher Safety and Preparedness to examine how educator preparation programs address campus safety, crisis response, and educator well-being. Speaking to this priority, she states:

“Institutions of higher education have a responsibility to prepare future educators not only to teach effectively, but to navigate the complex realities of today’s school environments.”

Under Dr. Wright’s leadership, ATE will continue its longstanding mission of advancing teacher education through collaboration, research, advocacy, and professional learning. Her presidency signals a year of strengthened partnerships, thoughtful innovation, and bold engagement with the challenges and opportunities facing educator preparation.

About the Association of Teacher Educators

Founded in 1920, the Association of Teacher Educators is a national individual membership organization devoted solely to the improvement of teacher education for both school-based and post-secondary teacher educators. ATE advances educator preparation through professional development, scholarship, leadership cultivation, and collaboration among PK–12 and higher education partners across the United States.

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