PSE Newsletter



EDITORIAL

The 12th edition of the PSE newsletter provides an update on selected current PSE activities related to teacher education. This issue highlights the project seminar "Taking a Stand in School?!", a look back at the 2026 autumn conference, the conclusion of the "Teachers as Changemakers" (TaC) project, news from the Competence Center for Digital Teaching and Learning (DigiLLabs), and the 2026 ERASMUS DAYS at the PSE.

In the area of internationalization, we have successfully secured a "Blended Intensive Programme." This is covered in a report that also offers a preview of the 6th GoTEd+ Week, scheduled for February 2027. This edition also features a short Q&A with our secretary, Martina Eicher, giving you the chance to get to know her better.

We wish everyone a successful 2026/27 winter semester.

Best regards,

Thomas Trefzger, Matthias Erhardt & Angelika Füting-Lippert

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KARL SCHLECHT STIFTUNG

INTERDISCIPLINARY PROJECT SEMINAR WITH INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL UNIVERSITY COLLABORATIONS

TAKING A STAND AT SCHOOL?!

A CINEMATIC EXPLORATION

What does "stance" (or "attitude") mean? How is it linked to leadership? What do stance and leadership have to do with values and conflicts? These questions were the focus of an interdisciplinary, practice-oriented seminar held during the 2026 summer semester, which culminated in the production of short films as the final assessment.



The Würzburg (seminar) team, with instructors Sabine Kehr and Angelika Füting-Lippert (Photo: KSS)

Twelve engaged students explored these issues, developing their own perspectives to address this complex and highly relevant topic through film. Many drew on their own experiences from internships or teacher training periods, where they had encountered both exemplary and problematic attitudes among teachers and students. Often, in the heat of conflict, individuals lacked the routines or options for action needed to take a clear, principled stand—to demonstrate a firm stance and serve as a role model within the school environment. From both a professional and an educational standpoint, there is a pressing need for pre-service teachers to engage with the concepts of stance and leadership before they begin their professional practice.
A highlight of the seminar was the collaboration with Anita Hajani, a teacher at the "Ankerzentrum" (a reception and integration center) in Schweinfurt—specifically, the Hugo-von-Trimberg-Mittelschule in Niederwerrn. Ms. Hajani shared how she must consistently demonstrate a clear stance in the classroom to foster a sense of community within culturally diverse groups. The students were deeply engaged, and one group produced a short film in collaboration with the Ankerzentrum.

The seminar was organized by the PSE (Professional School of Education)—represented by Dr. Angelika Füting-Lippert—in cooperation with Sabine Kehr from the Department of Politics and Society Education (Didaktik Politik und Gesellschaft), and with the support of the Karl Schlecht Foundation (KSS). It was titled: "Taking a Stance (in School)?!" The participants explored the attitudes, mindsets, and emotional stability of teachers and, working alongside a professional filmmaker, collaboratively produced a short film on the subject of leadership and professional stance. The students were encouraged to—and learned how to—demonstrate and reflect upon democratic attitudes and mindsets within the school environment. Furthermore, they acquired the skills to create professional short films (covering storyline, dramaturgy, format, and concept). Both the capacity to adopt a professional stance and media literacy are essential "future skills" for everyday teaching and are highly relevant to fostering democracy in schools.

FILM AWARD?

Three of the short films produced will take part in the F+X Award in Stuttgart on November 6, 2026. Following this, the short films will be made available on the PSE website.

PART 1 – STRENGTHENING THE HEALTH OF STUDENTS

UNDERSTANDING CONSPICUOUS BEHAVIOR

Following a welcome address by Prof. Siller, a member of the PSE Executive Board, who emphasised the importance of seeking to understand students and explained that this meant "not jumping to conclusions, but asking about causes, contexts and possible support needs", Sybille Schulze from the Government of Lower Franconia and Matthias Erhardt, Managing Director of the PSE, welcomed circa 480 guests. Schulze was particularly pleased "that so many school development officers …, school inspectors from the local education authorities, headteachers, training center directors, teachers, as well as trainee teachers and students have come together to address the current and pressing issues in schools, so that they can work with a view to the future". Erhardt thanked the conference sponsors (BLLV, GEW, bpv, brlv and Europafels e.V.) and emphasised the importance of neurodiversity for work in schools.



Prof. Siller, Dr. Erhardt, Ms. Schulze, and the plenary session; Photo top right: Prof. Lenhard during the keynote presentation (Photo: Ch. Weiß)



WHAT IS THE STATE OF OUR CHILDREN'S AND ADOLESCENTS' MENTAL HEALTH?

Prof. Lenhard successfully introduced the conference theme with his keynote speech. Using statistical data, he highlighted the current state of mental health amongst our children and young people. Alongside the marked increase in mental health disorders amongst young people – particularly following the COVID-19 pandemic – and an almost universally poor performance in reading literacy in the PISA assessments, there are also some rays of hope: violence in schools has fallen significantly over the last few decades, as have alcohol and tobacco consumption. Lenhard painted a nuanced picture, which provided a solid foundation for the subsequent panel discussion.

Regarding the presentation

Regierung von Unterfranken | MB für die Realschulen in Unterfranken | mb Der Ministerialbeauftragte für die Gymnasien in Unterfranken | Berufliche Oberschule MB Nord | Staatliche Schulberatung

17. AUTUMN CONFERENCE ON 1. OCTOBER 2026

PART 2 – STRENGTHENING THE HEALTH OF STUDENTS

UNDERSTANDING CONSPICUOUS BEHAVIOR

PANEL DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES

Moderated by Andreas Jungbauer of the "Main-Post", he discussed the causes of mental health issues amongst pupils with Ulf Cronenberg from the Lower Franconia School Counselling Centre, Stefanie Frahsek from the Würzburg Family and Parenting Counselling Centre, and Dr Arne Bürger from the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at Würzburg University Hospital. During the discussion, Frahsek emphasised the parents' perspective in particular, whilst Cronenberg described the school's perspective and Bürger shared his views from a psychiatrist's perspective.

IN-DEPTH EXPLORATION ACROSS TWO ROUNDS OF WORKSHOPS

In the afternoon, conference participants were able to explore individual aspects of the conference theme in greater depth through a series of workshops. The programme covered a wide range of topics, from 'Don't wait to fail – why challenging behaviour is often a cry for help' to 'Understanding trauma – supporting children and young people with refugee and trauma experiences at school'. Almost all the workshops were fully booked, and we are looking forward to receiving the participants' feedback, which was collected via a feedback survey.

TAC AWARDS CEREMONY

The groups from the three winning schools waited with bated breath for the announcement of the TaC Awards for community-focused initiatives. Third prize went to the 'Urban Gardening' P-seminar at the Olympia-Morata-Gymnasium in Schweinfurt for the project 'Easy Language 2.0 – Easy Listening', the Matthias-Grünewald-Gymnasium in Würzburg received second prize, and this year's first prize was won by the Alexander-von-Humboldt-Gymnasium in Schweinfurt with the project '#mitcouragegegenhassimnetz'. During the award presentations, the individual projects were introduced, and the exceptional commitment of the pupils, teachers and supervisors was highlighted. A group of people with disabilities from Arche gGmbH in Würzburg had travelled specially for the second prize; they had actively supported the pupils in the project. The award winners were delighted with their prizes and the recognition they received.



Group photo with the winning teams of the TaC Awards 2026. (Photo: Ch. Weiß)

TOPIC FOR 2027?

In an on-site survey, participants identified "digitalization and AI" as well as "heterogeneity and differentiation" as preferred topics for 2027.

TEACHERS AS CHANGEMAKERS (TAC)

A LOOK BACK AND AHEAD

SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION

CONCLUSION

The project ends in December 2026 — leaving behind a wealth of experience and insights into embedding SEE in teacher education, as well as the SEE self-study course and the TaC Toolbox, which are already available free of charge and on a permanent basis. This ensures that the materials developed can continue to be used in the future, so that SEE remains an integral part of Bavarian teacher education.

The "Teachers as Changemakers (TaC)" project raises awareness among and trains teacher candidates, faculty members, and teachers to implement the action-oriented educational approach known as Social Entrepreneurship Education (SEE) in schools and higher education institutions. The focus is on future-oriented skills such as creative, solution-oriented, and responsible action.

During the summer semester of 2026, TaC offered a variety of opportunities to learn about SEE and test it in practice. In the STEM seminar, students planned and facilitated a school-based STEM action day and gained valuable experience in designing hands-on learning opportunities. The Impact Workshop on April 23 focused on the TaC Toolbox, which outlines SEE methods. These methods were tested and reflected upon with a view to their application in various subjects. The semester was rounded out by the new WueCampus self-study course "Social Entrepreneurship Education Compact" and the presentation of the TaC Awards to Lower Franconian P-seminars that demonstrate exceptional social engagement.



Snapshot STEM action day 2026 (Photo PSE)

The TaC project will conclude with the 2026–27 winter semester. However, several events are planned for the final stretch: The digital lecture series "Teaching for Impact" provides foundational knowledge and ideas from various perspectives on integrating SEE into schools and colleges. The seminar "Hands-on: Teachers as Changemakers in the LehrLernGarten" focuses on the practical implementation of ESD methods and interdisciplinary instruction. In addition, professional development sessions on the TaC Toolbox are planned for Bavarian teachers.

DIGILLABS@JMU

DIGITALIZATION AND AI

NETWORKING AND TEACHING

WÜRZBURG DIGILLAB AT THE BAVARIAN DIGILLABS NETWORK MEETING

On 29 July 2026, the heads of the Bavarian DigiLLabs met at the University of Passau. The DigiLLabs@JMU were represented by Prof. Dr Silke Grafe (spokesperson) and coordinator Tina Heurich. Following a keynote presentation, colleagues from Passau introduced their laboratories, including the staff room, classrooms, video studio and makerspace. In the afternoon, participants worked in Barcamp sessions on topics such as AI in teacher education, media technology, basic digital skills during practical training phases and joint research projects. The next steps for collaboration between the sites were also planned during these sessions.



Network Meeting of the Bavarian digiLLabs 2026 (Photo: PSE)

INTERDISCIPLINARY MEDIA EDUCATION ON THE TOPIC OF AI: STUDENTS DEVELOP AND TEST INNOVATIVE TEACHING CONCEPTS

From 21 to 23 July 2026, the seminar ‘Artificial Intelligence in Schools from an Interdisciplinary Perspective’, led by Norbert Noster and Tina Heurich, took place at DigiMINT. The focus was on microteaching sessions, in which the students developed, delivered and collectively reflected on subject-specific teaching ideas relating to the use of AI. In addition to subject-specific learning objectives, the sessions also addressed media literacy, critical thinking, and the opportunities, limitations and ethical issues surrounding AI-based systems.



Seminar "AI in Schools: An Interdisciplinary Approach" (Photo: PSE)

EXPERIENCING AI, AR AND VR IN A SEMINAR: THE USE OF MEDIA IN POLITICS AND SOCIETY AT DIGIPHIL

On 29 June 2026, students from Sabine Kehr’s seminar ‘The Use of Media in Politics and Society’ visited DigiPhil. Together with Tina Heurich, they tried out AI-powered explanatory videos and AR applications such as MauAR, the Climate App and WDR 1933–1945. VR headsets were also used for a virtual tour of the Anne Frank House and a 360-degree exploration of the Bundestag. The potential and limitations for teaching politics and society were discussed.



Seminar "Politics and Society" (Photo: PSE)

ERASMUS DAYS 2026 AT PSE

WANDERLUST INCLUDED

Music has the power to bring us to places we have never been. Sometimes, it even sparks a desire to explore these places in person one day. This is exactly what many students experienced during this year's Erasmus Days on 13 and 15 October, when the PSE hosted an information stand at Z6 and in the foyer of the Hubland Süd canteen.





At the heart of the stand was an engaging music quiz that challenged participants to match a variety of songs to their countries of origin. The quiz focused exclusively on countries where the PSE's partner universities are located, making them potential destinations for a semester abroad. With great enthusiasm, students guessed, discussed and debated where the different songs might come from. The quiz not only encouraged active participation but also offered new perspectives on different countries and cultures, while sparking ideas about the exciting experiences that studying abroad can bring.

But the Erasmus Days 2026 had much more to offer than musical guesswork. The event gave preservice teachers the opportunity to learn more about the wide range of options to study abroad as part of their degree programme. A broad selection of informative brochures offered an initial overview of potential destinations and exchange programmes. Our team was also on hand to provide individual advice and answer specific questions about planning a semester abroad and the requirements involved.





Snapshots from the ERASMUS DAYS (Photo: PSE)

All in all, we look back on successful Erasmus Days 2026, which inspired students to explore international opportunities and take their first steps towards studying abroad.

Further information regarding international offerings can be found on the website.

„BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMME“ (BIP)

PART 1 – INTERNATIONAL TEACHER TRAINING

NEW APPROACHES IN THE ERASMUS+

LEARNING ABOUT EDUCATION TOGETHER

How is education understood in different cultural contexts? How do different education systems address diversity? And what can teacher education students learn from perspectives that extend beyond their own national experience?

These questions form the basis of the new English-language seminar, “New Perspectives through Exchange on Education – A Comparison of Approaches to Differentiation”, which will be offered for the first time in the winter semester of 2026/27. Students from Germany, Spain and the Czech Republic will explore different perspectives together and work in international groups.

The programme is organised as an Erasmus+ Blended Intensive Programme (BIP). This European Union funding scheme combines virtual collaboration with a short period of face-to-face learning. In this case, the seminar brings together digital collaboration between the three universities and a joint in-person phase in Würzburg.

CROSS-BORDER EXCHANGE

Teacher training in Würzburg is strengthening its international focus: the Professional School of Education (PSE) is launching a new Erasmus+ project with partner universities in Spain and the Czech Republic.

In collaboration with the University of Cádiz in Spain and the University of Hradec Králové in the Czech Republic, the Professional School of Education (PSE) at Julius Maximilian University of Würzburg (JMU) is launching a new international seminar. The programme combines online sessions with an in-person component in Würzburg.

The focus is on cross-national exchange, the comparison of different education systems, and the question of how schools can best respond to diversity and the individual needs of pupils.

RECAP UND TEASER

A review of the 5th GoTEd+ Week in 2025 can be viewed here.

A preview of the 6th GoTEd+ Week 2027 can be found on page 10.

> ***The opportunity to enable students from our partner universities to take part in GoTEd+ Week for the first time with financial support, and thus to promote international collaboration at student level, was the main motivation for submitting our application,“***

explains Maike Madera, Erasmus+ and GoTEd+ project coordinator at the PSE.

„BLENDED INTENSIVE PROGRAMME“ (BIP)

PART 2 – INTERNATIONAL TEACHER TRAINING

NEW APPROACHES IN THE ERASMUS+

COMPARING EDUCATION SYSTEMS ACROSS NATIONAL BORDERS

The course focuses in particular on cultural diversity in schools. Particular attention is paid to how the targeted support of individual pupils is understood and put into practice in different countries.

Students compare similarities and differences between the three education systems and critically examine educational inequalities. At the same time, they reflect on how their own cultural background can shape their perceptions of teaching, learning and educational opportunities.

Through international collaboration, participants learn to view teaching and learning processes from a transnational perspective while strengthening their skills in intercultural communication and cooperation.

FROM VIRTUAL EXCHANGE TO THE CONFERENCE IN WÜRZBURG

In the winter semester of 2026/27, the students will first get to know one another during two online meetings in November and December and begin working together on the course topics.

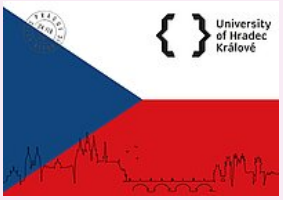
The highlight will be the subsequent in-person phase in Würzburg. From 22 to 26 February 2027, the international students will take part in the 6th GoTEd+ Week, the PSE's international winter school. There, they will meet their fellow students from the partner universities in person and present the results of their joint project.

The project gives teacher training students from all types of schools the opportunity to gain international experience as part of their studies and earn credits (ECTS) towards their degree – for example, 5 ECTS for JMU students.



UNIVERSITÄT CÁDIZ

PSE's cooperation partner in Spain introduces itself (Link to the YouTube-Clip).



UNIVERSITÄT HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ

PSE's cooperation partner in the Czech Republic introduces itself (Link to the YouTube-Clip).

6TH GOTED+ WEEK 22-26 FEBRUARY 2027

EMPOWERING EDUCATION FOR TRANSFORMATION

KEY QUESTIONS

How can education drive transformation?

What role do teachers play in an increasingly diverse, multilingual, and AI-driven world?

And how can teachers actively contribute to shaping schools and society?

Under the overarching theme "Empowering Education for Transformation," the international conference will bring together academics, teachers, and education professionals from around 15 international partner universities. A diverse programme of lectures, workshops, and discussion sessions will provide opportunities to explore different perspectives, exchange experiences, and reflect together on the future of education.

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES – FROM MULTILINGUALISM TO AI

The programme covers a broad range of current topics in education and teacher education. Sessions will explore, among other things, how empathy can be fostered through foreign language education, the TASLL Framework for language-sensitive teaching, and the changing role and authority of teachers in Italian primary education.

Other contributions will focus on multilingualism and creativity as resources for resilient educational transformation, as well as on how teachers can be prepared for an increasingly AI-driven future. Key topics will include pedagogical judgement, ethical responsibility, and global citizenship, alongside practical questions of teaching and classroom practice.

EXPERIENCING EDUCATION: INSIGHTS INTO EVERYDAY SCHOOL LIFE

A particular – and now traditional – highlight of the GoTEd+ Week is the visit to a school in Würzburg. During classroom observations, participants will have the opportunity to experience school and teaching first-hand and gain direct insights into educational practice.

The school visit also provides an opportunity to connect the international discussions of the conference with the realities of education on the ground: What does good teaching look like across different educational systems? What challenges do teachers face in their everyday work? And what ideas and approaches can be taken from international perspectives and incorporated into teacher education?

EXCHANGE, DISCUSSION, AND INTERNATIONAL NETWORKING

Alongside the academic programme, personal exchange and international networking are at the heart of the GoTEd+ Week. Participants will have the opportunity to meet students and educators from different countries, build new connections, and share experiences and perspectives on schools, teaching, and teacher education.

Link to further information and registration (open mid-November)

Students studying to become teachers, teacher educators, and practising teachers who are interested in international perspectives on education and keen to engage with new ideas, stimulating discussions, and international encounters are warmly invited to join the GoTEd+ Week 2027.



Martina Eicher (Photo: Ch.Weiß)

I CONSISTENTLY FIND STUDENTS IN TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS TO BE VERY COMMITTED, PURPOSEFUL, AND RELIABLE.

An interview with Martina Eicher from the PSE administrative office about her responsibilities and how she unwinds in nature.

What special date do you associate with the PSE?

1 July 2024 was my first day at work at PSE and, after more than 30 years at my previous company, it was a huge challenge for me. I've been at PSE for over two years, I really enjoy the work, and looking back I have to say: I made the right choice!

What experiences have you had at th PSE so far, with teachers and in relation to education and educational research?

In the secretariat, I also work alongside preservice teachers. They're employed by us as student assistants and help us with events such as the autumn conference, the graduates' ceremony, the student fair and much more. I've found them to be consistently very committed, determined and reliable.

What are your responsibilities at PSE?

As well as all the administrative tasks that come with working in a secretariat, I'm also responsible for organising events such as the graduation ceremony for preservice teachers. It's always lovely to see the beaming faces of the graduates, proud of what they've achieved and ready for the next chapter.

What was your funniest experience at university?

The vegetable garden that my colleagues once made for me as a birthday present. It was a really funny idea. The various figures, each accompanied by a delicious recipe, show me harvesting between the beds – not to mention the deckchair, so that I can relax once the work is done…

What are your interests and hobbies? What do you like to do when you're not at the PSE?

I spend a lot of time outdoors running and hiking, and from May onwards you'll usually find me in the garden in my little greenhouse tending to my tomatoes, peppers and the like. I enjoy baking, even when it's a bit more labour-intensive, and when the weather outside gets too unpleasant, I retreat to the sofa with a good book.



DATES & ANNOUNCEMENTS

OKT 21

Lecture Series „Teaching for Impact“

Wednesdays, Oct 21, 2026 – Jan 27, 2027, 6:15 PM – online

NOV 11

Teaching Day featuring a PSE booth on "Internationalization"

Wed, Nov 11, 2026, 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM – Z6 foyer

DEZ 01

Lecture Series „Global Challenges in Teacher Education“

01/12/2026 – 19/01/2027, 12:00 PM – 2:00 PM – online

FEB 04

Celebration for graduates of teaching degree programs

Thu, February 4, 2027, 4:00 PM – Neubaukirche

FEB 22

6. GoTEd+ Week

Mon-Fri, 22-26 February 2027, all day – Z6

More information on our website

1.111 FOLLOWER

The PSE regularly posts information about teacher training programs at the University of Würzburg on Instagram.

The account has now surpassed the 1,111-follower mark. As a token of appreciation for their loyalty, two surprise packages were raffled off among all the followers.

PSE-Insta-Account

IMPRINT

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