

Making Waves

UC Berkeley
School of Education

Impact 2025



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COVER Rippling outward and rising up to transform the present and shape the future

\$3.7M

awarded to students in
**SCHOLARSHIPS
+ FELLOWSHIPS**



7.5x

more new donors
than the campus average

BSE +5.60%

AVG +0.75%



7 ENDOWED Chairs

143,657

students served by current
LEAD EdD Students
leading in district offices



#2

World University
Rankings: Education
TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION

#6

Best Graduate
Education Schools
U.S. NEWS & WORLD REPORT



20 School Psychology

PHD STUDENTS ENGAGED IN

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

at **30** sites serving

510 students



\$16.9M

in annual funding for
RESEARCH

50%

of faculty are National
Academy of Education

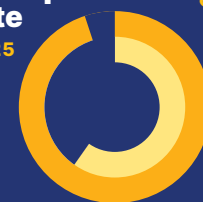
MEMBERS + 50%

of faculty are American
Educational Research
Association

FELLOWS



Principal
Leadership
Institute
COHORT 25



95% EDUCATORS OF COLOR
60% MULTILINGUAL

● From the Dean

Every graduate of the Berkeley School of Education sets in motion a wave of possibility. A single educator inspires countless students over the course of a career; those students in turn influence their families, communities, and beyond. They are the dreamers, innovators, teachers, artists, and leaders of tomorrow, making waves of their own.

Our BSE faculty make all of this possible. Their research, teaching, and mentoring has a multiplier effect, and in a moment when public education faces unprecedented challenges, their work has never been more vital.

Across equity, innovation, access to excellence, and the public good, our faculty and graduates are creating opportunity and amplifying impact. This takes shape in our commitment to questioning historical and accepted practices, disrupting systemic inequities, turning the tide toward justice and possibility, and reshaping what education can be.

We don't turn away from challenges—we rise to meet them. We seek clarity and transparent analysis through groundbreaking research and action across multiple contexts—from classrooms to boardrooms, from rural towns to urban neighborhoods.

This year's impact report captures the reach and resonance of the Berkeley School of Education. Each story, data point, and initiative is evidence of what happens when education meets purpose. At the BSE, we are transforming the present and shaping the future, making waves that don't just ripple outward, but rise up to foster opportunity and high-quality learning for all.



Michelle D. Young

Dean, Berkeley School of Education



ABOVE Berkeley School of Education Dean Michelle D. Young

Across equity, innovation, access to excellence, and the public good, our faculty and graduates are creating opportunity and amplifying impact.

Impact for the Public Good

Student art from
Berkeley Teacher
Education Program
in the field



Alum Spotlight Urvashi Sahni

Urvashi Sahni PhD '94, MA '90 is a social entrepreneur, women's rights activist, and educationist with over four decades of experience. A leading expert in school governance, curriculum reform, and girls' education, she is the founder and CEO of the Study Hall Educational Foundation (SHEF), which has reached more than 100,000 teachers and 5 million children from marginalized communities. A recipient of the 1999 Haas International Award from UC Berkeley and the 2017 Social Entrepreneur of the Year India award, Sahni is also an Ashoka Fellow and non-resident fellow at Brookings Institution's Center for Universal Education. In 2024, she was a fellow in Harvard's Advanced Leadership Initiative and previously served on Rajasthan's Chief Minister's advisory council.

● Sixty Years of Clarity and Purpose Frame Berkeley's School Psychology Program

Founded in 1965, the **Berkeley School Psychology Program** marked 60 years of impact and service with a milestone celebration that brought together alums, students, and faculty to honor the far-reaching influence of its graduates. Over six decades, graduates have advanced the field of school psychology as practitioners, researchers, university educators, program directors, and association leaders at local, state, national, and international levels. “What is so unusual about Berkeley graduates is the clarity we share about the role of the school psychologist,” said alum **Brent Duncan** PhD '86, MA '81. “A Berkeley-trained school psychologist—whether a practitioner, administrator, educator, or in private practice—has a clear conceptual framework and understands... the critical importance of preventing school failure and increasing well-being for all children.”

This program gave me more than just theoretical foundations and teaching skills; it gave me the courage to practice advocating for myself, to speak my truth, and to never forget the communities that shaped me. —BERKELEY TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM GRADUATE

● Preparing Teachers to Educate for a More Just World

The **Berkeley Teacher Education Program** (BTEP) prepares teachers committed to co-creating powerful and enriching classrooms that embody the values, relationships, and experiences of a more just world. With the support of a nearly \$3 million, 5-year grant from the Department of Education, BTEP has teamed with the BSE's Educational Sciences major to recruit undergraduates and paraprofessionals to earn teaching credentials. Reflecting on their BTEP experience, a recent graduate said: “This program gave me more than just theoretical foundations and teaching skills; it gave me the courage to practice advocating for myself, to speak my truth, and to never forget the communities that shaped me. I learned how to become a better educator, but most importantly, how to lead with integrity and humility in order to build meaningful relationships.... I leave BTEP more grounded in who I am and empowered to create the kind of learning opportunities that can change the world.”



ABOVE School Psychology Program anniversary attendees contribute to a timeline. **BELOW** Teaching and learning with BTEP in the field



Access to *Excellence*



Kindergartners
studying sand
crabs in the
Academic Talent
Development
Program's seashore
science class



Alum Spotlight
Elena Silva

Elena Silva PhD '02, MA '99, newly appointed president and CEO of the Learning Policy Institute (LPI), has built a distinguished career advancing educational equity and excellence. A two-time UC Berkeley graduate in Education, Silva has shaped national research agendas and driven policy change in leadership roles at New America, the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, and the American Association of University Women. Her early work managing youth leadership programs and launching one of the nation's first AmeriCorps service initiatives reflects her lifelong commitment to expanding opportunity. Today, Silva leads LPI's efforts to turn rigorous research into actionable policies that ensure all children—regardless of background—have access to high-quality learning.

● **A Bold New Pathway Brings the Brilliance of Berkeley to Educational Sciences**

The BSE celebrated the first graduating class in **Educational Sciences**, a new undergraduate major designed to transform pre-K–16 schooling through equity and inclusion. The major prepares students to become educational researchers, curriculum and learning specialists, policy analysts, teachers, and educational leaders who are dedicated to fostering human thriving through learning and ensuring democracy remains responsive to all. At Commencement, **Emma Rose Neal**, a first-generation immigrant and undergraduate researcher with the Center for Research on Expanding Educational Opportunity, delivered an inspiring speech. As co-president of Aspiring Educators and Student Affairs Professionals, a student organization she co-founded this year, Emma exemplifies the major’s mission to create safe, empowering learning environments. The program also reached a new milestone with a generous gift from the Kelsey family establishing the inaugural **Colette Granlund Kelsey Scholarship Fund** in memory of Kelsey, a 1966 BSE alum, to support future Educational Sciences students.

● **Joyful Learning Engages Future Changemakers**

The mission and values are in its name. The BSE’s **Academic Talent Development Program** (ATDP) enables all highly motivated and prepared students to pursue their academic passions through rigorous coursework in a community of like-minded peers. “No one is born gifted,” said Professor **Frank C. Worrell**, ATDP’s director. “We can develop a student’s talent when we create learning environments that are joyful and engaging.” ATDP’s summer program for K–12 students offers exciting and challenging topics ranging from seashore science and tropical rainforests to applied physics and robotics engineering. The program maintains a financial aid fund to support all qualified applicants. Throughout its 40+ years, outstanding public school, private school, and university instructors—as well as industry professionals who have deep knowledge of their subject areas and are committed to helping students think and understand deeply—have joined UC Berkeley School of Education faculty and staff to extend the reach of ATDP to thousands of youth from across the globe.



ABOVE Commencement 2025 launched the inaugural class of BSE Educational Sciences undergrads. **BELOW** Hands-on chemistry in the Academic Talent Development Program



Advancing Equity

From Equity and Excellence in Early Childhood's policy brief on multilingual Los Angeles



Student Spotlight **Yared Portillo**

Yared Portillo, a 2025 NAEed/Spencer dissertation fellow, focuses on the musical repertoires of bilingual, intergenerational Latine *fandango* communities in the U.S., and the relationship between those repertoires and learning. The fandango is the participatory, communal celebration of *son jarocho*, a musical genre from what is now Veracruz, México, where Indigenous, African, and Andalusian roots intersect. "In the fandango, the role of teacher is widely held, and loosely defined," Portillo said, adding that sharing of knowledge is integral to the fandango whether it's music, cooking, dance, history, biology, politics, or building and repairing instruments. "All of us teach in different ways. All of us are students in different ways. The educational work we do in our community contexts is so powerful and so necessary, especially in current times."

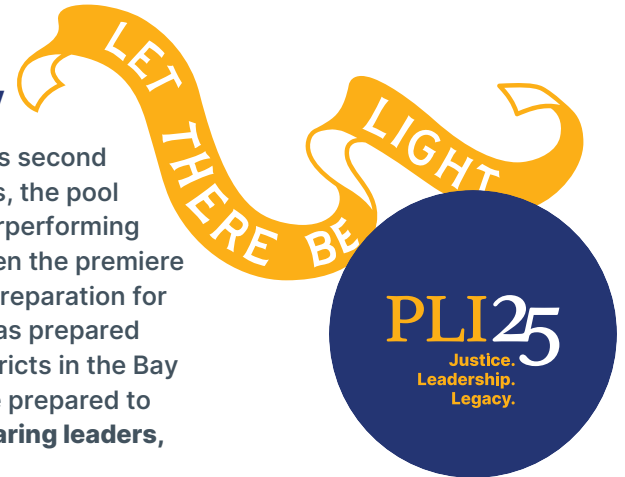
● Marking a Quarter Century of Leading for Equity

Research shows that the influence of the school principal on student achievement is second only to that of teachers. And with growing demands and difficult working conditions, the pool of principals prepared to face these challenges has diminished, particularly in underperforming schools. Since its founding in 2000, the **Principal Leadership Institute** (PLI) has been the premiere program in leadership development, consistently providing rigorous and effective preparation for school leaders in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. In its first 25 years, PLI has prepared more than 700 justice-oriented leaders, most of whom still work in schools and districts in the Bay Area. This solid foundation has created a powerful alum network of leaders who are prepared to transform schools in the next quarter century, and beyond. **The PLI is not just preparing leaders, it is securing the future of K–12 leadership.**

The role of teacher is widely held, and loosely defined.... All of us teach in different ways. All of us are students in different ways. The educational work we do in our community contexts is so powerful and so necessary, especially in current times. —YARED PORTILLO (OPPOSITE)

● Mobilizing Berkeley's Strengths to Expand Early Childhood Access

Fueled by a \$1.4 million grant from Ballmer Group, Berkeley School of Education—partnering across campus and with UCLA—leads a major effort to expand high-quality preschool. In Los Angeles County, Berkeley is preparing principals to champion early learning, creating career pathways for early-childhood teachers, and researching how child care and pre-K providers can better support children. By leveraging Berkeley's research, expertise, and leadership development, BSE is advancing Governor Gavin Newsom's vision for transitional kindergarten for every 4-year-old. This initiative is part of **Equity and Excellence in Early Childhood** (E3C), a cross-campus alliance led by BSE and the Goldman School of Public Policy with support from the Heising-Simons Foundation. Dedicated to advancing early learning and transforming childhood systems, E3C ensures California's youngest learners have equitable opportunities that promote healthy development, well-being, and long-term success, enabling every child and family to thrive.



ABOVE The Principal Leadership Institute celebrates 25 years of leading for justice. **BELOW** Boosting early childhood literacy—in two languages—in a Los Angeles county classroom



Innovation *in Learning*

Connecting language and learning to make complex ideas accessible and meaningful



Alum Spotlight

Warren Benjamin Wood

Ben Wood MA '25 is transforming language learning with a new app that teaches grammar and vocabulary through real-world, interest-driven contexts. As an undergraduate at Louisiana State University, he began with the Houma Language Project, which helps reclaim the Indigenous Houma language through collaboration with volunteers, tribal members, and linguists. After earning a master's in Linguistics from Cal State Fullerton and working at Google, Meta, and LinkedIn, he came to UC Berkeley, studying interest-based motivation and contextualized learning—how people retain and apply knowledge when it connects to their daily lives. Houma is among the first languages featured in his app, showing how personalized, context-rich learning can make education more meaningful, effective, and equitable. The app prototype is now in refinement.

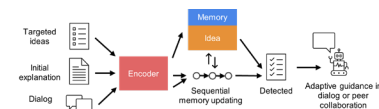
● Advancing Science Education With AI-Powered Innovation

Professor **Marcia C. Linn**, a trailblazer in STEM education and a longtime Berkeley faculty member, is once again at the forefront—this time harnessing AI to support student learning. With NSF support, her latest project, NLP-TIPS, uses natural language processing to provide students real-time, constructive feedback as they engage in scientific explanation and inquiry. Built into her WISE (Web-Based Inquiry Science Environment) platform, this work reflects Linn’s enduring commitment to **making complex science ideas accessible and meaningful for all learners**. A member of the National Academy of Education and the International Academy of Education, Linn is a globally recognized leader in the learning sciences who continues to break new ground. Her legacy includes not only transformative research but also decades of mentoring doctoral students who are shaping the field’s future.

Players depend on each other for overall success and need to somehow communicate their ideas in real time and learn from considering what the other person has just done and is trying to do—all this without a common language. —DOR ABRAHAMSON

● ORTHO: Collaborative Gameplay Meets Math Innovation

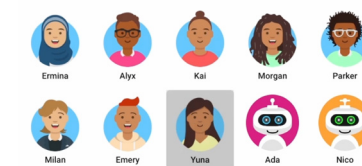
ORTHO is a groundbreaking educational game that turns the fundamentals of the Cartesian coordinate system into a fast-paced, collaborative challenge. Co-developed by Professor **Dor Abrahamson** and researchers at the Copernicus Science Centre (CSC) in Warsaw, ORTHO builds mathematical understanding, communication, empathy and problem-solving through play, even among players who don’t share a common language. Players are invited to guide a ball through digital mazes—one player steering along the x-axis, the other along the y-axis. Since its launch in May 2023, ORTHO has been played nearly half a million times and is now a centerpiece of CSC’s LivingLab. As a research platform, **it’s helping scholars analyze how speech, movement, and perception contribute to conceptual learning**—bringing big data into the future of math education.



Discuss with a thought buddy.

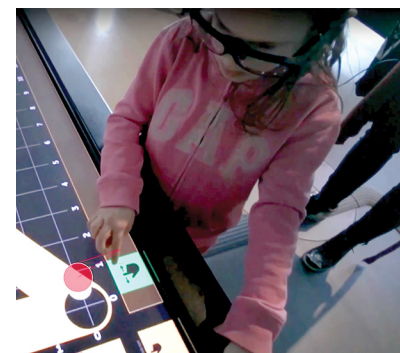
Your buddy will ask you to explain your thinking and compare your response to responses from other students around the country. Then your buddy will ask you some questions.

Choose Your Thought Buddy:



CONTINUE

ABOVE NLP-TIPS uses natural language processing to engage students in scientific inquiry. **BELOW** A player guides a ball through a digital maze in ORTHO



A Thriving Democracy

"Day of Action for
Higher Education"
assembly at Sproul
Plaza in April 2025 to
protest against
policies affecting
educational funding
and academic
freedom



Alum Spotlight

Maisha T. Winn

Maisha T. Winn PhD '02 is a leading voice in reimagining education for democracy and justice. Elected 2025–2026 president of the American Educational Research Association, she is the Excellence in Learning Graduate School of Education Professor at Stanford University and faculty director of the Stanford Accelerator for Learning's Equity in Learning Initiative. Winn investigates how nondominant communities—from neighborhood bookstores to classrooms to carceral settings—create powerful models of literacy and learning. Author of 10 books, Winn has illuminated how education can confront systemic inequities while fostering humanizing practices. She is co-founder of the Transformative Justice in Education Center at UC Davis and a member of the National Academy of Education.

● Activism and Policy Shape Black Studies Inquiry

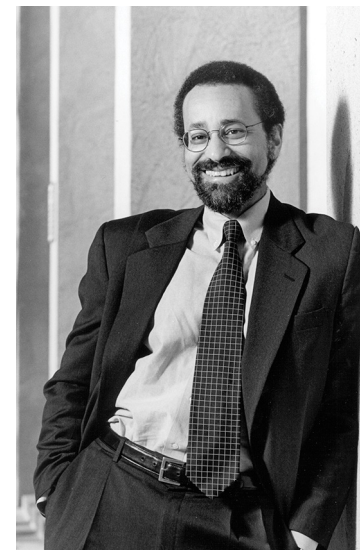
The **California Black Studies Curriculum** (CABSC) team, led by **Hillary Walker**, developed more than 20 interdisciplinary modules aligned with the first-in-the-nation California Reparations Report. One such module, **Shaunte Hill**'s "The Clean Up: Monitoring and Remediating Our Environment," incorporates environmental, physical, and computer science, alongside social science and math, to examine the legacy of Black Californians' environmental activism and the policies that have concentrated environmental hazards in communities of color. The CABSC effort also includes a partnership with the Californians for Justice Summer Youth Leadership Academy to teach modules at sites statewide, as well as a BSE-funded inaugural teacher fellows program focused on Black Studies pedagogies and curricula.

May you take these challenges on with a gusto worthy of this great university... with an excitement and enthusiasm worthy of those of us who believe in you.

—ROBERT B. REICH AT BERKELEY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION'S COMMENCEMENT

● Sparking Dialogue Across Differences

At a time when democratic values face real threats, the BSE continues to foster dialogue, bringing in leading voices that help us engage more deeply with our motto: "**Educate like democracy depends on it.**" In her address to the BSE, **Diana E. Hess**, dean emerita and senior leader of The Discussion Project and Deliberation Dinners at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, underscored the role of discussion-rich classrooms in preparing students to deliberate across differences and strengthen democratic practice. At spring commencement, **Robert B. Reich**, UC Berkeley professor emeritus and former U.S. secretary of labor, reminded graduates that public education is the key to sustaining and strengthening democracy: "May you take these challenges on with a gusto worthy of this great university... with an excitement and enthusiasm worthy of those of us who believe in you."



ABOVE Christopher Edley Jr.

Shaping Tomorrow's Leaders: The BSE established the Christopher Edley Jr. Educational Leadership Memorial Fellowship to honor its former interim dean, a visionary advocate for civil rights and educational equity. The fellowship supports students in the Leaders for Equity and Democracy (LEAD) EdD program, which prepares leaders to enact large-scale, equity-centered change and reimagine schools as engines of justice and democracy.

Distinctions

Faculty and Directors



Dor Abrahamson

PROFESSOR

Outstanding Reviewer,
Review of Educational
Research

*American Educational
Research Association (AERA)*



Marcia C. Linn

PROFESSOR

Fellow

*International Academy of
Education*



Soraya Sablo Sutton

DIRECTOR, PRINCIPAL
LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

Exemplary Educational
Leadership Preparation
Program Award

*University Council on Educational
Administration (UCEA)*



Travis J. Bristol

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Chancellor's Awards for
Public Service: Community
Engaged Teaching Award

*Public Service Center,
UC Berkeley*



Jabari Mahiri

PROFESSOR

Master Professor Award

*University Council on
Educational Administration
(UCEA)*



Geoffrey Saxe

PROFESSOR EMERITUS

Sylvia Scribner Award

*American Educational
Research Association (AERA)*



Gina Garcia

PROFESSOR

Outstanding Reviewer,
AERA Open

*American Educational
Research Association (AERA)*

Presidential Chair Fellow

*UC Berkeley Center for
Teaching & Learning*



Erin Murphy-Graham

ADJUNCT PROFESSOR

Outstanding Mentorship
of GSIs

UC Berkeley



Jose Eos Trinidad

ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

Outstanding Reviewer,
Educational Evaluation and
Policy Analysis

*American Educational
Research Association (AERA)*



Cati V. de los Ríos

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR

Early Career Award,
Division G

*American Educational
Research Association (AERA)*

Students



Isaac Félix

PHD STUDENT

AERA Minority Dissertation
Fellowship

*American Educational
Research Association (AERA)*



Jin Hyung Lim

PHD STUDENT

Graduate Student
Scholarship

*Trainers of School
Psychologists (TSP)*



Yared Portillo

PHD STUDENT

Dissertation Fellowship

*National Academy of
Education/Spencer
Foundation*



Siqi Huang

PHD STUDENT

Outstanding Dissertation
in Mathematics Education
Award

CPM Educational Program



Caisa-Marie Lindfors

MA STUDENT

First Cal Track & Field
Olympian in Women's
Discus Throw

Paris 2024 Olympic Games



Ankita Rakhe

PHD STUDENT

CRG Student Research
Grant

*Center for Race and Gender,
UC Berkeley*



Weiying Li

PHD STUDENT

Diversity and Community
Fellowship

*Graduate Division, UC
Berkeley*



Cristina S. Méndez

PHD STUDENT

UC Dissertation Year
Fellowship

UC Berkeley



Nathaly Santos

PHD STUDENT

John Smartt Summer
Scholar

*Rutgers Center for Minority
Serving Institutions (CMSI)*

Educate like democracy depends on it.

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UC Berkeley School of Education

