

2025 Annual Report

of the Center for Teacher Education and
Educational Research (ZLSB)



Publishing Details

Published by the ZLSB Board of Directors

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Editorial deadline: 04/01/2026 Cover image: Ante Beslic

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Dear Readers,

2025 was not a year for the Center for Teacher Education and Educational Research (ZLSB) that could easily be captured in a single headline. It was a year of consolidation and, at the same time, one of increased visibility. A year in which developments not only continued but became firmly embedded in institutional structures. And it was also a year that allowed us to pause and reflect: twenty years of the ZLSB.

The anniversary celebration in June was more than a retrospective. It demonstrated how profoundly the Center has evolved from a newly established institution into a key actor in teacher education. What once began as an initiative is now institutionally anchored, strategically oriented, and broadly connected. The celebration itself reflected this development: it brought together companions from academia, schools, politics, and public administration, while also looking ahead to the challenges and opportunities that lie before us.

The implementation of § 99 Sächsisches Hochschulgesetz (Saxon Higher Education Act) marked a new stage in this development in 2025. What had grown over many years was now also formally defined in legal and structural terms. Teacher education is therefore no longer merely a shared responsibility among many stakeholders; it has become clearly defined, institutionally organized, and strategically manageable. For the ZLSB, this means greater responsibility, broader opportunities, and, at the same time, a clearer understanding of its role within the university and beyond.

This clarity is reflected in many areas. In teaching, for example, the time-slot model now provides a high degree of reliability and demonstrates that structural conditions can be decisive for students’ academic success. In research, there is an increasing emphasis on collaboration across all phases of teacher education and on actively fostering exchange between the university and school practice. Continuing professional development has likewise gained prominence through initiatives such as the Teacher Academy and a wide range of professional qualification programs, placing greater focus on the third phase of teacher education.

At the same time, 2025 highlighted how closely teacher education is now embedded in broader contexts. The annual conference on teacher education in Saxony brought together, for the first time on such a broad scale, stakeholders from all phases of teacher education. European projects such as the “Teacher Academy Project – Teaching Sustainability” demonstrated that questions of education for sustainable development can no longer be addressed solely at the national level. Initiatives in the fields of inclusion, digitalization, and internationalization likewise

illustrate that today’s challenges are complex and require interconnected responses.

At the same time, much of what defines the ZLSB remains rooted in everyday practice: in working with students, supporting career changers entering the teaching profession, engaging in dialogue with schools, and developing innovative teaching and learning environments. Once again, 2025 has shown that it is not only programmes and projects but, above all, the people behind them who shape and sustain this institution.

Perhaps this year is best described as one in which momentum was transformed into lasting structures without sacrificing the openness needed to respond to new developments. It was a year in which established networks proved their resilience while new connections emerged.

After twenty years, the ZLSB has reached a point that represents neither an end nor a beginning, but rather a transition: from establishment to further development, from individual initiatives to systematic impact. The challenges remain considerable: the shortage of teachers, the transformation of schools, and the growing expectations placed upon education as a whole. Yet the conditions for addressing these challenges are fundamentally different from those of only a few years ago.

What remains is the conviction that teacher education can succeed only through collaboration—through the combined efforts of disciplines, institutions, and individuals. That we continued along this path together in 2025 is perhaps the most important insight of the year.

Prof. Dr. Axel Gehrmann
Managing Director of the ZLSB



Photo: © Ante Beslic

Report from the Head Office

20 Years of the ZLSB: A Celebration Looking Back—and Ahead

On June 5, 2025, the ZLSB celebrated its 20th anniversary with a festive event attended by 200 guests from academia, politics, schools, and educational administration. Among the guests were Conrad Clemens, Saxon State Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs; Prof. Ursula M. Staudinger, Rector of TU Dresden; Prof. Katja Koch of TU Braunschweig; and Dr. Conor Galvin of the University of Dublin. The celebration was hosted by Michael Wendt, a former teacher education student at TU Dresden and now a teacher in Riesa, who guided the audience through the program with warmth, professionalism, and enthusiasm.



Address by Rector Prof.in Ursula M. Staudinger, Photo: © Janis Foster

The anniversary celebration honored the ZLSB’s development since its founding in 2005. In her address, Prof. Ursula M. Staudinger, Rector of TU Dresden, emphasized the Center’s central role in teacher education at a university where recent amendments to the Saxon Higher Education Act have further strengthened its position. “With a strong and innovative ZLSB, TU Dresden is well positioned to meet the challenges of teacher education,” Staudinger remarked. She highlighted the close collaboration among regional schools, the two ministries, the State Office for Schools and Education (LaSuB), and the university as the cornerstone of successfully translating theory into practice.

The ZLSB also received special recognition in the keynote address delivered by Prof. Katja Koch, Vice President for Organizational Development and Teacher Education at TU Braunschweig. In her tribute, she emphasized the ZLSB’s strategic capacity and its contribution to advancing teacher education beyond the role of a service provider. At the same time, she underscored the growing importance of teacher education centers as institutions that shape organizational structures and foster innovation within higher education, describing the development of the ZLSB in Dresden as exemplary in the national context.



Tribute by Prof. Katja Koch, Photo: © Janis Foster

Dr. Conor Galvin of the University of Dublin, who traveled to Dresden as an international partner from TAP-TS, paid tribute in a personal and humorous address not only to the Center’s institutional achievements but, above all, to the people behind them. Concluding with an appeal for friendship, humor, and collaboration, he remarked: “What Europe needs more of, is mutual understanding—with a sense of humour.”



Address by Dr. Conor Galvin, Photo: © Janis Foster



Moderation by Michael Wendt, Photo: © Janis Foster

In his address, Prof. Axel Gehrmann, Managing Director of the ZLSB, reflected on the Center’s eventful history and its continuous institutional growth. What had once begun as a “Trojan horse within the university system,” he remarked, has since grown into what is, in terms of its size, “a medium-sized enterprise,” employing around 70 staff members directly. Through initiatives such as SYLBER, BQL, Schullogin, and the Teacher Academy, the ZLSB has not only established lasting structures but has also helped shape the future of teacher education. As Gehrmann emphasized, “Teacher education is not an administrative task—it is a societal responsibility.”



Ceremonial address von Prof. Dr. Gehrmann, Photo: © Janis Foster

The event concluded with a reception in the foyer, where former and current colleagues, students, cooperation partners, and guests from across Saxony and beyond had the opportunity to reconnect and exchange ideas in an informal atmosphere.



Photo: © Janis Foster

“We would like to thank everyone who joined us for the celebration and for the many kind congratulations. Here’s to the next 20 years!”

➤ [More impressions from the anniversary celebration are available in the article on our website](#)

§ 99 SächsHSG: A Strategic Milestone for the ZLSB

The introduction of § 99 Sächsisches Hochschulgesetz (SächsHSG, Saxon Higher Education Act) in May 2024 marked a significant institutional milestone for the Centers for Teacher Education in Saxony. For the ZLSB at TU Dresden, it opened new strategic opportunities while also establishing clearly defined rights and responsibilities. As General Manager of the ZLSB, I look back on a year in which the legislative changes introduced by § 99 SächsHSG were, for the first time, fully translated into the Center’s organizational structure and operational processes. § 99 authorizes Saxony’s universities to establish Centers for Teacher Education as central academic institutions, assigning them clearly defined responsibilities for quality assurance, coordination, strategic development, and networking in teacher education.

Twenty years after its founding, the ZLSB’s work was therefore not only placed on a firm legal foundation but also, for the first time, embedded within a binding framework for institutional governance. These clearly defined rights and responsibilities are evident in our day-to-day work. We coordinate teacher education across faculties, contribute

to the development of academic and examination regulations, oversee school-based practical studies, ensure quality in both degree programs and continuing professional education, and play a strategic role in shaping university-based professional development through the newly established Teacher Academy. The new target agreements between the Rectorate and the ZLSB provide a binding strategic framework that enhances transparency and long-term planning. At the same time, the introduction of § 99 created the opportunity to rethink the ZLSB’s internal organization—an evolution reflected in the Center’s new organizational chart (as of April 2026).

The organizational chart illustrates how the responsibilities established by law have been translated into teams, functions, and areas of responsibility. At its core is a clear organizational structure consisting of three main units:

- Academic Affairs Office for Teacher Training: responsible for academic advising, program development, the time-slot model, coordination of school placements, and student services.
- Continuing Education and Professional Development Team: responsible for the Qualification Program for Second-Career Teachers (BQL), certificate programs, and the newly established Teacher Academy.

Organizational chart of the ZLSB, Figure: © ZLSB

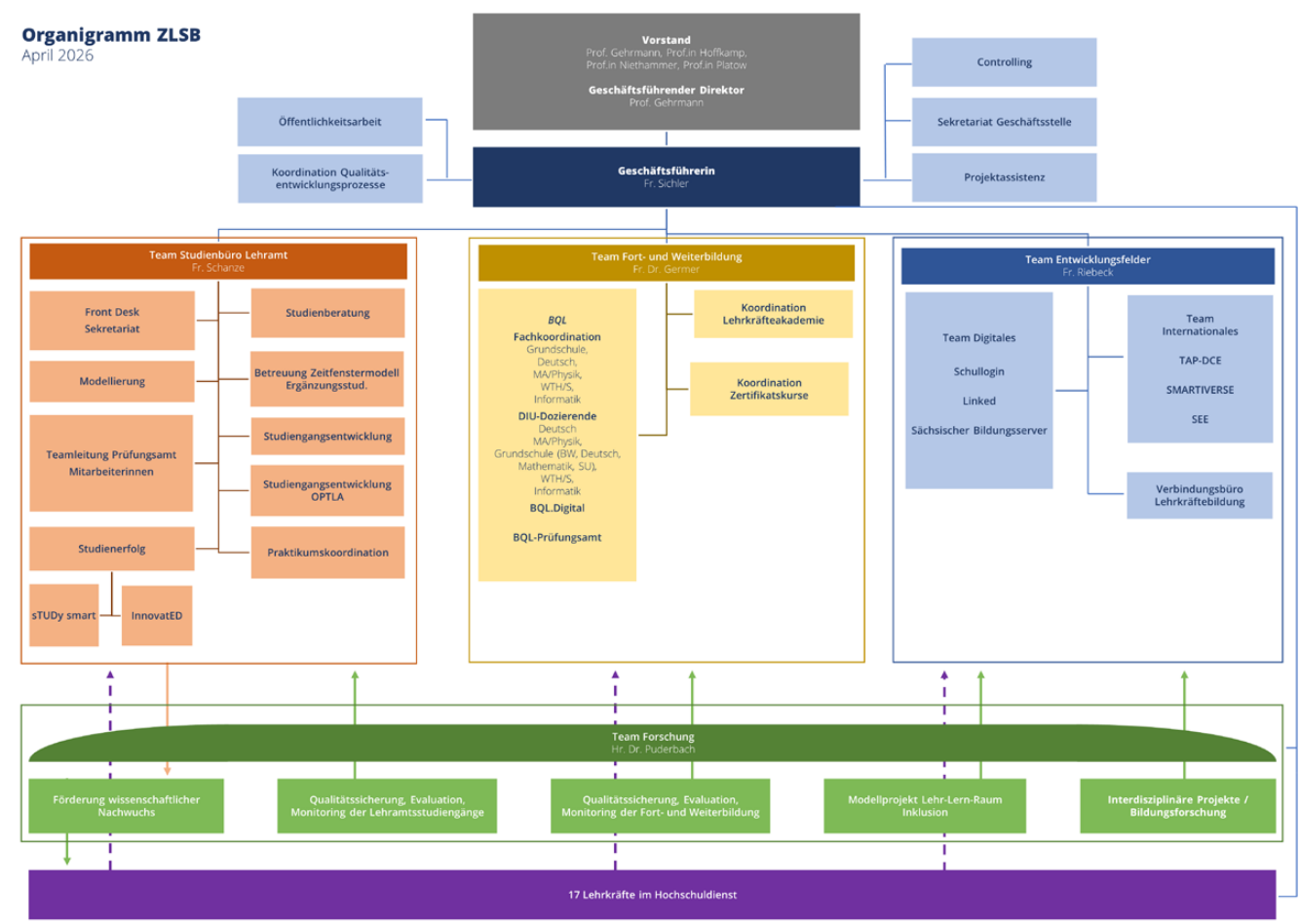


Photo: © Laura Mitzscher

- Strategic Development Team: operating at the intersection of digitalization, internationalization, sustainability, and regional partnerships in teacher education.
- Research Team: responsible for the evidence-based quality assurance of teacher education programs and continuing professional development, as mandated by law.
- The role of the 17 school teachers seconded to the university: serving as multipliers who strengthen the connection between academic instruction, school-based practice, and partnerships with schools, representing a key component of § 99.

This new organizational structure illustrates the broad scope of teacher education today—from digitalization and internationalization to school-based practical studies, quality assurance, and innovation-oriented development projects such as the Teaching and Learning Space for Inclusion. It enables us to meet these expanding responsibilities in a professional and sustainable manner. The clear team structure makes it transparent where responsibilities lie, how legal requirements are implemented, and how interdisciplinary, cross-faculty collaboration is put into practice. Bringing together research, digitalization, internationalization, and school-based practical training within a single organizational framework creates synergies that are essential for modern teacher education. For us, § 99 SächsHSG therefore represents both an opportunity and a responsibility. It provides the foundation for the continued development of teacher education at TU Dresden, strengthening its visibility and strategically integrating research, academic programs, continuing professional development, and knowledge transfer. Together with my team, I look to the coming years with optimism and am confident that we will continue to help shape the educational landscape in Saxony with expertise, innovation, and reliability.

ZLSB Project Day at the “SpielWerk” Daycare Center

On September 9, 2025, the annual project day of the Center for Teacher Education and Educational Research (ZLSB) at TU Dresden took place at the SpielWerk Daycare Center, with this year’s event dedicated to community service.

Taking advantage of the late-summer weather, staff members from the Center enthusiastically rolled up their sleeves. Benches and tables were painted, shrubs were trimmed, leaves were raked, and weeds were removed. Together, the team helped noticeably improve the daycare center’s outdoor facilities, creating an even more welcoming environment for the children. The staff of the “SpielWerk” Daycare Center expressed their sincere appreciation for the support and were delighted by the visible commitment demonstrated by the ZLSB team.

The day also provided an opportunity for colleagues to connect outside their usual work environment, get to know one another better, and work together toward a shared goal. The event concluded with a barbecue at the ZLSB, where the focus was on spending time together before the afternoon continued with team activities and informal conversations.

General Manager
Juliane Sichler

[ZLSB Management](#)



Photo: © Steffen Schreiber

Academic Affairs Office for Teacher Training

TUD Senate Extends the Time Slot Model for Teacher Degree Programs by Five Years

At its meeting on July 9, 2025, the Senate of TU Dresden voted to extend the time slot model for all years of study and all teacher education programs—Elementary Education, Secondary Education (Oberschule), Academic Secondary Education (Gymnasium), and Vocational Education—for an additional five years, beginning with the 2025/26 winter semester. This decision sends an important signal in support of the long-term planning and organization of teacher education programs at TU Dresden.

The time slot model was developed to improve the overall study experience in teacher education programs, which combine two academic subjects (or vocational specializations), educational sciences, and supplementary studies, making them particularly complex degree programs. Its primary goal is to ensure that students can complete all required modules according to the recommended curriculum within the standard period of study, without being prevented from doing so by scheduling conflicts between courses.

The implementation of the model has significantly improved course and classroom scheduling, making it more reliable, coordinated, and transparent for faculty, students, and administrative staff alike. At the same time, it accommodates the complexity of teacher education at TU Dresden. Approximately 365 possible subject combinations across roughly 1,000 course modules are efficiently organized by grouping 20 teaching subjects and 10 vocational specializations according to the combinations most frequently chosen by students in recent years.

For each semester of the program, these subject groups are assigned dedicated time slots, which are divided into core periods and elective periods:

- Core periods are reserved for large, required courses that are offered only once, such as lectures
- Elective periods are designated for required elective courses that are offered multiple times

This scheduling system enables the vast majority of common subject combinations to be studied without timetable conflicts. As a result, 95 percent of teacher education course schedules at TU Dresden are now conflict-free.

Evaluation Following the Introduction in Winter Semester 2023/24

Before the Senate's decision, the time-slot model had been introduced in the 2023/24 winter semester and subsequently evaluated through three complementary studies. The objective was to assess the model's effectiveness and identify opportunities for further refinement.

The findings were compiled into a comprehensive report and presented to both the Senate Committee on Teaching and the University Senate.

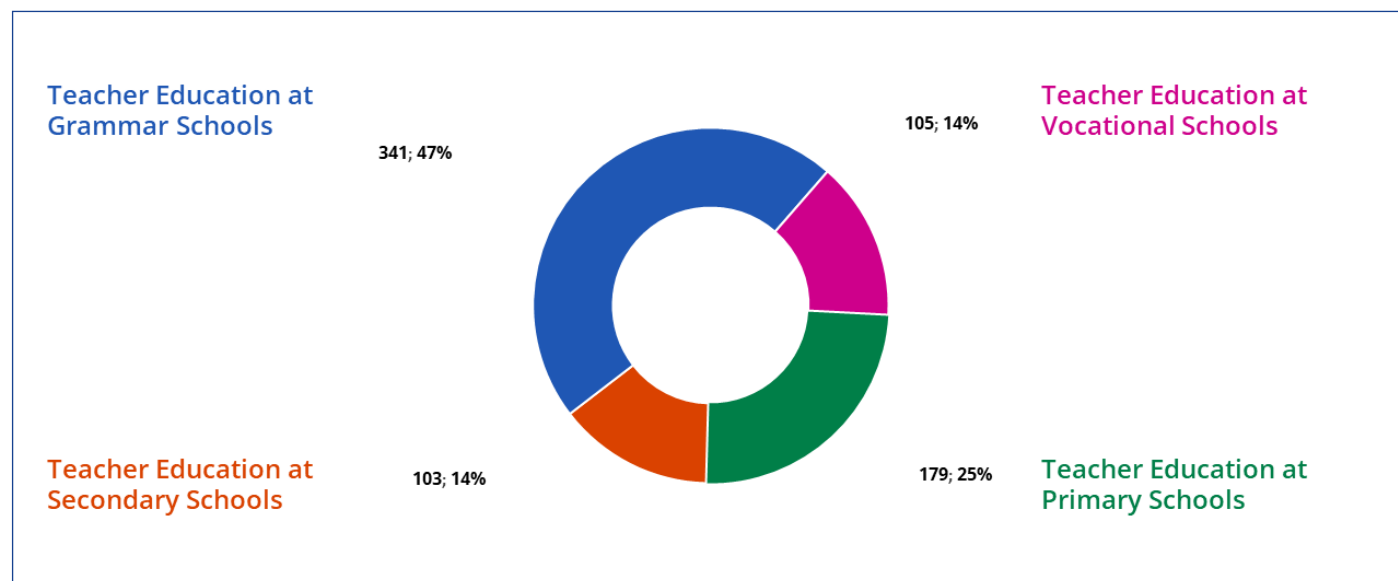
Feedback and Outlook

The survey of staff responsible for course scheduling and classroom planning showed that the time-slot model has been received positively by many of those involved. It provides a structured framework for coordinated course scheduling and space allocation. By extending the model for another five years, the Senate has provided the faculties with both planning certainty and institutional support for its continued development. At the same time, the model will remain subject to ongoing evaluation and targeted improvements to further enhance the compatibility of all subject combinations.

Coordinator for Supplementary Studies
Christine Hähnliche

oto: © New Africa/Adobe Stock





First-year teacher education students enrolled in the 2023/24 winter semester (as of December 1, 2025; TU Dresden Higher Education Statistics) © ZLSB

Teacher Education Remains TUD's Largest Student Cohort

In the 2025/26 winter semester, 3,796 of TU Dresden's 25,456 enrolled students were pursuing one of the university's four teacher education degree programs. Together, teacher education students therefore accounted for approximately 14.9 % of the university's total student population. Of the 6,173 students who began their studies at TU Dresden in the first semester, 728 enrolled in teacher education programs, representing 11.8 % of all first-year students. These students were distributed across the four degree programs as follows: 341 enrolled in the Academic Secondary Education (Gymnasium) program, 179 in Elementary Education, 105 in Vocational Education, and 103 in Secondary Education (Oberschule).

Most Popular Teaching Subjects and Specializations

Across all teacher education programs and years of study, German was the most frequently studied teaching subject, with 1,266 enrolled students. It was followed by History, with more than 700 students, while English, Mathematics, and Geography each enrolled more than 600 students. Among the vocational education specializations, Health and Care was the most popular, with 195 students, followed by Social Pedagogy, with 160 students.

Graduation Ceremony for Teacher Education Graduates

On January 30, 2026, the Student Council for General Education Programs organized the graduation ceremony for students completing their teacher education degrees in the 2025/26 winter semester. The event attracted a record 208 graduates, including 73 graduates from the Elementary Education program, 101 from Academic Secondary

Education (Gymnasium), and 34 from Secondary Education (Oberschule).

Due to an unexpected technical malfunction in the Audimax lecture hall at the Lecture Hall Center, the ceremony had to be relocated at short notice to the Physics Lecture Hall in the Trefftz Building to avoid canceling the event altogether. Because the replacement venue could not accommodate all guests, a live stream was arranged so that family members and friends could still participate in the celebration.

With the support of the State Office for Schools and Education (LASUB), degree certificates were presented to the graduates to enthusiastic applause. Several speeches invited graduates to reflect on their years of study before Dipl. Claudia Kutter-Clauß offered words of encouragement as they prepared to begin the next stage of their professional journey—the teacher traineeship (Referendariat). The ceremony was accompanied throughout by the talented violinist Astrid Haferland.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to making this graduation ceremony possible and already look forward to celebrating with the next graduating class.



Graduation ceremony in the Audimax, Photo: © FSR ABS



Photo: © ZLSB

4th TEACHERMANIA—A Teacher Education Festival with a Diverse Program

On May 21, 2025, the 4th TEACHERMANIA took place at the ZLSB, bringing together the teacher education community at TU Dresden for a day of inspiration and exchange. Under the theme "Theory in Action—From Classroom Concepts to Real-World Teaching," the event featured a diverse program of workshops and information booths highlighting practical aspects of teacher education.

Throughout the day, teacher education students, career changers entering the teaching profession, and university instructors had the opportunity to explore current topics in teacher education, connect with one another, and discuss the relationship between theory and classroom practice. Workshop sessions covered a wide range of subjects, including game-based approaches to promoting democratic citizenship in the classroom, movement-based learning strategies, effective responses to classroom disruptions, and differentiated instruction as implemented at the Schkola school network. In addition, a Mobility Café fea-

red students sharing their experiences studying abroad, while on-site advisors provided information about international exchange opportunities.

The event also included an information fair featuring numerous exhibitors related to teacher education. Students could learn about teaching internships and part-time employment opportunities, explore instructional materials, and gather new ideas for their future classrooms. They also had the opportunity to speak directly with teacher associations and labor unions, while initiatives such as Schullogin and STUDY SMART presented resources and services designed specifically for teacher education students. Refreshments were provided by the student club Countdown and the student councils, which offered homemade cakes, waffles, food, and beverages throughout the day.

The festival provided an excellent opportunity for participants to network, exchange ideas, and collaboratively develop new perspectives on the teaching profession.

Overall, the 4th TEACHERMANIA was a great success—an inspiring day filled with practical ideas, professional exchange, and valuable opportunities for everyone involved in teacher education.



Photo: © Ante Beslic

Welcoming First-Year Teacher Education Students to TU Dresden

On October 1, 2025, TU Dresden welcomed its newly enrolled teacher education students for the 2025/26 winter semester with an orientation event held in the Audimax lecture hall at the University Lecture Hall Center. Approximately 600 first-year students attended the event. Once again, teacher education represented the university's largest group of incoming students, with around 740 first-semester enrollments.

The program featured welcoming remarks by Prof. Koerber, Dean of the Faculty of Education, and Prof. Axel Gehrmann, Managing Director of the ZLSB. In addition, first-year students received a wealth of practical information designed to help them navigate the start of their studies. Presentations were given by the Academic Affairs Office for Teacher Training as well as the Student Councils for General Education Programs and Vocational Education.

This information, along with additional resources for new students, is also available on the TU Dresden and ZLSB websites.



Photo: © Ante Beslic

With the support of the Student Councils for General Education Programs and Vocational Education, together with other partners involved in teacher education, the popular welcome bags for first-year students were distributed during the event.

The Academic Affairs Office for Teacher Training also organized an information fair on the ground floor of the Lecture Hall Center. Exhibitors included the two student councils, the "Perspektive Land" (Perspective Rural Areas) program of the German Children's and Youth Foundation (DKJS), the "Junger SLV" (Young Saxon Teachers' Association), the State Office for Schools and Education (LaSuB), and the Education and Science Workers' Union of Saxony (GEW Saxony). The fair provided new students with an opportunity to meet representatives in person, ask questions, and establish their first contacts within the teacher education community.

From Campus Tours to Building Class Schedules: Our Orientation Program by the Numbers

Beginning university is an exciting but often challenging experience for first-year students. To help future teachers get off to a successful start, the Center for Teacher Education and Educational Research (ZLSB) at TU Dresden once again offered a comprehensive range of orientation and support services during the 2025/26 winter semester.

The results speak for themselves: 425 first-year students registered for at least one of our orientation activities, and most participated in several offerings. This represents approximately 60 percent of all newly enrolled teacher education students.



Photo: © Ante Beslic

A Variety of Programs for a Successful Start

Working closely with ZLSB peer tutors and students from the Student Councils for General Education Programs and Vocational Education, the Making Teachers Confident (MTC) project team developed a range of activities specifically designed to meet the needs of incoming teacher education students. During the three-week orientation period, held from September 22 to October 10, 2025, a total of 38 programs and events were offered.

Video Tutorials: Flexible and Available Anytime

The orientation program began with a series of video tutorials covering essential topics such as building a class schedule, organizing academic studies, digital tools and university services, and examination requirements. Based on viewing statistics, class scheduling and study organization were the topics of greatest interest to incoming students, and according to participant evaluations, they also received the highest ratings. The tutorials allowed students to become familiar with the fundamentals of university life at their own pace.

Class Schedule Workshops: The Most Popular Support Service

The class schedule workshops complemented the video tutorials by providing individualized guidance. With 543 registrations, these workshops were by far the most popular offering within the orientation program. Peer tutors worked directly with students to help them create their personal course schedules. To maximize accessibility and flexibility, the workshops were offered both online via Zoom and in person. Some sessions were tailored to specific teacher education programs or subject areas, allowing tutors to address discipline-specific scheduling requirements. Participant feedback was overwhelmingly positive. Comments included: "Extremely helpful." "I finally understood how to build my class schedule." "It was a lifesaver—I never would have figured it out on my own." Many students emphasized the clear structure of the program, the easy-to-understand explanations, and the opportunity to receive individualized guidance.

Campus Tours: Exploring the Campus and Meeting Fellow Students

The campus tours attracted 263 registrations. In small groups, first-year students were introduced to important

locations across campus, including the ZLSB, the Academic Affairs Office for Teacher Training, various academic departments, and the university dining halls. Beyond helping students navigate TU Dresden's expansive campus, the tours also provided an excellent opportunity to meet fellow classmates and begin building connections.

The peer tutors received consistently positive feedback for their friendly and approachable manner. Participants commented that they were "very friendly and helpful," praised the "great insider tips," and described the tours as "really nice, wonderful people, a great experience." Some participants suggested allowing more time to explore the university buildings and extending the length of the tours. The practical advice and the opportunity to connect with other students were especially appreciated.



Photo: © Ante Beslic

"All You Can Ask": Learning from Experienced Students

The All You Can Ask format focused on connecting first-year students with experienced teacher education students from higher semesters. During the week of September 22–26, online sessions addressed specific topics before transitioning to open question-and-answer discussions. Students were able to submit their questions in advance using a digital bulletin board, allowing each session to be tailored to their interests and concerns. Participants particularly valued the practical advice on organizing their studies and navigating TU Dresden's online platforms and digital services.

Conclusion and Outlook

The high level of participation and the overwhelmingly positive feedback demonstrate that our orientation programs make an important contribution to helping new students successfully begin their teacher education studies.

We would like to express our sincere thanks to all of the peer tutors and the student representatives from the student councils. Through their outstanding commitment, enthusiasm, and dedication, they played a vital role in the success of these programs and made the transition to university life significantly easier for many first-year students.

Research Associate

Mathis Heinig



Research

Annual Conference on Teacher Education in Saxony Strengthens Collaboration Across All Phases of Teacher Education

On February 1, 2025, the Center for Teacher Education and Educational Research (ZLSB) at TU Dresden, together with the Dresden branch of the State Office for Schools and Education (LaSuB), hosted the Annual Conference on Teacher Education in Saxony. The conference aimed to strengthen collaboration among the many stakeholders involved in teacher education across the state. The event was held under the patronage of Sebastian Gemkow, Saxon State Minister for Science, and Conrad Clemens, Saxon State Minister for Education and Cultural Affairs.

For the first time, representatives from Saxony’s universities and all regional offices of the State Office for Schools and Education gathered in such large numbers to coordinate the content and objectives of teacher education. The conference welcomed approximately 350 participants, including teacher educators representing nearly every school type, subject area, vocational specialization, and special education focus.



Photo: © Ante Beslic

“The conference marks an important milestone for the future of teacher education in Saxony,” emphasized State Minister for Science Sebastian Gemkow. TU Dresden Rector Prof. Ursula M. Staudinger likewise highlighted the university’s commitment to teacher education: “Teacher education is one of TU Dresden’s core responsibilities, involving nearly all of our faculties. I am therefore delighted that TU Dresden is hosting this first annual conference.” In the coming years, the conference will rotate among the universities in Leipzig, Chemnitz, and Dresden that are involved in teacher education across Saxony. Looking beyond the conference itself, State Minister Conrad Clemens emphasized its broader significance: “All institutions involved in teacher education share responsibility for preparing highly qualified teachers for our students. Over the coming years, standardized forms of cooperation among the institutions responsible for teacher education will be established throughout Saxony. This annual conference marks the beginning of that process.”



Photo: © Ante Beslic

As in the rest of Germany, teacher education in the Free State of Saxony consists of several consecutive phases. The first phase is the university-based teacher education degree program. Upon completing their academic studies, prospective teachers enter the teacher traineeship (Vorbereitungsdienst), which constitutes the second phase of teacher education. This stage is administered by the State Office for Schools and Education (LaSuB) and takes place in both training schools and state teacher training centers. While the university phase focuses primarily on the academic foundations of teaching subjects and educational sciences, the traineeship emphasizes classroom practice and professional teaching skills.

To ensure high-quality teacher preparation, it is essential that the content of these two phases is carefully aligned, allowing prospective teachers to develop their professional competencies in a coherent and continuous manner. Because the phases are administered by different institutions, achieving this close coordination remains a challenge—but it is also recognized as one of the key factors in improving teacher education. Accordingly, strengthening cooperation among the first, second, and third phases of teacher education has been identified as a strategic objective in the Saxon State Ministry of Education’s policy framework “Bildungsland Sachsen 2030” (Educational State of Saxony 2030).

Former Research Associate
Oda Schlünz



Photo: © Tina Czaja

Pilot Project Creates the “Classroom of the Future” at a Dresden Elementary School

Since late June 2024, the Saxon State Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs has funded the pilot project Teaching and Learning Space for Inclusion Transfer (LLR Transfer). The project aims to implement and evaluate the concept of a multifunctional classroom at 117th Elementary School Dresden, creating an inclusive learning environment designed to meet the diverse needs of all students.

At the outset of the project, all students in the participating class took part in individual interviews, while teachers, school administrators, and after-school care staff were consulted about the requirements of an inclusive classroom. In addition, 360-degree video recordings of the classroom environment were produced and analyzed to identify spatial needs and potential barriers to learning.



Photo: © Tina Czaja

The findings from these analyses formed the basis for the classroom's redesign. Working closely with the City of Dresden's Office for Schools, the project team selected appropriate furnishings and supervised the renovation process.

Students are now seated on chairs equipped with height-adjustable footrests, allowing the furniture to be adapted to each child's individual height while enabling all desks to remain at a uniform level. Newly introduced asymmetrical desks can be arranged flexibly to create a wide variety of learning environments. Equipped with casters, the desks allow students themselves to actively participate in reconfiguring the classroom to suit different learning activities. These flexible seating arrangements also required the installation of multiple presentation surfaces to reduce visual barriers. Through an interactive whiteboard and two additional displays, instructional content can now be presented simultaneously on three classroom walls, ensuring improved visibility from any seating arrangement. The redesigned classroom also incorporates a range of instructional resources, including an audio pen, a portable headphone system, and mini whiteboards, all of which have been integrated into everyday classroom instruction.

The pilot project will continue through the end of 2026. Its outcomes will be compiled into a practical guide containing recommendations for inclusive classroom design, which will be made available to schools throughout Saxony.

Research Associate

Tina Czaja

➤ [Further information about the pilot project “Teaching and Learning Space for Inclusion Transfer \(LLR Transfer\)”](#)

Teacher Education Curriculum Reform and Time Slot Model Show Positive Results

Initial Findings from the ZLSB Survey on the Study Experience in TU Dresden's Teacher Education Programs

To support the continuous, evidence-based development of its teacher education programs, the ZLSB regularly surveys all enrolled students about their study experiences, overall satisfaction, and learning behavior. More than 1,100 teacher education students participated in the survey conducted during the Summer Semester 2025, providing feedback from nearly one-third of all students enrolled in TU Dresden's teacher education programs for Elementary Education, Secondary Education (Oberschule), Academic Secondary Education (Gymnasium), and Vocational Education.

Comparing these results with the previous survey conducted in 2021 makes it possible to assess the impact of recent curriculum reforms and quality enhancement measures. Since the 2021 survey, the curricula of all teacher education programs have been revised following the reform of Saxony's teacher education examination regulations. As part of these revisions, the cross-cutting topics of civic education and media literacy were systematically incorporated into the curricula. Initial findings indicate that these reforms are having the desired effect: students report more frequently than four years ago that their studies provide sufficient opportunities to develop competencies in both civic education and media literacy.

To reduce scheduling conflicts that can delay students' academic progress, TU Dresden introduced the time-slot model for teacher education programs in the 2023/24 winter semester. The current survey provides the first evi-

dence of the model's positive impact. The findings suggest that scheduling conflicts are gradually becoming a less significant cause of delays in students' progress toward graduation.

However, another organizational challenge remains. In some subject areas, limited seminar capacity prevents students from enrolling in the courses they need when they would like to take them. A large proportion of teacher education students encounter this issue during their studies, making it an important area of focus for future quality assurance efforts.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic, instructors have repeatedly reported declining attendance in university courses. The ZLSB survey confirms this trend within teacher education programs. Three-quarters of respondents indicated that they did not attend one or more of their courses regularly during the summer semester. Most explained that they instead devoted their time to other academic responsibilities. Courses whose content is not directly relevant for examinations were especially likely to be attended irregularly. These findings point to the need for strategies that encourage greater participation in classes, as regular attendance remains an essential component of successful teacher education.

Over the coming months, the survey data will be analyzed in greater depth. Further evaluations will provide additional insights into students' perceptions of curricular coherence, the practical relevance of their coursework, and their workload throughout the academic year. Subject-specific analyses, in particular, will help identify areas in which students are highly satisfied as well as areas where challenges remain. The findings will be discussed with representatives of the individual disciplines to inform future measures for the continued improvement of teacher education at TU Dresden.

Photo: © Crispin-Iven Mokry





Photo: © Crispin-Iven Mokry

Initial Findings on Student Retention and Attrition in Teacher Education Programs

Student success in teacher education programs has become a matter of considerable public interest in light of the ongoing teacher shortage. However, producing reliable longitudinal data on student retention is a complex undertaking. As part of a project funded by the Saxon State Ministry for Science, Culture and Tourism, the ZLSB is developing a comprehensive understanding of student retention and academic success in TU Dresden's teacher education programs.

As an initial step, the project analyzes student retention during the standard period of study using semester statistics provided by the University's Office of Student Records. Although these data have certain methodological limitations, they already provide valuable insights into the scope and structure of student retention at TU Dresden.

The findings show that student attrition occurs most frequently during the initial phase of teacher education programs. This is likely due to students re-evaluating their academic interests while searching for the degree program or subject combination that best matches their goals. Strategic enrollment decisions also play a role—for example, when students initially enroll in an open-admission program with the intention of transferring later into their preferred degree program. Attrition also occurs during later stages of study, although these cases tend to be driven by different motivations and circumstances.

Compared with other degree programs at TU Dresden, teacher education programs do not exhibit unusually high levels of student attrition. Moreover, not every instance of attrition should be interpreted as an unsuccessful outcome. For example, students who transfer to another degree program within TU Dresden remain enrolled at the university and may ultimately find a program that better aligns with their interests and career goals.

Analyses by individual teacher education program and teaching subject reveal considerable variation in both the extent of attrition and the points during the course of study at which it occurs. These findings underscore the need for targeted and differentiated measures to improve retention rates, particularly in subjects and degree programs where attrition is comparatively high. A more in-depth investigation of the reasons underlying program withdrawal and changes of major is therefore essential. Equally important is the continued refinement of retention analyses using higher-quality longitudinal data, particularly detailed records of students' academic progress. To support this effort, the ZLSB is currently developing a student monitoring system based on aggregated longitudinal study data. In the future, this system will not only make it possible to measure retention during the standard period of study but also to calculate comprehensive indicators of academic success.

Head of Research Team

Dr. Rolf Puderbach



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Teaching & ESD

90 Mentors for Future Teachers Participate in ZLSB Professional Development Program

On March 19, 2025, TU Dresden hosted a professional development event that prepared approximately 90 teachers for their role as mentors in teacher education.

Mentors play a vital role in supporting prospective teachers as they gain their first classroom experiences during university-based school placements, complete their practical training during the teacher traineeship (Vorbereitungsdienst), or begin their careers through alternative pathways into the teaching profession. These experienced teachers guide aspiring educators alongside their regular teaching responsibilities and actively support their professional development. In Saxony, mentors are prepared through a specialized qualification program jointly organized by the State Office for Schools and Education (LaSuB) and the Centers for Teacher Education at the state’s universities.



Photo: ©ZLSB

The opening event of the MentoS 2025 mentor qualification program was once again held at TU Dresden, following the successful format established the previous year. The event was organized by the Teachers in Higher Education at the Center for Teacher Education and Educational Research (ZLSB).

Dr. Volker Kreß, who led the program together with several colleagues, emphasized the importance of mentors in teacher education: “Mentors play a crucial role in the successful preparation of future teachers. We want to equip our colleagues for this important responsibility because they are our partners in organizing school-based practical studies within teacher education. Today’s event marks the first step in that process.”

The professional development program focused on strengthening participants’ mentoring competencies and fostering productive mentor-mentee relationships. The workshop content was grounded in current educational research on motivating teaching and learning methods as

well as constructivist approaches to mentoring. The workshops provided ample opportunities for collaborative learning and professional exchange. Working in stable groups, participants shared experiences, reflected on practical challenges, and developed new strategies to strengthen their role as mentors. Participant feedback was highly positive. One mentor summarized the experience simply: “Extremely well structured and highly inspiring!” Another participant reflected: “The group discussions gave me practical strategies that I can immediately apply in my own mentoring. I also benefited greatly from the partner activities during the workshops.” Co-organizer Michael Schröder highlighted the broader value of the collaborative format: “The participants’ committed collaboration throughout the workshops not only deepens their understanding of the core principles of effective mentoring but also creates a supportive professional community that strengthens them on their journey toward becoming successful mentors.”

School Teacher Seconded to the University Volker Kreß

Between Language Preservation and the Educational Mission

On September 17, 2025, the school teachers seconded to the university at the ZLSB visited the Sorbian Gymnasium in Bautzen to gain insights into instruction conducted in the Upper Sorbian language and into the educational work of a school serving a national minority. The program included classroom observations in subject lessons taught in Upper Sorbian as well as classes dedicated to teaching the Sorbian language itself.

A subsequent discussion with Principal René Jatzwauk and Vice Principal Nicolle Stenzel provided a deeper understanding of the school’s unique mission. As the only secondary school offering instruction in Upper Sorbian, the school



Photo: ©ZLSB



Photo: © Ante Beslic

bears the dual responsibility of serving both as an educational institution and as a guardian of Sorbian language and culture. In addition to fulfilling its general educational mission, the school plays a vital role in preserving and promoting Sorbian linguistic and cultural heritage—a commitment reflected in many of its longstanding traditions.

The school’s work takes place at the intersection of several important responsibilities: meeting the state’s educational standards, ensuring the continuity of the Sorbian language, recruiting and retaining qualified teaching staff, and preparing students with diverse educational backgrounds for higher education, which in most cases is pursued at German-language universities. At the same time, this unique setting offers an important opportunity to preserve linguistic and cultural heritage. Future teachers of Sorbian can only emerge from the school’s own student body, as only they possess the level of language proficiency required to teach in Upper Sorbian.

The principal also shared experiences from other schools serving national minority communities across Europe, including schools in Brittany. Such exchanges are intended to deepen dialogue on language preservation and educational strategies. Across Europe, minority-language communities share a common goal: ensuring that lived linguistic and cultural identity no longer requires constant defense and preservation, but instead becomes a natural and enduring part of everyday life for future generations.

School Teacher Seconded to the University Katja Kuritz

Taking Stock: Final Project Meeting, Multiplier Event, and Evaluation Report of the Teacher Academy Project “Teaching Sustainability”

As the Erasmus+ Teacher Academy Project – Teaching Sustainability (TAP-TS) drew to a close, project partners and guests from across Europe gathered in Dresden from June 3–5, 2025. Through a final project meeting and a multiplier event, participants reflected on the achievements of the previous three years, explored future perspectives, and joined in celebrating the 20th anniversary of the ZLSB.

Project Objectives: Embedding Sustainability in Schools and Teacher Education

The goal of TAP-TS was to empower teacher education students, practicing teachers, and teacher educators across Europe to integrate Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into their professional practice. To achieve this, the consortium—comprising 11 partner institutions from seven European countries—developed interdisciplinary learning resources, organized a wide range of professional development activities, and established a sustainable network connecting universities, schools, and civil society organizations.

The project’s key achievements included:

- Developing seven Learning and Teaching Packages (LTPs) as Open Educational Resources (OER) for use in teacher education as well as in primary and secondary schools.
- Delivering 11 professional development programs, including four online workshops, four hybrid Active Learning Events, and three Summer Schools.
- Promoting professional exchange and international collaboration in the field of sustainable development.
- Applying the European Commission’s GreenComp framework to foster sustainability competencies among educators and future teachers.



Photo: © Ante Beslic

Seven LTPs: Interdisciplinary Resources for Schools and Teacher Education

The Learning and Teaching Packages (LTPs) developed within the project provide practical, interdisciplinary approaches for integrating sustainability into both classroom teaching and teacher education. They are designed for teacher education students, teacher educators, and practicing teachers in primary and secondary education.

The seven LTPs are:

1. A Sustainable Europe
2. Sustainability & Digitality
3. Sustainability & Environmental Education
4. Climate Crisis Resilience
5. Dealing with Climate Disinformation
6. Green Citizenship in/for Europe
7. Sustainable Entrepreneurship Education (SEE)

The materials are complemented by the LTP Compendium, which provides pedagogical guidance and practical recommendations for implementing the resources in teacher education and classroom practice.

All Learning and Teaching Packages are freely available through the [project’s online platform](#).

Evaluation: Positive Impact on Teachers, Students, and Educational Institutions

According to the project’s final evaluation report, TAP-TS generated significant positive impacts at the individual, school, and institutional levels.

Teachers reported greater professional confidence, the adoption of new instructional approaches—including outdoor learning and interdisciplinary project-based teaching—and the successful integration of sustainability topics into their classrooms, including in science and language subjects.

Students benefited from engaging, action-oriented learning environments that fostered a stronger sense of personal responsibility and active participation. School leaders initiated school-wide sustainability strategies involving parents and community stakeholders. At the same time, teacher educators and universities began incorporating TAP-TS resources into their courses and contributing to national conferences on teacher education and sustainability. The project’s final meeting brought together consortium partners to discuss the evaluation findings, reflect on the project’s impact on schools and universities, and plan future collaborative initiatives. During the subsequent multiplier event, Prof. Axel Gehrmann (TU Dresden, ZLSB) welcomed 15 external guests together with numerous members of the consortium. In addition to presentations on the Learning and Teaching Packages, the program featured participatory workshops and guided visits to sustainable learning sites throughout Dresden. The event concluded with the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the ZLSB.



Photo: © Ante Beslic

Sustaining the Network: Looking Ahead

One of the project’s most important achievements has been the establishment of a Europe-wide network of teachers, universities, and educational institutions. Many project partners have already launched follow-up initiatives or are preparing joint proposals for future collaborative projects. TU Dresden likewise intends to continue expanding its activities in the field of ESD within teacher education.

In this way, TAP-TS has produced not only innovative teaching materials and professional development formats but also a lasting foundation for international collaboration—making tangible contributions toward achieving the objectives of the European Green Deal and the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Former Coordinator for ESD
Dr. Rachel Bowden

[➤ Further information on the State Initiative for ESD](#)

[➤ Further information on the TAP-TS Project](#)

“Hello, Dublin ...” ZLSB Teacher Educators Exchange Ideas at European TAP-TS Workshops in Ireland

The Teacher Academy Project – Teaching Sustainability (TAP-TS) was launched in 2022 as one of eleven Erasmus+ Teacher Academies funded by the European Commission through May 2025. As part of a series of workshops held in Ireland in February 2025, teachers and teacher educators from nine European countries explored, tested, and evaluated teaching materials on sustainability.

The Teacher Academy focuses on strengthening sustainability competencies among teachers, teacher education students, and teacher educators working in primary and secondary education across Europe. Participants from Belgium, Croatia, Cyprus, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Austria, Portugal, and Sweden collaborated to develop teaching and learning resources on sustainability, adapting and testing them within their respective national educational contexts.

The workshops, held on February 17–18, 2025, at University College Dublin, were designed to evaluate the TAP-TS

teaching materials developed over the previous years and to discuss their practical application in the classroom. To contribute to these discussions, the ZLSB at TU Dresden was represented by a multidisciplinary team of experts with diverse professional backgrounds. Participants included Katrin Günther, Katrin Lange, and Maria Melchior-Tunc (Teachers in Higher Education), Dr. Peggy Germer (Coordinator, BQL Project), Alexander Klippstein (Subject Coordinator, BQL Elementary Education), Dagmar Oertel (BQL Digital), and Christin Nenner (BQL.Digital).

Beyond the workshop sessions themselves, the program at University College Dublin offered numerous opportunities for networking with partners from the TAP-TS consortium as well as representatives of other Erasmus+ Teacher Academies, fostering new international collaborations in teacher education.

Video highlights from the workshops are featured in a new [film project](#) on the European Education Area (beginning at 02:08).

Head of Professional Development Team
Dr. Peggy Germer

Photo: © Paul Moore



Rethinking Schools: Compact Training Day at the ZLSB Provides Practical Impulses for Future Teachers

On June 19, 2025, the ZLSB hosted an inspiring Compact Training Day under the theme “Insights from the ZLSB: Schullögin, Inclusion, and ESD.” Twenty-six prospective elementary school teachers from the Teacher Traineeship Center in Löbau participated in the event, engaging with key issues shaping the future of school education.

Strong Partnerships for Practice-Oriented Teacher Education

The event was organized through close collaboration between Silke Lubiger (Teacher Traineeship Center Löbau), Tina Czaja (Inclusion Coordinator, ZLSB), Maria Melchior-Tunc (School teacher seconded to the university, ZLSB), Elisa Röbner (Schullögin), and Dr. Rachel Bowden (former Coordinator for ESD, ZLSB), who also coordinated the program. Together, they designed a diverse agenda addressing current educational challenges while offering practical strategies for classroom implementation.

The primary objective was to equip teacher trainees with concrete approaches for integrating cross-cutting themes such as inclusive education, digitalization, and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into their future teaching practice.

Three Key Focus Areas

Through interactive workshops and expert presentations, participants explored three central areas of teacher education

- **Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)**
Drawing on the Teaching Sustainability (TAP-TS) project, participants developed ideas for integrating sustainability into elementary school classrooms through age-appropriate, practice-oriented teaching approaches
- **Designing Inclusive Learning Environments**
Guided by the Teaching and Learning Space for Inclusion initiative, participants explored strategies for creating accessible learning environments. Alongside practical approaches, the workshops encouraged reflection on participants’ own professional attitudes and the collaborative development of concrete instructional practices
- **Schullögin**
Presentations on the statewide Schullögin initiative demonstrated how digital platforms can provide orientation, networking opportunities, and educational resources for teacher education and professional development

The event formed part of the nationwide ESD Initiative, “SDG 4 – Embedding ESD in University-Based Teacher Education,” funded by Engagement Global with financial



Photo: © Ante Beslic

support from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ).

Participant evaluations were overwhelmingly positive. Attendees particularly praised: the high practical relevance of the topics, the interactive and engaging workshop formats, the collaborative and supportive atmosphere, and the opportunities for professional self-reflection.

One participant summarized the experience succinctly:

So much that was genuinely relevant in such a short time—it was truly motivating for everyday teaching.”



Photo: © Ante Beslic

The Compact Training Day clearly advanced one of the ZLSB’s central objectives: strengthening collaboration across the three phases of teacher education. Participants regarded the direct exchange between the university and school-based practice as especially valuable.

The success of the event has encouraged all participating partners to further expand the collaboration between the ZLSB and the Teacher Traineeship Center in Löbau. Additional Compact Training Days are already being planned, with the shared goal of embedding innovative educational approaches sustainably within teacher education.

Former Coordinator for ESD
Dr. Rachel Bowden

School Gardens & ESD: Growing Together for a Just and Sustainable Future

How can a school garden become a vibrant learning environment for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)? This question was at the heart of a practice-oriented professional development program organized by the ZLSB. The program aimed to help elementary school teachers in Saxony strengthen both their horticultural and pedagogical competencies while establishing school gardens as inclusive, authentic learning environments for ESD.

Putting Down Roots, Embracing Diversity, Thinking Globally

In the school garden, theory and practice come together. By planting, harvesting, observing, investigating, and working collaboratively, children experience ecological relationships through hands-on learning. At the same time, the garden provides countless opportunities to explore key ESD topics: Which crops are regional and seasonal? Where do imported foods come from? Why is crop diversity declining? How are agriculture, globalization, nutrition, climate change, and social justice interconnected? One participant reflected on the experience: “I learned how to plan a planting schedule together with children—but also how to bring the wider world into the school garden, for example through the potato project or by exploring spices. I now feel much more confident tackling these topics with my students.”



Photo: © Ante Beslic

At a Glance: The Professional Development Program
The program was designed for elementary school teachers from both urban and rural regions of Saxony who were interested in further developing the school garden as a learning environment for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). A total of eleven teachers participated in the program, which ran from December 2024 through October 2025.

The program combined a variety of learning formats. It included ten sessions in total: five online meetings, three full-day hands-on workshops in the school garden of 129th Elementary School Dresden-Reick, and two additional sessions dedicated to professional exchange, peer consultation, and reflective practice. The goal was not only to provide participants with new knowledge but also to create practical inspiration and a supportive environment for collaborative learning and experimentation with new teaching approaches. Throughout the program, participants also developed a shared collection of teaching materials—including classroom activities, instructional methods, project ideas, and curated resources—that remains available for continued use.

Learning from Experienced Practitioners

The program was led by an interdisciplinary team of experienced educators and subject specialists. Overall coordination was provided by Dr. Rachel Bowden, Coordinator for ESD at the ZLSB, who co-developed the program’s concept. Her expertise at the intersection of sustainability and teacher education shaped the program’s pedagogical design.

Heidelinde Wutzler, an experienced educator specializing in nature, environmental, and farm-based education, contributed extensive practical expertise during the hands-on workshops. She shared her knowledge of seasonal gardening, cultivation practices, and effective ways of guiding children through garden-based learning experiences. Participants especially appreciated her practical advice and numerous examples drawn from everyday school life.

Another important contribution came from Amira Said and Lisa Becker of CAMBIO e. V., whose work focuses on Global Learning and diversity-conscious education. Their sessions broadened participants’ perspectives on the global dimensions of food systems, agriculture, and consumption while introducing age-appropriate methods for addressing complex issues such as colonialism, global supply chains, and fair trade through school garden activities.

Several sessions also featured Johanna Lochner from pflanzenzet.de as a guest speaker. Her workshops explored connections between nutrition education and interdisciplinary project weeks, providing participants with practical ideas for designing classroom units and project days centered on vegetables, spices, and the origins of the foods we eat.

Together, these educators formed a highly complementary team that enriched the program not only through their expertise but also by fostering an atmosphere in which practical learning, collegial exchange, and fresh perspectives could flourish.

Former Coordinator for ESD
Dr. Rachel Bowden



Photo: © Steffen Schreiber

ZLSB to Prepare New Teachers Through 2031: Extension of the Qualification Program for Second-Career Teachers Signed

Since 2017, approximately 1,000 participants have successfully completed the Qualification Program for Second-Career Teachers (German: Berufsbegleitende Qualifizierung von Lehrkräften, BQL) at the ZLSB at TU Dresden, preparing them for careers in the teaching profession. In December 2024, Béla Bélafi (Head of Department at the Saxon State Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs) and Prof. Ursula M. Staudinger (Rector of TU Dresden) signed the agreement extending the program for a third funding period at the Dresden site.

The continuation of the program ensures that, beginning with the Winter Semester 2025/26 and continuing until the final cohorts complete their studies in 2031, prospective teachers will continue to have access to an attractive, second-career pathway into the teaching profession. Together with comparable programs offered by the teacher education universities in Leipzig and Chemnitz, the initiative provides a strong foundation for modern, family-friendly blended learning formats that combine university-based instruction with professional teaching practice.

The academic qualification program at TU Dresden enables participants to earn additional teaching qualifications in elementary education subject didactics as well as in subjects taught at secondary schools. The program currently focuses on high-demand subject areas, including mathematics, computer science, German, and Economics-Technology-Household/Social Studies (WTH/S). Beginning in the Winter Semester 2025/26, the program will also be expanded to include Civics, Law, and Economics (GRW).

The Qualification Program for Second-Career Teachers (BQL) combines full-time teaching responsibilities in schools with a structured academic qualification phase. Participants attend the university two days per week while continuing to work as teachers. The program is organized and coordinated by the Center for Teacher Education and Educational Research (ZLSB) under the academic leadership of Prof. Dr. Axel Gehrmann and the program coordination of Dr. Peggy Germer, in close cooperation with the Executive Board of TU Dresden, the Saxon State Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs (SMK), and the State Office for Schools and Education (LaSuB).

In addition, the agreement includes certificate programs in Ethics and Technology/Computer Science (T/C). Over the course of 18 months, teachers at secondary schools (Oberschulen), special schools (Förderschulen), and academic secondary schools (Gymnasien) who are teaching these subjects outside their original field of qualification develop both subject-specific expertise and practical instructional skills. Participants in the Technology/Computer Science certificate program not only explore innovative teaching concepts but also complete extensive hands-on workshop training. The Ethics certificate program for elementary school teachers similarly strengthens participants' disciplinary knowledge and pedagogical competencies in ethics education for the primary grades.

Head of Professional Development Team
Dr. Peggy Germe

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Professional Development

ZLSB Edited Anthology Examines Alternative Pathways into Teaching from Eleven International Perspectives

In February 2025, the ZLSB at TU Dresden published its first international edited volume on teacher shortages and non-traditional pathways into the teaching profession. Researchers from Australia, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States contribute diverse national perspectives, combining analyses of the global teacher shortage with approaches to alternative routes into teaching.

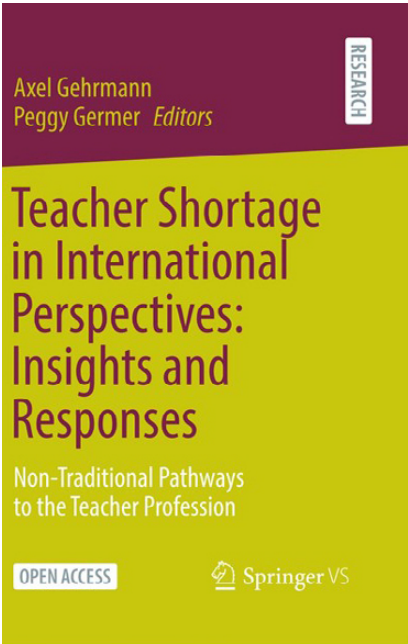


Foto: © ZLSB

The open-access volume, titled “Teacher Shortage in International Perspectives: Insights and Responses: Non-Traditional Pathways to the Teacher Profession” ([open access](#) und [Springer](#)), is the result of many years of intensive collaboration between the ZLSB and its national and international research partners on the topic of teacher shortages.

The contributors present innovative ideas for reforming teacher education policy and practice in response to the worldwide shortage of qualified teachers. The volume examines the issue from multiple perspectives, including country-specific overviews of teacher education systems and current teacher workforce challenges. It also analyzes continuing education and qualification structures for career changers entering the teaching profession in different national contexts. Qualitative and quantitative research findings, together with examples of effective practice, complement the individual country chapters. In the concluding chapter, the editors return to the complexity of the global teacher shortage and propose a systematic framework for understanding its underlying causes.

Against this backdrop, Prof. Dr. Axel Gehrmann, Managing Director of the ZLSB and co-editor of the volume, identifies three overarching models that characterize different national approaches: the “State Responsibility Model,” the “Market Economy Model,” and the “Model of Overproduction of Teacher Certificates.”

The international edited volume represents an important milestone in advancing sustainable and resilient education systems in the face of current political and societal challenges.

Head of Professional Development Team
Dr. Peggy Germer

➤ [Further information on the Qualification Program for Second-Career Teachers \(BQL\)](#)

ZLSB Showcases Teacher Education at the Rabryka Innovation Center in Görlitz

On March 5, 2025, the first networking meeting of the German Center for Astrophysics (DZA)—currently under development—was held at the Rabryka Innovation Center in Görlitz. Participants included representatives from schools, government ministries, astronomy associations, industry, and the ZLSB at TU Dresden. Throughout the day, educational stakeholders gathered at thematic discussion tables to explore key questions concerning the future of education in the Lusatia region.

The event focused on the region’s ongoing structural transformation and emphasized close collaboration among industry, academia, and civil society. Five thematic discussion groups addressed different aspects of this transformation.

One discussion centered on the question of how alternative pathways into teaching could help alleviate the regional teacher shortage. Particular attention was given



Photo: © DESY/Paul Glaser

to strengthening networks, recruiting career changers into the teaching profession, and leveraging the expertise of professionals—especially in mathematics and physics. Participants also outlined and critically discussed ideas for continuing education initiatives that could be offered by the ZLSB at TU Dresden in rural areas. These conversations generated proposals ranging from digital education initiatives to new approaches for strengthening the transfer of scientific knowledge into schools.

Additional discussion groups examined methods for monitoring students’ interest in astrophysics, data science, and technology development.

Other sessions explored the conditions necessary for effective science communication in astronomy, the involvement of extracurricular partners in developing an educational vision for the Lusatia region, and the role of observatories as places of scientific and cultural engagement.

The exchange of perspectives among regional and national stakeholders marked a successful first step toward future collaborative initiatives aimed at strengthening education throughout the Lusatia region.

Head of Professional Development Team
Dr. Peggy Germer

The Magdeburg Hemispheres and Dual Teacher Education Programs: Reflections on the Second Networking Conference at the Guericke Center

From April 3–4, 2025, experts in school and teacher education from nine German states met at the Guericke Center of the Otto von Guericke Foundation in Magdeburg to discuss the design and implementation of dual teacher education programs. Organized jointly by Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg (OVGU), the Bertelsmann Foundation,



Photo: © DESY/Paul Glaser

and the CHE Center for Higher Education, the conference brought together school principals, career changers, teachers, teacher educators from universities and teacher training institutes, and representatives of state ministries to discuss the conditions for successfully implementing non-traditional pathways into the teaching profession.

Surrounded by blooming cherry trees and the artistic installation commemorating Otto von Guericke’s famous Magdeburg Hemispheres experiment, participants explored key questions surrounding practice-integrated teacher education. The two copper hemispheres served as a fitting symbol for the conference. In his famous 1656 experiment, Otto von Guericke demonstrated the existence of atmospheric pressure by removing the air from two hemispheres with a vacuum pump. Even sixteen horses pulling in opposite directions were unable to separate them.

At the opening of the conference, Dr. Dirk Zorn, Director of Education and Next Generation at the Bertelsmann Foundation, drew on this historic experiment to illustrate the relationship between theory and practice in teacher education:

“One hemisphere represents theory and the other practice. Neither exists independently of the other. External pressure creates a unique relationship that shapes both halves. Applied to today’s teacher shortage, this illustrates the need to rethink and strengthen the connection between theory and practice.”

Against this backdrop, it was only natural that the conference focused on developing stronger links between academic study and professional practice. Discussions centered on the conceptual design of dual teacher education programs, their practical implementation, and strategies for their ongoing evaluation. To open the conference, Junior Professor Dr. Karina Becker, Franziska Kempka, and Professor Dr. Stefanie Rach (all OVGU) presented Saxony-Anhalt’s pilot model for an integrated, practice-based undergraduate teacher education program for secondary schools. Introduced in 2024 with an inaugural cohort of 30 students, the program quickly demonstrated both the considerable potential and the organizational and communicative challenges involved in implementing such an innovative model.

During a panel discussion on the practice-integrated teacher education program in Magdeburg, Professor Dina Kuhlee (Vice Rector for Academic Affairs at Otto von Guericke University Magdeburg), Jürgen Böhm (State Secretary at the Ministry of Education of Saxony-Anhalt), Heike Szebrat (principal of a secondary school in Stendal), Thomas Lieber (Director of the State Institute for Teacher Education and School Development (LISA) in Magdeburg), and Thomas Neumann (Head of Division at the Ministry of Science, Energy and Climate Protection of Saxony-Anhalt) discussed the opportunities and challenges of the new program. The school principal described the difficult staffing situation at her school, where only 68 percent of teaching positions were currently filled, and repeatedly emphasized

the urgent need for qualified teachers. Supporting this assessment, the director of LISA noted that secondary schools in rural areas are particularly affected by the teacher shortage.

The subsequent presentation by Achim Rix and Hendrik Reimers from the Institute for Quality Development in Schools Schleswig-Holstein (IQ.SH) focused on the practical implementation of a dual master’s program. They introduced the Dual Master of Education in Special Education at the Europa-Universität Flensburg, a program designed for career changers who already hold a relevant bachelor’s degree and have professional experience. Since 2021, prospective students have been able to apply for the program. In addition to academic qualifications, applicants are advised to possess a Class B driver’s license and access to a private vehicle, as the considerable travel distances between Flensburg in northern Schleswig-Holstein and the partner schools located in regions experiencing severe teacher shortages present significant logistical challenges. The presenters explained that the program has therefore been continuously refined to address these practical realities.



Photo: © Dr. Peggy Germer

During the interactive roundtable discussions, participants focused in particular on how the various stakeholders in teacher education could work together more effectively. Conversations addressed questions such as how university-based and school-based mentoring could be coordinated successfully and what transparent structures of responsibility should look like within dual teacher education programs.

On the second day, Prof. Dr. Axel Gehrmann, Managing Director of the ZLSB at TU Dresden, presented Saxony’s approaches to evaluating the Qualification Program for Academics Entering the Teaching Profession (QUER). He also shared findings from a survey of approximately 1,000 participants in the Qualification Program for Second-Career Teachers (BQL). Other representatives from Saxony

included Petra Zeller (Head of Division, Saxon State Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs), Martin Neumärker (Advisor for Teacher Education, Saxon State Ministry for Science, Culture and Tourism), Dr. Peggy Germer (ZLSB, TU Dresden), and Peggy Hempel, a graduate of TU Dresden’s Qualification Program for Second-Career Teachers who now teaches computer science.

Following additional workshop sessions devoted to evaluation and discussion, participants concluded that there are multiple promising pathways into the teaching profession. At the same time, Prof. Gehrmann emphasized in his closing remarks that the introduction of new teacher education programs should be accompanied by systematic research in order to maintain high quality standards and ensure meaningful comparisons across different program models.

Head of Professional Development Team
Dr. Peggy Germer

Artificial Intelligence in Schools and Higher Education: Insights, Perspectives, and Practice

With the goal of fostering critical reflection on the opportunities and challenges of artificial intelligence (AI) in education, TU Dresden launched the event series “AI in Schools and Higher Education” in November 2024. Organized by staff from the Qualification Program for Second-Career Teachers (BQL) and the Schullogin project, the four-part series ran through March 2025. Building on the success of earlier workshop formats, it created a forum for dialogue and networking among teachers, university faculty, and students.



Photo: © BQL.Digital

Inspirierender Auftakt der Veranstaltungsreihe „KI in Schule & Hochschule“
The opening event addressed fundamental questions about the role of AI in school education. A keynote presen-

tation emphasized that digitalization should be understood not merely as a technological development but as a broader societal transformation. Consequently, participants discussed the need to actively shape a “culture of digitality” within education.

Central topics included educational equity, the appropriate age at which students should begin using AI, and the evolving role of teachers. A recurring theme throughout the discussion was that AI is both an object of learning and a tool for learning, with significant implications for teaching, communication, and school organization alike.

AI in Teacher Education as the Second Event in the “AI in Schools & Higher Education” Series
The second event, held in December 2024, focused specifically on teacher education, highlighting its pivotal role in preparing educators to integrate AI effectively into schools. Participants explored both practical teaching scenarios and current research initiatives.



Photo: © BQL Deutsch

A major emphasis was placed on classroom applications. Demonstrations showed, for example, how AI can support poetry interpretation, lesson planning, and creative learning activities such as designing future schools using AI-generated images. These examples illustrated the educational potential of emerging technologies while also encouraging critical reflection on their use. The event also introduced the “Pedagogical AI Lab,” an innovative initiative designed to equip future teachers with foundational competencies for the responsible use of AI. Discussions made clear that successful integration of AI requires not only technical proficiency but also sound pedagogical concepts and carefully considered instructional strategies.

Keynote Lecture and Panel Discussion: AI in German Language Education
The third session examined the use of AI in subject-specific teaching, using German language education as a case study. It highlighted the profound influence AI is already having on creative and language-based learning processes. Through a keynote presentation and panel discussion, participants explored both the opportunities and limitations of AI-assisted work with texts. Central questions included how writing processes are changing, which competencies will become increasingly important, and how teachers can support students in using AI thoughtfully and responsibly.

The discussion underscored that AI should not simply be regarded as another educational tool. Rather, it requires educators to rethink assessment practices, instructional formats, and learning objectives. Particularly in language education, traditional approaches to evaluating student performance must be reconsidered in light of AI-assisted writing.



Speakers and organizers of the event “AI Tools: Behind the Scenes,”
Photo: © BQL Deutsch

A Look Behind the Scenes – Focus on AI Tools: Closing Event of the “AI in Schools & Higher Education” Series
The series concluded with a hands-on event showcasing specific AI tools and their practical applications in everyday school settings. Rather than discussing AI in abstract terms, participants had the opportunity to explore how these technologies function and how they can be integrated into teaching practice.

Looking back, the four-part series addressed a remarkably broad range of topics—from educational policy and media pedagogy to teacher education, subject-specific applications, and practical classroom implementation. It also offered perspectives on future developments in the field. Particular attention was given to the award-winning “Pedagogical AI Lab,” which was highlighted as an exemplary model for embedding AI into teacher education. The series itself is viewed as the starting point for further initiatives aimed at establishing AI as a lasting topic within educational discourse.

Overall, “AI in Schools & Higher Education” demonstrated the many dimensions of artificial intelligence in education. It showed that the discussion extends far beyond technological innovation, raising fundamental questions about pedagogy, educational equity, and the evolving professional identity of teachers.

Research Associates BQL
Stephanie Richter (BQL-German), Dagmar Oertel (BQL.Digital), Dr. Anja Mede-Schelenz (former BQL-GS), Fritz Hoffmann (Schullogin)

➤ [Further information on the event series “AI in Schools & Higher Education”](#)

Innovative Professional Development Concepts in the BQL Program

The Qualification Program for Second-Career Teachers (BQL) at TU Dresden stands for a modern, dynamic, and practice-oriented approach to teacher education. In an educational landscape increasingly shaped by digitalization, societal change, and global challenges, the BQL program develops innovative learning formats that combine academic rigor with practical classroom application. The result is a range of learning environments that extend well beyond traditional professional development courses, supporting teachers in their ongoing professional growth.



Photo: © Jason Szedlak

From the Lecture Hall to the Classroom—and Back Again: First BQL Alumni Day at TU Dresden

A particularly compelling example of this approach was the first BQL Alumni Day, held on September 24, 2025. The event highlighted a core principle of the program: professional development does not end with program completion but continues throughout a teacher’s career.

Photo: © TUD/André Wirsig



Former participants gathered to connect their classroom experiences with current academic perspectives. Their discussions demonstrated the value of linking theory and practice, as participants reflected on challenges from everyday school life, explored new instructional approaches, and collaboratively developed practical solutions.

The program focused on key topics shaping the future of education, including civic education, media literacy, digitalization, and Education for Sustainable Development. In particular, the interactive workshop format enabled participants to further develop their own teaching ideas while benefiting from the experiences and perspectives of their colleagues.

The Alumni Day thus exemplifies a central principle of the BQL program: meaningful professional growth is fostered through active professional networks. The event provides precisely such a space—a forum for dialogue, reflection, and collaborative learning.

Shaping Digital Education: The Pedagogical AI Lab as a Model for the Future

Another flagship initiative within the BQL program is the Pedagogical AI Lab, which received the 2024 Teaching Award from the Society of Friends and Supporters of TU Dresden in the category “Teaching Award for Teacher Education Initiatives.” The award ceremony took place on January 15, 2025, recognizing the program’s exceptional quality and its forward-looking contribution to teacher education.

The Pedagogical AI Lab was established to prepare teachers comprehensively for the use of artificial intelligence (AI) in educational settings. Its objective extends beyond familiarizing participants with new technologies. Instead, the program promotes a deeper understanding of how AI systems function, how they influence teaching and learning, and what broader societal implications they entail.



Photo: © Aurica Borszik

The concept of the Pedagogical AI Lab is built on three core pillars: developing foundational knowledge about artificial intelligence, applying AI in authentic teaching contexts, and critically reflecting on its ethical and pedagogical implications. This integrated approach enables participants not only to use AI as a practical tool but also to incorporate it into their teaching in a thoughtful and responsible manner.

Didaktisch From a pedagogical perspective, the AI Lab employs innovative instructional methods such as learning maps, collaborative writing formats, and interactive experimentation sessions. These approaches promote self-directed learning while encouraging active engagement with the subject matter. At the same time, they create a supportive environment in which uncertainties surrounding emerging technologies can be openly discussed and addressed collaboratively. In this way, the Pedagogical AI Lab makes an important contribution to the development of “future skills”—the competencies teachers need to prepare students for an increasingly digital world.

Thinking Globally: International Perspectives Through Collaboration

Alongside digitalization, international collaboration is another defining feature of the BQL program. This is exemplified by the Ugandan–German Theme Week on Education for Sustainable Development, held from June 2–5, 2025, as part of an Erasmus+ project.

The program brought together prospective and practicing teachers from Germany and Uganda to engage with global educational challenges. Its objective was to foster an exchange of perspectives on sustainable development and to encourage participants to incorporate these insights into their own educational practice.

The Theme Week combined theoretical preparation with a wide range of collaborative activities. Through workshops, discussions, and project-based learning, participants explored global challenges and developed teaching approaches for elementary education. The program underscored that Education for Sustainable Development can only be truly effective when it takes cultural contexts into account and embraces multiple perspectives.

Beyond strengthening professional competencies, the intercultural exchange also promoted participants’ personal development. It encouraged them to broaden their perspectives, question their own assumptions, and deepen their understanding of global interconnections. At the same time, the program fostered lasting professional networks that extend well beyond the event itself.

Initiatives such as this demonstrate that teacher education must increasingly be understood within an international context. The BQL program embraces this perspective by creating learning opportunities that transcend national borders.

Head of Professional Development Team
Dr. Peggy Germer

➤ [Further information on the first BQL Alumni Day](#)

➤ [Further information on the Pedagogical AI Lab](#)

➤ [Further information on the Ugandan–German Theme Week](#)

50 Teachers and School Leaders Attend Professional Development Day on AI in the Classroom

Artificial intelligence has become both an important and a challenging topic in schools and universities alike. To support school leaders and teachers in navigating this rapidly evolving field, TU Dresden hosted a joint professional development event on March 4, 2025, entitled “AI in the Classroom: Sharing Best Practices.”



Photo: © Schulkontaktstelle

Under the theme “AI in the Classroom,” approximately 50 participants attended a morning program featuring six expert presentations that explored the use of AI in education from a variety of disciplinary perspectives:

- Analyzing World Knowledge in GPT (Prof. Dr. Simon Razniewski)
- A Colleague Called AI? Ethical and Pedagogical Reflections on New Partnerships in the Classroom (Prof. Dr. Birte Platow)
- From Excellence Research to the Classroom: Discovering AI Applications Firsthand (Marcus Kotte)
- Personalized Learning Experiences with Generative AI (Dr. Claudia Loitsch)
- Google vs. ChatGPT? Conducting Purposeful Research with AI Models (Markus Sprenger)
- Fairy Tales and Machines: Language Models as Digital Storytellers in Narrative Teaching and Learning (Ariane Schneider)

In the afternoon, researchers from TU Dresden presented a range of projects that make artificial intelligence and scientific research accessible to school students. At interactive discussion tables, participants exchanged ideas and collaboratively explored opportunities to initiate or further develop joint projects.

The strong participation underscored the growing interest in AI within the education community. Participants gained a research-informed overview of current developments in artificial intelligence and its applications in higher education. At the same time, scholars from the fields of religious education, STEM education, language education and geo-

graphy education demonstrated the diverse ways AI can enrich teaching and learning across subject areas.

The afternoon sessions, featuring collaborative projects developed by TU Dresden and its partner schools, fostered in-depth discussions on the practical use of AI in everyday school settings. Overall, the event provided valuable opportunities for networking among teachers, school leaders, and university faculty while inspiring new ideas for future collaboration.

Former Coordinator of the TUD Teacher Academy
Damaris Schabel

Dialogic 3.0! Knowledge Exchange in Vocational Education

On March 27, 2025, 33 stakeholders in vocational education gathered in the Weber Building at TU Dresden to engage in an interdisciplinary dialogue on topics in vocational education, social pedagogy, healthcare and nursing education, and nutrition and home economics education. Originally initiated by the Chair of Vocational Education and the Chair of Social Pedagogy, the event is now jointly supported by the Center for Teacher Education and Educational Research (ZLSB) and the Chair of Healthcare and Nursing Education.

Held for the third time, the event once again provided a platform for interdisciplinary exchange, the circulation of knowledge, and networking within the professional community.



Photo: © Teacher Academy of TUD

Keynote Address: The Importance of Vocational Education

In the opening keynote, “Vocational Education Matters,” Professor Dr. Sandra Bohlinger highlighted the significance and distinctive role of vocational education within the German education system and discussed its importance in light of current societal and international developments. Against the backdrop of an increasingly diverse landscape of educational and career pathways, she presented strategies for enhancing the attractiveness of vocational

education. These included strengthening career guidance, improving public awareness and the image of vocational training, modernizing qualification profiles, increasing permeability between educational pathways, and ensuring competitive compensation.

Workshops: Applied Research in Focus

Following the keynote, participants joined a series of workshops led by students and researchers from TU Dresden, where they explored and discussed findings from state examination theses and doctoral research projects. Workshop topics included: implementing the situational learning principle in vocational Gymnasium programs specializing in Health and Social Sciences, the role of AI-generated feedback in supporting learning tasks, and the design and evaluation of an educational detective game for apprentices in the hotel and hospitality industry.

Former Coordinator of the TUD Teacher Academy
Damaris Schabel

From Campus to Classroom: TU Dresden Launches the Teacher Academy

With the official opening of its Teacher Academy on December 2, 2025, TU Dresden marked an important milestone in the professional development of teachers in Saxony. Beyond its longstanding role in preparing future teachers during the first phase of teacher education, the university is now bringing together its continuing education and professional development activities for teachers of all school types under a single institutional umbrella. In doing so, it formally integrates the third phase of teacher education—teachers’ ongoing professional careers—into the knowledge transfer between the university and school practice through the Center for Teacher Education and Educational Research (ZLSB). The Teacher Academy will provide teachers with sustained opportunities to engage with leading researchers and explore the latest developments in educational research and innovation through professional learning opportunities. Participants will be able to transfer these insights directly into their classrooms, benefiting both their own professional practice and their students’ learning. The Academy thus represents an important milestone in lifelong learning at TU Dresden. In pursuing this mission, the university continues its close collaboration with the Saxon State Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs (SMK) and the State Office for Schools and Education (LaSuB).

In his opening remarks, Prof. Dr.-Ing. Niels Modler, Vice-Rector for Education and Lifelong Learning, emphasized the university’s responsibility to support teachers throughout their professional careers: “The university sees it as its fundamental mission not only to provide teachers with a strong academic education during their studies, but also to support their professional development throughout their entire careers.” He noted that, within the framework of universities’ Third Mission, knowledge transfer through



Foto: © Ante Beslic

teacher professional development has become increasingly important. According to Prof. Modler, the establishment of the Teacher Academy represents a key component of TU Dresden’s University Development Plan 2021–2025 while also fulfilling the university’s mandate under § 99 of the Saxon Higher Education Act (SächsHSG) to develop and coordinate university-based professional development opportunities for teachers.

Prof. Dr. Axel Gehrman, Executive Director of the ZLSB, then outlined the Academy’s development process. He explained that its creation was a direct response to the revised statutory responsibilities of teacher education centers in Saxony. From the outset, the ZLSB systematically developed the Academy’s academic profile, established a university-wide network of teacher educators, and created structures for the organization, coordination, and evaluation of its professional development activities. A comprehensive review of existing programs revealed that TU Dresden already offered a remarkably broad range of continuing education opportunities for teachers. However, these initiatives had previously lacked a shared institutional framework and a common understanding of quality. The establishment of the Teacher Academy now provides both a clear institutional identity and a comprehensive evaluation system to ensure and continuously enhance the quality of its professional development offerings.



Foto: © Ante Beslic

Dr. Volker Kreß, School Teacher Seconded to the University, presented the wide range of services offered by the new Teacher Academy, representing Laura Mitzscher, the Academy's Coordinator. The Teacher Academy supports instructors from TU Dresden in planning, delivering, and evaluating their professional development programs while also serving as the university's central point of contact for schools—for example, in organizing school-based professional development programs (SCHILF). Presenting the professional development portfolio for the 2025/26 school year, Dr. Kreß highlighted offerings ranging from subject-specific courses in physics and history to cross-curricular topics such as working with internationally diverse families. These programs were developed through close collaboration among university chairs, Teachers in Higher Education, and staff from the Qualification Program for Second-Career Teachers (BQL). At the heart of the Academy, Dr. Kreß explained, is the newly established Teacher Professional Development Network, which plays a central role in advancing quality development. The network systematically promotes collegial exchange, the sharing of best practices, and the collaborative design of new professional development programs. In addition, the Teacher Academy offers individualized guidance for instructors with less experience in designing and delivering professional learning opportunities.

Dr. Peggy Germer, Head of the Continuing Education and Professional Development Team, outlined the Academy's future strategic priorities. She emphasized that TU Dresden sees itself as a key partner in fostering reciprocal exchange among academia, industry, and society—an essential component of the university's Third Mission: "In the coming years, the Teacher Academy will focus in parti-



Photo: © Ante Beslic

cular on expanding professional development opportunities in rural regions and strengthening cross-institutional collaboration on quality standards. We also plan to deepen our partnerships with organizations such as the German Center for Astrophysics (DZA) while exploring additional funding opportunities at the federal level."

Following the welcome addresses, Prof. Modler and Prof. Gehrman officially inaugurated the Teacher Academy by ceremonially cutting a red ribbon.

The opening celebration concluded with the workshop "Creating Educational Videos for the Classroom," which provided participants with a hands-on introduction to digital teaching and learning formats.

Coordinator of the TUD Teacher Academy
Laura Mitzscher

[➤ Further information on the Teacher Academy](#)

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Digitalization

Dienste

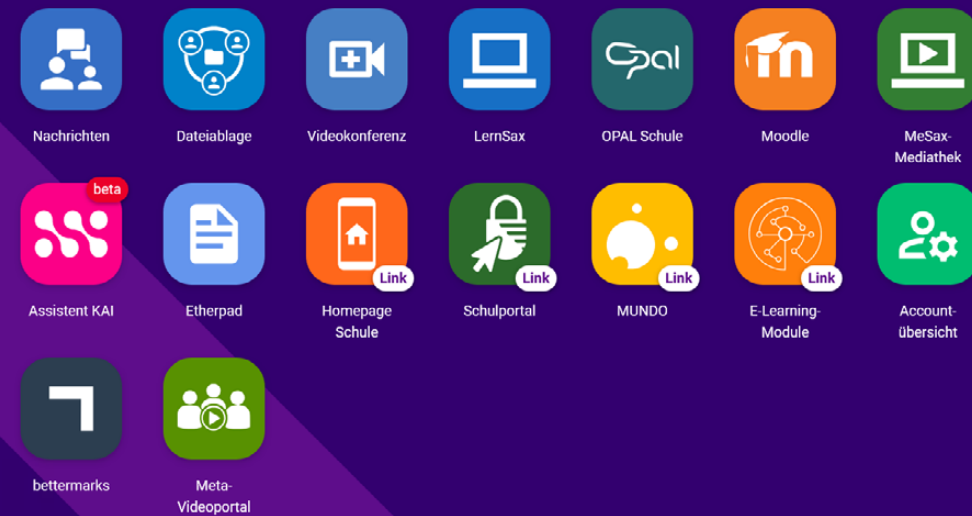


Photo: © Schullogin

Schullogin

The year 2025 marked a period of significant progress for Schullogin, the central platform for digital services in Saxon schools. One of the most important organizational milestones—and the first major step toward establishing Schullogin as a permanent operational service—was the transfer of responsibility from Division 32 of the Saxon State Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs (SMK) to Division 53 of the State Office for Schools and Education (LaSuB). This organizational restructuring provides a solid foundation for the platform's continued development by strengthening its connection to educational practice, enabling faster and more efficient communication, improving support for schools and teachers, and creating a clearer distribution of responsibilities within Saxony's education system.

Substantial progress was also made in expanding the platform's services. At the beginning of the 2025/26 school year, three additional digital applications were integrated into Schullogin through VIDIS: bettermarks, an adaptive online mathematics learning platform; the Meta Video Portal (MeVi), a search engine that centrally indexes educational videos from multiple repositories for use in teacher education; and HubbS, a nationwide digital platform that connects teachers working in vocational education across Germany. These additions provide teachers and students with new digital tools that support more effective and innovative teaching. In particular, the Meta Video Portal offers valuable resources for both pre-service and in-service teacher education. At the same time, Schullogin began piloting the automated integration of LernSax, with the first schools successfully connected to the new system. According to the current implementation schedule, automated user synchronization between LernSax and Schullogin will be available to all schools in Saxony beginning in spring 2026.

Another strategic objective has been to further simplify the use of Schullogin while strengthening digital collaboration with providers of integrated services. Throughout 2025, particular emphasis was also placed on accessibility. Targeted improvements significantly enhanced the platform's usability for people with visual and hearing impairments, underscoring Schullogin's commitment to making digital education accessible and inclusive for all users.

Finally, the results of a comprehensive user survey conducted in March 2025 provided valuable insights into users' experiences, expectations, and needs, offering an important foundation for the platform's continued development.



Foto: © Ante Beslic



Foto: © Ante Beslic

Particularly noteworthy is that the survey findings are being used directly to guide concrete improvements to the platform's usability. One of the most frequently expressed requests was a closer integration of LernSax with Schullogin—an enhancement that, at the time of the survey, was already being implemented through a phased roll-out. These findings underscore the importance of actively incorporating users' perspectives into the platform's ongoing development, ensuring that Schullogin becomes not only more functional but also more intuitive and user-friendly. This participatory approach helps ensure that the platform continues to meet the real needs and expectations of its users while making a meaningful contribution to digital education.

In addition, collaboration with teacher traineeship programs (Vorbereitungsdienst) was significantly expanded. Working together with the regional offices of the State Office for Schools and Education (LaSuB), the Schullogin team developed and piloted new formats designed to help teacher trainees become familiar with the platform. In 2025, trainee cohorts from the LaSuB site in Löbau visited the ZLSB on two occasions for Compact Training Days. More than 60 participants attended sessions on inclusive education, Education for Sustainable Development, and Schullogin. Furthermore, a series of online introductory workshops on Schullogin was delivered to more than 1,000 teacher trainees from the Chemnitz regional center, including Annaberg-Buchholz, as well as to interested mentor teachers and teacher educators. In cooperation with the LASUB site in Dresden, plans are underway to expand these introductory sessions into a standardized, statewide program available to all new teacher trainees across Saxony, ensuring that they begin using Schullogin from the outset of their professional preparation. As in previous years, the Schullogin team also offered a broad range of professional development opportunities throughout 2025, supporting teachers in the effective use of the platform. In addition to online training sessions and school-based professional development programs (SCHILF), the team participated in events such as Safer Internet Day in Großenhain, the Saxon School Computer Science Day in Dresden, and #excitingedu in Leipzig. These activities not only encourage professional exchange but also contribute to the ongoing development of teachers' digital competencies.

Through these initiatives, the Schullogin team at the ZLSB made a significant contribution to the digital transformation of education in Saxony during 2025, laying the groundwork for continued innovation and future development.

Photo: © Ante Beslic



Launch of the Linked Project

In November 2025, the project “Teacher Education in Collaboration—Cross-Institutional and Digital (Linked)” was officially launched with funding from the Saxon State Ministry for Science, Culture and Tourism. Running through the end of 2026, the project aims to strengthen digital connectivity across all phases of teacher education—from university-based preparation and the teacher traineeship (Vorbereitungsdienst) to continuing professional development.

To date, teacher education in Saxony has relied on separate digital infrastructures. Universities operate their own services, such as learning management systems and cloud platforms, through institution-specific identity management (IdM) systems. Schools, by contrast, use Schullogin as their identity management platform, providing access to services such as Nextcloud, BigBlueButton, and a variety of learning platforms. What has been lacking, however, is a shared digital infrastructure that enables seamless collaboration across institutional boundaries and throughout the entire teacher education continuum.

Working in close partnership with Saxony’s teacher education universities, the Linked project explores and pilots the use of Schullogin as a shared single sign-on (SSO) solution for teacher education. The long-term vision is to extend this established, privacy-compliant identity management system beyond schools, enabling digital collaboration across all phases of teacher education without the need to develop an entirely new collaboration platform.

Key project activities include:

- developing application scenarios and use cases together with participating universities,
- designing and implementing a permissions and role management framework for university users,
- piloting selected use cases at participating institutions, and
- developing an automated process for creating, managing, and deleting Schullogin accounts for university staff and students.

The broad participation of all Centers for Teacher Education in Saxony, together with other key stakeholders at the state’s teacher education institutions, ensures that a wide range of perspectives and expertise informs the project. Equally important is the close collaboration with the Schullogin team, the Schullogin coordinators at the State Office for Schools and Education (LaSuB), the Saxon State Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs (SMK), and the Saxon State Ministry for Science, Culture and Tourism as the funding body. This collaborative approach reflects the project’s core objective of strengthening connections across institutions and educational phases.



Photo: © PantherMedia / Andriy Popov

Saxon School Database

The Saxon School Database (SSDB) project continued the nearly thirty-year partnership between the Saxon State Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs (SMK) and TU Dresden from May 1, 2024, through December 31, 2025. Managed by the SMK, the Saxon School Database provides comprehensive information on all public and independent schools in Saxony, helping users identify schools that best meet their needs. The database includes information on staffing, teaching and learning opportunities, school life, support services, school profiles, partnerships, and many other aspects of school operations.

Within the Center for Teacher Education and Educational Research (ZLSB), the project focused primarily on providing user support and consultation for schools and other stakeholders in the education sector.

As part of this work, the project team helped raise public awareness of the database’s features and search capabilities while assisting users in locating suitable schools. Schools also received guidance on maintaining and updating their institutional profiles. In this way, the SSDB project contributed to the ongoing completeness, accuracy, and quality of the database.

Head of Digital Services
Sindy Riebeck

➤ [Further information on the Schullogin project](#)

➤ [Further information on VIDIS – Identity Management Brokerage Service for Schools](#)

➤ [Further information on Digitalization in Teacher Education and Schools](#)



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International Affairs

Looking Beyond the Classroom: Observations at Educational Institutions in the United States

As part of her work at the ZLSB, Maria Melchior-Tunc, Teacher in Higher Education for Social Sciences, had the opportunity to spend several weeks observing teaching and learning at a variety of educational institutions in the United States. In the following report, she shares her experiences and reflections, highlighting insights that may inform both teacher education and classroom practice in Germany.



Photo: © Maria Melchior-Tunc

Christian Timothy School

One of the schools I had the opportunity to visit was Christian Timothy School in New Jersey, a private elementary school distinguished by its strong sense of community and its highly individualized approach to supporting students.

From my very first day, I was struck by how naturally students were encouraged to take an active role in their learning. Personal responsibility, teamwork, and creative problem-solving are integral to everyday school life and are consistently fostered both inside and outside the classroom. Equally impressive was the teachers’ supportive and respectful approach, which places a strong emphasis on social-emotional learning and positive reinforcement. Praise, encouragement, and personal attention shape the school’s learning environment.

Conversations with faculty members revealed the school’s commitment to a holistic vision of education. Alongside traditional academic subjects, music, the arts, and community engagement are integral components of the curriculum. Students regularly participate in local service projects and help organize school-wide events that connect learning with active community involvement.

The visit also provided valuable insights into curriculum development, educational program design, and alternative approaches to student assessment. It quickly became clear that many of the challenges facing schools—including responding to student diversity, providing individualized

support, and integrating digital technologies—are shared internationally, even though different cultural contexts often give rise to different solutions.

One particularly noteworthy strategy for managing these complex demands is the distribution of responsibilities across multiple staff members, allowing the workload to be shared more effectively.

German School Princeton

Another particularly memorable part of my visit was the German School Princeton, which serves as a unique bridge between the German and American education systems. Its mission is to preserve and promote the German language and culture within the United States while implementing contemporary educational approaches.



Photo: © Maria Melchior-Tunc

Classroom observations revealed a particularly strong emphasis on differentiated language instruction. Teachers worked with small, flexibly grouped classes and adapted instruction to meet students’ varying language backgrounds and learning needs. This instructional approach successfully combined structured language support with opportunities for students to develop their own learning pathways.

The school’s educational philosophy combines proven strengths of the German education system with innovative features of American instructional practice. Open learning environments, respectful communication, and shared activities shape everyday school life. This intercultural setting offers valuable perspectives on working with diversity and multilingualism—insights that are equally relevant for schools in Germany. Beyond its outstanding educational work, the German School Princeton also provides a meaningful sense of home for German-speaking families living abroad.

University of Princeton

A particular highlight of my visit was the opportunity to spend time at the University of Princeton, where I attended George Kiraz’s course, Introduction to Syriac. The course offered a fascinating introduction to the world of Semitic languages and demonstrated how closely language learning is connected to intercultural understanding, historical inquiry, and interdisciplinary thinking.



Photo: © Maria Melchior-Tunc

George Kiraz combined exceptional scholarly expertise with remarkable pedagogical skill. His classes were characterized by an open, discussion-based atmosphere that encouraged active participation and meaningful dialogue among students. Linguistic concepts were never examined in isolation but were consistently situated within their cultural, religious, and historical contexts. This approach illustrated language learning as a holistic educational experience. From the perspective of educational research, the course served as an excellent example of how contextualization, interactive teaching, and historical reflection can enrich language learning. At the same time, it became clear that language education extends far beyond the acquisition of grammatical structures. It fosters empathy, intercultural awareness, and the ability to view differences as opportunities for learning. These insights are highly relevant for teacher education in Germany, particularly in the areas of

multilingualism, intercultural learning, and language-responsive instruction.

Conclusion and Outlook

My observation visit to the United States has fundamentally broadened my perspective on teaching, educational culture, and teacher education. I was especially inspired by the emphasis placed on independent learning, personal development, and a school culture grounded in trust, appreciation, and mutual respect.

At every institution I visited, I encountered a genuine culture of welcome. I was warmly received throughout my stay, and this openness created an environment in which authentic dialogue and collaborative learning could flourish. It demonstrated how educational communities can successfully transcend cultural boundaries.

Overall, the experience reinforced the idea that schools are far more than places of knowledge transmission. They are spaces for collaboration, creativity, and personal growth. International perspectives provide valuable opportunities to critically reflect on and further develop one’s own educational practice.

Looking ahead, these initial contacts may develop into long-term partnerships between the ZLSB and the Christian Timothy School. Exchange and observation programs for teacher candidates and practicing teachers represent one promising avenue for future collaboration. Such partnerships would not only strengthen intercultural competencies but also generate fresh ideas for classroom practice, school development, and teacher education, contributing to a vibrant international network of educational cooperation.

School Teacher Seconded to the University

Maria Melchior-Tunc

Building a Foundation for Sustainable International Collaboration in Teacher Education: ZLSB Secures Three EU-Funded Projects

The ZLSB has achieved an exceptional milestone. Over the past several months, the Center secured funding for three European Union projects across three different EU funding programs—a remarkable accomplishment that, according to TU Dresden’s European Project Center (EPC), is unprecedented.

“Three proposals, three successes—this is an extraordinary achievement that confirms we are addressing the right challenges and working with strong partners around the world,” said Maria Richter-Babekoff, International Affairs Officer at the ZLSB and coordinator of the projects.



Foto: © Ante Beslic

Three Projects, One Shared Vision: Shaping a Better Future Through Education

Although the three initiatives differ in focus, they share a common ambition: to advance education in ways that contribute to a more equitable, sustainable, and digitally empowered world.

DILIGENCE (Digital Literacy Guidance in Teacher Education for Critical Empowerment)

With €1.5 million in funding, DILIGENCE strengthens the digital competencies and pedagogical capacities of teacher educators and teachers in Mozambique. The project promotes inclusion, equal educational opportunities, and social participation, with a particular focus on underserved communities. Through professional development programs, a multilingual learning platform, and close collaboration with national educational institutions, DILIGENCE supports the development of a more equitable, sustainable, and democratic education system. The project also contributes to the European Union's Global Gateway strategy, which promotes sustainable partnerships and digital transformation worldwide.

SMARTIVERSE

Supported by €400,000 in funding, SMARTIVERSE addresses the urgent need to integrate sustainability, digital education, and DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging) into the preparation of elementary school teachers in STE(A)M disciplines (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics). The project develops age-appropriate teaching and learning materials that foster critical thinking about the use of digital technologies in building a sustainable future. Through practice-oriented modules and openly accessible educational resources, SMARTIVERSE promotes inclusive education, critical digital literacy, and the responsible use of technology in European classrooms.

TAP-DCE (Teacher Academy Project – Democratic Citizenship Education)

With funding totaling €1.5 million, TAP-DCE strengthens democratic citizenship education in schools and teacher education across Europe. At a time when democratic values face increasing challenges, the project promotes democratic participation and critical thinking among teachers, teacher candidates, and school students. International Professional Learning Communities collaborate to develop, pilot, and openly share innovative teaching and learning materials. TAP-DCE connects democratic citizenship education with sustainability, inclusion, and digital competence, helping to build resilient, values-based education systems throughout Europe.

Creating Added Value Through Collaboration

While each of the three projects has its own distinct focus, their greatest strength lies in the opportunities they create together. "The real impact comes from connecting these initiatives," explained Maria Richter-Babekoff. "By linking the projects, we create synergies that will benefit not only TU Dresden but also our partners in the Global South over the long term."

With a combined funding volume of €3.4 million, this triple success marks a major milestone for the ZLSB and establishes a strong foundation for sustainable international collaboration in teacher education.

International Affairs Advisor

Maria Richter-Babekoff



Photo: © PantherMedia / stokkete

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