

Dr. Rebecca West Burns Named Dean of College of Education at Kutztown University

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KUTZTOWN, Pa. – Dr. Rebecca West Burns has been named dean of the College of Education at Kutztown University, effective Aug. 1. A Berks County native, Burns brings 20 years of teaching and leadership experience in education to KU.


“Dr. Burns rose to the top of a national search due to her strong background in teacher education,” said Dr. Lorin Basden Arnold, provost and vice president for Academic Affairs. “She has served as an endowed professor, director of Clinical Practice and Educational Partnerships and coordinated both graduate and undergraduate programs, as well as having years of experience as an educator at the university level and in the public school system. Her work building collaborative partnerships with k-12 districts and extensive scholarly record in clinical and classroom pedagogy will be important assets to our university and the college. I’m so pleased to welcome her as a colleague.”



Burns comes to KU from the University of North Florida, where she served as the Bill Herrold Endowed Professor in the Department of Teaching, Learning and Curriculum and the director of Clinical Practice and Educational Partnerships since 2021. She earned her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction, emphasis in supervision, from The Pennsylvania State University in 2012, and went on to work at the University of South Florida. She taught for nine years and served stints as program coordinator for the Urban Teacher Residency Partnership Program, the Teacher Leadership Graduate Certificate Program, the elementary education program, the Master of Arts in elementary education program and the Teacher Education Doctoral program.

Burns is a nationally recognized leader in teacher education, having served in leadership positions for the National Association for Professional Development Schools, the American Education Research Association Professional Development Schools Research Special Interest Group and Supervision and Instructional Leadership Special Interest Group and the Council of Professors of Instructional Supervision. She also has received national recognition for her exemplary school-university collaboration and impact on urban education. Burns has authored and co-authored more than 60 publications, including four books, and has given more than 130 presentations in local, state, regional, national and international contexts.

“Kutztown University has a rich history in education and specifically in educator preparation,” Burns said. “I am honored to join such a community that is dedicated to embracing diversity, fostering a lifelong passion for learning, and collaborating with schools to address challenges together. I look forward to working with students, faculty, staff, and university partners to inspire growth and encourage innovation in the pursuit of excellence in education.”



In addition to her doctorate, Burns earned her bachelor's degree in elementary education and master's degree in curriculum and instruction from Penn State. She is a graduate of Wilson High School and was inducted into the district's Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame in 2020.

The College of Education at Kutztown University is dedicated to having a positive impact on the lives of children and youth in the commonwealth of Pennsylvania through the preparation of highly qualified professional educators. Its goal is to provide preparation programs that blend a strong knowledge base in the content area and understanding of human development and grounding in pedagogy with frequent and continuous field experiences. The professional educators prepared in KU's programs will be willing and able to effect change in an increasingly diverse and technologically integrated educational environment. Graduates will be committed to professional development throughout their careers, thus supporting the College of Education model of lifelong learning.