

## School of Education - Program Guiding Principles

### The centrality of relationships to teaching and learning

Inspired teaching starts with strong relationships with students, families, and communities. Knowledge of the racial, cultural, social, familial, linguistic, and historical backgrounds of students serve as the starting point for teachers' ability to design, adapt, and adjust rigorous curriculum that builds upon and expands students' knowledge of themselves, each other, and the world. Socially just teachers foster socially-conscious, democratically-literate students who work to improve their immediate and broader communities. Teachers' ability to enact the following flows directly from the relationships they establish with students. Our program is committed to developing teachers who take up roles as leaders in schools and school districts who:

- **Respect for the complexity of teaching and learning.**  
Teachers use multiple pedagogies and methodologies to meet the learning needs of all students. To remain pedagogically flexible and responsive, good teachers sustain an evolving understanding of best practice as documented in the relevant educational research.
- **Enact socially just, equity-focused instruction.**  
Teachers work to create a positive and inclusive learning community for all students. Equity-focused, public school teachers seek to understand and acknowledge their inherent biases and work against structures that limit opportunities for under-served and under-privileged populations of students.
- **Embrace collaboration and foster the active construction of knowledge.**  
Learning is an inherently social and active process that deepens our understanding as we engage with others who have similar and divergent perspectives and biases. Collaboration, both by and between students, teachers, and families encourages learning through inquiry, reflection, and iteration.
- **Implement culturally relevant, intellectually rich content.**  
Students deserve robust learning experiences that help them make sense of their place in the world and that gives them the tools to use that knowledge to be social conscious and democratically active citizens. This requires teachers to have an adaptive, sophisticated, and expansive knowledge of content, students, and pedagogy.