

Tonia Flora Bauer Ed.D

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Professional Summary

- Assistant Professor of Education at the University of South Carolina-Upstate (Fall 2024-Present)
- 20 years of experience in elementary education
- National Board-Certified Teacher (2016- Present)
- Nominated for Teacher of the Year four times at different schools
- Teacher of the Year (Hickory, NC 2013)
- Research interest in literacy, science of reading, educational technology, GenAI, and student motivation

Education

- EdD: Curriculum and Instruction (Educational Technology), University of South Carolina, 2022
- MEd: Curriculum and Instruction (Children's Literature), Pennsylvania State University, 2012
- BA: Elementary Education (Summa Cum Laude), Lenoir-Rhyne University, 2008
- Graduate: Teachers College, T.A. Marryshow Community College / University of the West Indies, 2005
- Associate Degree of Arts: Social Science, T.A. Marryshow Community College, 1996
- St. Joseph's Convent, Grenville Grenada, West Indies, 1994

University Teaching Experience

Assistant Professor of Early Childhood and Elementary Education (2024-Present)

Courses Taught:

- Field Experience II Early Childhood Education (EDEC U440) (Fall 2025)
- Addressing Reading and Writing Problems (EDEC U444) (Fall 2025)
- Survey in Early Childhood Education (EDEC U422) (Fall 2024-Present)
- Emergent and Early Literacy Part I (EDRE U414) (Fall 2024-Present)
- Emergent and Early Literacy Part II (EDRE U416) (Fall 2024-Present)
- Language Acquisition and Communication Skills (EDEC U445) (Spring 2025)
- Adjunct Professor, University of South Carolina-Upstate (Fall 2023 - Spring 2024)

K-12 Teaching & Professional Experience

- 5th Grade Teacher at Drayton Mills Elementary, Spartanburg District 7, SC (2018 - July 2024)

- 4th & 5th Grade Teacher at East North Street Academy & Thomas E. Kerns Elementary, Greenville County Schools, SC (2014 - 2018)
- 3rd & 4th Grade Teacher, Southwest Elementary School, Hickory Public Schools, NC (2008 - 2014)
- 1st, 3rd, and 4th Grade Teacher, Grenville Roman Catholic Primary School Grenada, West Indies (1997 - 2005)
- Virtual Instructional Coach, Voorhees EPI Center, Denmark, SC (June 2023 - June 2024)
- Completed Improvement Science Carnegie Introductory Course (October 2023)
- Led scope and sequence work for 5th-grade ELA Fountas and Pinnell Literacy program for the district (2021)
- Fountas and Pinnell Literacy Training (2021)
- Grade Level Chair (2016-2017)
- Supervised two student teachers (2016-2018)
- Mentored an initial license teacher (2012-2014)
- Developed and facilitated Annual Multicultural Celebration (2013)
- Attended National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Conference (2007)
- Young Authors Program, Grenada Ministry of Education (1997-2004)
- Represented St. Andrew's Roman Catholic School in a Health and Family Life Education Workshop (2000)

Licensure and Certification

- Google AI Essentials Certificate (2026)
- ACUE Effective Teaching Practices Certificate (2025)
- South Carolina Teaching Standards 4.0 Rubric Certificate (2024)
- National Board-Certified Teacher (2016 - Present)
- Educator Certificate (#268212) – Elementary & Early Childhood Certification, South Carolina (Valid: 7/1/2020 - 6/30/2026)

Academic Advisement:

Academic Advisor for 17 advisees, 11 of which I communicated and advised, USC Upstate (Fall 2024 -Present)

Honors & Awards

- Recognition Letter: Completion of ACUE Course (Fall 2025)
- Recognition Letter: Exceptional Dedication to Professional Development (Steinke, 2024)
- Nominated: Teacher of the Year, Drayton Mills Elementary (2024, 2022)
- Nominated: Teacher of the Year, East North Street Academy (2018)
- Nominated: Teacher of the Year, Thomas E. Kerns Elementary (2016)
- Awarded: Teacher of the Year, Southwest Elementary School, Hickory, NC (2013)
- Winner: Outstanding Educator Award Grant, Wells Fargo (2012)
- Honored Interviewee for “LIVE Publication” (Penn State, 2012)
- President's List: Lenoir-Rhyne College (2006-2007)

- Earned Honor Scholarship for Teacher Training, T.A. Marryshow Community College (2003)

Scholarship

Accepted Papers for Presentation at AERA (Spring 2026)

- Nasr, N. R., Werner, J. M., Tu, C.-H., Bauer, T. F., & Sujo-Montes, L. E. (2026, April). *Passive Interaction or Human–AI Collaboration? GenAI’s Impact on Critical Thinking in Higher Education*. Paper to be presented at the 2026 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), Los Angeles, CA. Read the published article [here](#).
- Nasr, N. R., Bauer, T. F., Tu, C.-H., & Sujo-Montes, L. E. (2026, April). *Exploring Structured GenAI Applications in Bilingual Multicultural Education: Opportunities from Student Experiences and Reflections*. Paper to be presented at the 2026 AERA Annual Meeting, Los Angeles, CA.
- Bauer, T. (2025). *Evaluating pre-service teachers’ perceptions of generative AI tools in instructional planning: Assessing quality, accuracy, and developmental appropriateness*, RISE Proposal, University of South Carolina Upstate.
- Bauer, T. (2025). Differentiating instruction with AI tools, submitted to the *Journal of Technology-Integrated Lessons and Teaching (JTILT)*

- Journal Reviewer of 32 Proposals for Associations for National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Conference (2026)
- Associations for Educational Communications and Technology Research and Theory Division Early Career Research Symposium, Participant (2024)
- Journal Reviewer for *Journal of Technology-Integrated Lessons and Teaching (JTILT)* (2024-Present)
- Journal Reviewer for *Journal of Educational Technology Development and Exchange (JETDE)* (2023-Present)
- Journal Reviewer of Nine Proposals for Associations for Educational Communications and Technology International Conference 2025.
- Journal Reviewer for *Educational Media International* (2025)

Peer-Reviewed Publications

- Bauer, T. (2022). *The effect of explicit vocabulary instruction on elementary students’ vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension: An action research study* (Publication No. 29064188) Doctoral dissertation, University of South Carolina. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global.
Cited once
- Bauer, T., & Tang, H. (2022). Explicit vocabulary instruction for fifth graders' vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension: An action research study. *Journal of Educational Technology Development and Exchange*, 15(1), 124-141.
Cited five times
- Nasr, N. R., Tu, C.-H., Werner, J., **Bauer, T.**, Yen, C.-J., & Sujo-Montes, L. (2025). Exploring the

impact of generative AI ChatGPT on critical thinking in higher education: Passive AI-directed use or human–AI supported collaboration? *Education Sciences*, 15(9), 1198. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci15091198>

Bauer, T. (2025). Differentiating Instruction with AI Tools. *Journal of Technology-Integrated Lessons and Teaching*, 4(2), 32–38. <https://doi.org/10.13001/jtilt.v4i2.9073>

Peer-Reviewed Conference Presentations

- Presenter at the USC Upstate AI in Action, University of South Carolina- Upstate, Spartanburg (November 2025): Exploring Preservice Teachers' Perception of Generative AI in Content-Area Literacy Instructional Planning: A Focus on Accuracy, Quality, and Developmental Appropriateness
- Presenter at the Ireland Literacy Association 50th Annual Conference, Dublin City, Ireland (November 2025): Exploring Preservice Teachers' Perception of Generative AI in Content-Area Literacy Instructional Planning: A Focus on Accuracy, Quality, and Developmental Appropriateness
- Presenter at the Associations for Educational Communications and Technology Conference, Las Vegas (October 2025): Investigating Fifth Graders' Reading Motivation via Sora
- Presenter at the Summer Virtual Symposium for the Reading League of NC and SC (June 2025): Boosting Elementary Students' Vocabulary & Comprehension through Explicit Instruction
- Presenter at the Associations for Educational Communications and Technology Conference, Kansas City, MO (October 2024): SORA: A new approach to engaging fifth-grade readers
- Presenter at the Associations for Educational Communications and Technology International Convention at Las Vegas (October 2022): *The Effect of Explicit Vocabulary Instruction on Elementary Students' Vocabulary Knowledge and Reading Comprehension: An Action Research*

Workshops & Invited Talks

- Bauer, T. (2025, February 26). *Black heroes* [Talk]. Reidville Elementary.
- Bauer, T. (2023, March). *Roots + context = comprehension: The effect of explicit vocabulary instruction on elementary students' vocabulary knowledge and reading comprehension* [Presentation]. Drayton Mills Elementary School.

Professional Development Sessions

- LETRS Training (October 2025-present)
- Power of the AI Revolution Virtual Conference, USC Upstate (Spring 2025)
- RISE Grants Workshops, USC Upstate (Fall 2024)
- Publishing of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Part III, Writing Workday, USC Upstate (Fall 2024)

- Virtual Carnegie Summit Conference, Voorhees Center of Excellence for Educator Innovation (March 2024)

Service to the University:

- Member: University Assessment Committee, University of South Carolina Upstate (Fall 2025- Present)
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Service to the College of Education, Human Performance, and Health

- Member of SCAEYC Conference Committee (2025)
- Search Committee Member for Education Department Director of Field Placements (Spring 2026)
- Search Committee Member for DoHPH Director of Field Placements (Fall 2025)
- Search Committee Member for Tenure-Track Faculty Appointment (Spring 2025)
- Mock Interview of Teaching Cadets for the Teaching Fellows Program orchestrated by Dr. Brook Hardin in the Spring of 2025, Volunteer
- The R.E.A.L Center at Arcadia Elementary on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:30-4:30, which started on February 4th, 2025- Present, Supervisor
- Assessment and Accreditation Committee (Fall 2024- Present), Member
- Writing the Doctorate in Education Ad Hoc Committee (Spring 2025), Member
- Early Childhood Education Assistant Professor Search Committee (Fall 2024- Present), Member
- Revised South Carolina Literacy Competencies Report to be submitted to the South Carolina Department of Education, author (Spring 2025)

Curriculum Development

- Revised Addressing Reading and Writing Problems (EDRE U444) Course (Fall 2025)
- Revised Emergent and Early Literacy Part I (EDRE 414) Course (Fall 2024-Spring 2025)
- Revised Emergent and Early Literacy Part II (EDRE 416) Course (Fall 2024-Spring 2025)

Service to the Community

- Volunteer: Elementary Judge for Piedmont Region III Science Fair at USC Upstate (Spring 2026)
- Volunteer: A Place to Call Home: A Way Home, Unitarian Universalist Church, Spartanburg SC (December 2025-Present)
- Formed a partnership with Drayton Mills Elementary School where early childhood candidates tutor in second grade for 20 hours (Fall 2025)

- Tutor 5th graders in reading at Drayton Mills Elementary, Spartanburg, SC (November 2025-Present)
- Volunteer: Soup Kitchen, Spartanburg, SC (October 31, 2025)
- Tutor 4th and 5th graders in science, reading, and math at Drayton Mills Elementary (January 2025 -May 2025)
- Volunteer: Soup Kitchen, Spartanburg, SC (February 28, 2025, November 1, 2024)
- Judge at the Spelling Bee at Drayton Mills Elementary (November 22, 2024)
- Volunteer: Elks Lodge Soup Kitchen, Hickory, NC (2010 - 2012)
- After-School Tutoring: Centro Latino, Hickory, NC (2006)
- Dance Instructor: St. Andrew's Roman Catholic School, Grenada (2001 - 2003)
- 4H Youth and Program Coordinator, Grenada Ministry of Agriculture (1997 - 2003)

Professional Affiliations

- Board Member at Large: Association for Educational Communications & Technology, Research and Theory Division (Fall 2025-Present)
- Member: American Educational Research Association (2025-Present)
- Member: National Association for Education of Young Children (NAEYC, 2025-Present)
- Member: American Association of Teachers (2025 - Present)
- Member: South Carolina Association of Teachers (Fall 2024- Present)
- The Reading League South Carolina (2023-Present)
- Member: Association for Educational Communications & Technology (AECT, 2022 - Present)