



For Students

March 25, 2026



New PFW Program Empowers Local Teachers to Better Support Students with Autism

There are always times when leading a classroom is challenging and stressful, and often those are the times when Northrop High School teacher Jared McMullen hears Rama Cousik in the back of his mind.

"You hear her voice saying, 'You need to look past the behavior and look at the cause of it. Look for the seeds of it,'" McMullen said.

Last summer, McMullen, M.S. '25, and Kristen Bakehorn, B.S. '19, an instructor at Blackhawk Middle School, leaned into the Purdue University Fort Wayne School of Education's recently established autism concentration. [Cousik](#), an associate professor of special education, taught a

six-week online course this summer, and both Bakehorn and McMullen enrolled in it as an elective toward their master's degrees.

"I definitely gained some new perspective from the class in a way that would be very applicable," Bakehorn said. "I have a handful of kids each year who are diagnosed with autism, and it was very interesting to take the things we talked about and apply it directly."

Asked how quickly he was able to apply the skills, McMullen said it was on the first day of school.

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First-Year Education Majors' Efforts Impress Local School Corporation

With more than 15 representatives from Fort Wayne Community Schools and another 10 from their School of Education watching intently, 28 future teachers from Purdue University Fort Wayne marched to the front of the room and assertively and cheerfully stated why they had chosen this profession and were so excited about it.

They were impressive and determined—especially noteworthy considering they were almost all first-semester freshmen.

That's the transformative effect of the new Exploring Education class the offered by the SOE this semester. A few students even decided to become teachers after the general ed elective course started. No one dropped out, and everyone was empowered by what they learned during four weeks each at FWCS schools Bunche Montessori, Levan Scott Academy, Shawnee Middle School, and Snider High School.

"The first day that I met them, I could tell they were just eager to see what the world of education is about in action," said Ashlie Simpson, principal at Levan Scott Academy. "It's one thing to be in the classroom to learn about it, but another thing to see it in action. I could just tell they were really fearless and ready to be part of the work."

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Register Early for Fall Classes

The opportunity to register early for the fall 2026 semester started this week for degree candidates, military affiliates, graduate students, and seniors.

Starting at 8 a.m. on the next three Mondays, students in other priority groups will be able to start reserving their spots in the classes they want at the times they need. That schedule includes:

- Juniors, honors students, student-athletes, and students with disabilities: March 30
- Sophomores: April 6
- Freshmen and others; April 13

Make sure to meet with your advisor so they can answer any questions you might have and ensure you're on track for graduation.

Eventful

There's always plenty to do at Purdue Fort Wayne. To find your favorites—or discover new activities—check the full [events calendar](#) often to see what's happening on campus.

MARCH

26

Thurs., 2–4 p.m.

Global Eats and Treats

Join the Office of International Education for a taste of treats from around the world—while supplies last! This is a free event open to all students...

MARCH

27

Fri., 7–10 p.m.

SAB Retro Glow Party

Meet us in the International Ballroom for awesome music by DJ Hendryx, free snacks, and good vibes. Glowstick provided, so just bring yourself...

MARCH

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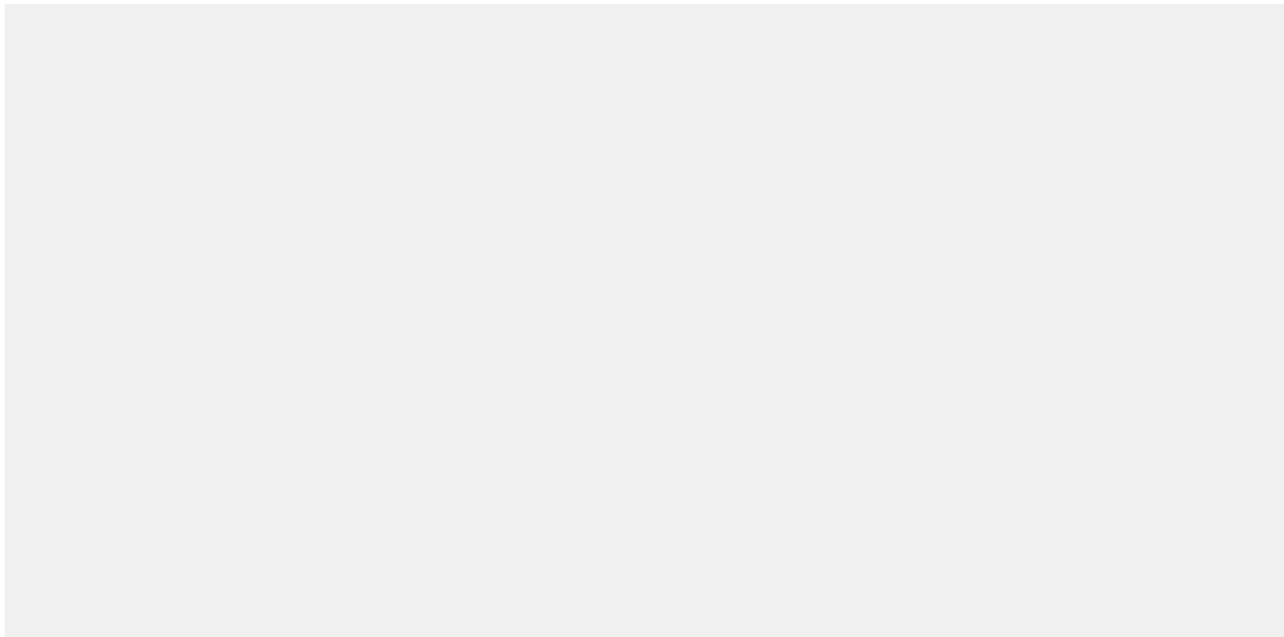
Tues., 6–7 p.m.

SAB: Stuff-a-Plush

Need a new cuddle buddy? Come make your very own custom-stuffed animal to take home. The only question is: are you choosing the mighty Mastodon or the adorable Red Fox...

Mastodon Moments

Seen and noted around campus. Monitor our university social feeds for more great moments of Mastodon life.





It wouldn't be St. Patrick's Day without the annual SAB St. Paddy's Potato Bar, served up near the north end of the skybridge.

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