

Sacred Heart University

From the Selected Works of Michael P. Alfano

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After an extensive national search, Sacred Heart University has named [Michael P. Alfano](#) the new dean of the [Isabelle Farrington College of Education](#) (FCE). He previously served as dean of the School of Education and Professional Studies at Central Connecticut State University (CCSU) in New Britain where he helped to establish the CCSU Center of Excellence in Social and Emotional Learning and the CCSU Teacher Leadership Fellowship Program. He was instrumental in developing numerous undergraduate and graduate programs at CCSU, including Central's first international doctoral program in educational leadership. He formerly served as professor and chair of the Department of Special Education and Reading at Southern Connecticut State University. Prior to that, he served first as director of the Graduate Teacher Preparation program and then as executive director of the Teacher Preparation programs in the Neag School of Education at the University of Connecticut.

The Wallingford resident currently holds an appointment to the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education's (AACTE) Clinical Practice Commission. Additionally, he recently joined the faculty of AACTE's Leadership Academy. He has published widely in the fields of teacher preparation, reading and special education. He holds a bachelor's degree from Southern Connecticut State University, an M.Ed from DePaul University and a Ph.D. in educational psychology and special education from the University of Connecticut.

"We are excited to have Mike here to lead the College of Education as we seek to strengthen our curriculum and add new graduate programs," said [Rupendra Paliwal](#), provost and vice president for Academic Affairs. "I am confident that his passion for teacher education and special education, along with his management experience, will lead him to great success here at SHU."

Alfano says he wanted to come to Sacred Heart because of how well the University's mission and vision aligned with his own professional and personal vision and goals. "And, even as an outsider, it's hard not to be incredibly impressed by the growth mindset that seems to be thriving at the University," he said. "To join that type of community is incredibly exciting and presents an amazing leadership opportunity."

He says his first priority will be to develop a detailed understanding of the SHU community by meeting with students, faculty, staff and others. “The learning that will take place from these discussions will be foundational and critical to expanding upon and refining strategic planning efforts for the College of Education,” he said.

He is excited about the College’s move to SHU’s West Campus (former home of General Electric’s global headquarters). “Our new home presents opportunities for the Isabelle Farrington College of Education that I don’t think some people have conceived of yet,” he says. “Long-term goals will be to maximize the space in ways that encourage innovation and collaboration while advancing the mission of the University and College.”

The Isabelle Farrington College of Education provides its students with the knowledge, skills and experience necessary to enter the teaching profession, meet new challenges as our nation’s schools evolve and to advance into new careers within the education field. Its mission—to promote a culture of excellence in a changing world—is consistent with the values the University places on the development of the whole person, the preparation for leadership roles and responsibility to contribute to the community.

FCE is the largest private institution for the certification of teachers and administrators in Connecticut, recommending nearly 250 individuals for elementary and secondary teaching certification and nearly 200 for administrative certification each year. Additionally, the graduate intern program in FCE is the largest such program in the state and is recognized as a model by peer institutions.

The College’s location at [West Campus](#), which is intended as an innovative space, will allow FCE faculty and students to partner on projects and programs with the [College of Business](#), the [School of Computing](#), local business people and more.