

Julie Mountcastle is Slate School's Head of School and Chief Innovator. She is an experienced educator who joined Slate School's team as Head of School early during its founding. Throughout the course of a more than 20-year career as an educator, she has taught at nearly every elementary grade level, in both traditional and project-based classrooms in public schools and at Slate School. She developed and leads Slate School's innovative curiosity-driven curriculum that is both developmentally appropriate and academically rigorous. She leads Slate School's ability to dive deep into recognizing and maximizing opportunities for discovery toward realizing a student's potential, and she creates a framework that allows for authentic assessment in all aspects of the classroom. Julie also builds, mentors, and supports the exceptional talent of Slate School's faculty. At Slate School, in addition to being Founding Head of School, Julie has taught Grades K/1, 1/2, 2/3, and Grade 5.

Slate School is a unique model for exceptional education that has drawn local, national, and international interest and recognition. Slate School is working to change the landscape of education, and Julie mentors other schools and educators through workshops, expert panels, and other educational forums. She frequently gives presentations at large conferences, including at TEDx, as well as at smaller events and in courses. She speaks about a variety of topics, including curiosity-driven education, being a founding Head of School of a unique K-12 school, the art of listening, the career journey, leadership, finding your passion and purpose, and collaboration. Her work has been profiled in Wendy Ostroff's book *Empowering Young Children: How to Nourish Deep, Transformative Learning for Social Justice*. Additionally, Julie has had 1-hour in-depth conversations with more than 120 respected experts and thought leaders in 40 Education Idea Labs, and these recordings have been viewed more than 160,000 times across the world.

Before becoming a teacher, Julie was a professional actress and appeared in plays and musicals on Broadway, on London's West End, and in regional theatre across the country. She has also produced and directed many original theatre works with student performers ranging from elementary school to high school. She continues to sing and perform locally, while also integrating the arts throughout every day at Slate School.

Julie received her BFA from Florida Atlantic University and a Teaching Certificate from Fairleigh Dickinson University. She is also an alumna of Columbia Teacher's College Summer Institute.