

## Urban Focus Big Idea Implementation Action Plan 2008

*The College of Education is committed to engaging in activities and partnerships that are aligned with our urban mission and that benefit our local community and merit national recognition.*

### Brief Description of the Big Idea Focus

This big idea is grounded in the mission of the University of Memphis as articulated by the Tennessee Board of Regents in 2005. TBR declared that the University is “To become a great metropolitan research university with an urban emphasis.” The College of Education is central to this mission and has dedicated several years to translating the TBR mission into a vision for the COE. This vision and aspiration work has led to the COE mission which reads “To provide high-quality undergraduate and graduate instruction for metropolitan and urban students, to conduct meaningful research designed to illuminate and solve problems, and to use our expertise to serve our community.” The vision of the College of Education is to be a leader in the preparation of metropolitan and urban professionals through being:

- engaged in effective practice
- relevant to diverse local and global communities
- leading the field in educational innovation, research, and excellence

All of these serve to frame the importance of the activities of the Urban Focus Big Idea. The following rationale statements for the Big Idea build upon these visions and missions and serve as a guide for the action plan that follows.

- Memphis typifies the opportunities and struggles of a large urban center.

- The COE could become nationally recognized for its work in urban education.
- This idea connects to a range of issues, including public education, economic prosperity, public health, & social justice.
- The urban focus work represents a chance for COE to demonstrate leadership, relevance, and engagement.
- Having a positive impact could improve the quality of life for **all of us** who live and work in the Memphis metropolitan area.

### Action Steps

The overarching action step of the Urban Focus Big Idea is to create of an Urban Education Center to be named the “Center for Urban Interdisciplinary Research and Engagement for Equity (CUIREE). The mission of CUIREE is to “Create Interdisciplinary Knowledge through Research and Collaborative Engagement which Strengthens our Urban and Metropolitan Communities.” This mission will be achieved through enactment of three primary goals:

- To advance research on urban education and its relationship to larger urban and metropolitan communities
- To nurture collaborative, interdisciplinary engagements across diverse groups both inside and outside the Campus
- To contribute to the broader national and international dialogue regarding education’s role in creating effective and equitable learning opportunities and strengthening communities

The mission and goals of CUIREE distinguish it from other centers on campus. CUIREE will serve as an institutional mechanism to create interdisciplinary networks of faculty within the College of Education, across the campus, and with community partners who are interested in advancing research and scholarly engagement to strengthening our communities. The Center will work to establish new forms of partnerships focused on scholarly engagement across interdisciplinary lines. Research, collaborative engagements and dialogue are foundational to creating initiatives within the Center to help establish the College of Education (COE) and the University as a leading urban institution.

The action plan for CUIREE further aligns with President Raines’ Strategic Priorities for the Campus as announced in the Fall 2007 campus-wide meeting. In particular, the Center will support (1) Building Productive Partnerships, (2) Creating Interdisciplinary Initiatives, (3) Generating New Resources, (4) Strengthening Community Connections, (5) Investing in People, and (6) Enhancing our Image and Reputation. As stated above, the core element of the center is to build research and engagement capacity through

interdisciplinary collaborations and powerful forms of partnerships all focused on strengthening our communities.

The Center will enable the following ideals and activities of the Big Idea work to be actualized:

- Build on our current expertise and prominence in areas urban education, partnerships and scholarship.
- Provide open forums where COE faculty and staff, university colleagues, and community members committed to this work can plan and work collaboratively.
- Engage directly with the school district, community agencies and others in action-oriented partnerships that benefit our community.
- Help faculty from **all** units see ways they might contribute to our urban mission.
- Create summer small faculty grants related to urban education and partnerships.
- Increase number of proposals for external funding framed around urban issues.
- Increase number of presentations and publications by COE faculty on the topic.
- Continue to highlight urban education issues in our professional development.
- Actively promote and enact the COE Diversity Standards.

### Action Plan

Action Steps	Activities	Timeline
Seek Center Approval	Identify Center Affiliates Coordinate w/ Aspiration Team Submit to appropriate campus administrators and to TBR	October 2007 – March 2008
Launch CUIREE w/ Urban Education Symposium	Identify Speaker Promote & Market Launch Coordinate Launch as Community Event	April 2008
Start-Up Funds for CUIREE	Website, space, telephone, letterhead, marketing/promotion	March 2008-June 2009
Offer Summer Faculty Research Grants	Develop RFP Select Faculty Monitor Grant Activity	Summer 2008 Summer 2009
Develop Urban Education Curriculum	Identify topics, courses, etc. Identify faculty Develop Curriculum Promote Curriculum	October 2007 – June 2009

The Urban Aspiration team expanded significantly after the last Summit. The new larger team has met twice to engage in dialogue about CURIEE activities. So this plan is presented with feedback and support from this key faculty, staff and community group.

## Two Year Budget Plan

### Budget Narrative

The following two-year budget will facilitate the College's move toward establishing its identity as an urban education institution who partners to achieve its urban mission. The budget is based on achieving the action plan as articulated above. Key to the budget is engaging and supporting faculty across the college through Summer Research Grants, Course Development, and professional development through the Urban Education Symposium.

### Budget

Action Steps	2007-2008	2008-2009
Seek Center Approval	0	0
Launch CUIREE w/ Urban Education Symposium	5,000	
Start-Up Funds for CUIREE	3,166	3,666
Offer Summer Faculty Research Grants @ \$2,500 each	7,500	10,000
Faculty Research Grant Symposia	0	1,500
Develop Urban Education Curriculum	1,000	1,500
	<b>\$16,666</b>	<b>\$16,666</b>