

**THE UNIVERSITY OF AKRON**  
**College of Education**

**THE CENTER FOR LITERACY**  
**Department of Curricular & Instructional Studies**

**MISSION STATEMENT**

The University of Akron develops enlightened members of society through comprehensive programs of instruction, research and service to the community. The University has identified six Strategic Directions to support this mission, including improving the undergraduate experience and developing a campus culture of service.

The College of Education supports the University mission by developing the knowledge and skills of its undergraduate and graduate students through interactive experiences in urban and inner-city educational settings. Objectives focus on developing student expertise in pedagogy, technology and applied research, with special attention to the complex social issues facing those who teach in a pluralistic society. In addition, the College develops human relations skills essential for working with children, adolescents and adults.

The Center for Literacy furthers the mission of both the University of Akron and its College of Education through a variety of programs that support development of expertise and dissemination of knowledge about language learning. The Center brings preservice, inservice and university teachers together with children and families in the greater Akron area through a wide range of literacy-related projects.

**OBJECTIVES**

Broadly defined, literacy refers to basic communication and calculation skills required for existing in a modern society. Central is the ability to construct meaning from print in a variety of contexts (school; home; workplace; community) and forms (alphabetic; numeric; technological; pictorial) for both individual and interactive purposes. Consequently, literacy requires integration of a complex set of skills, abilities and knowledge. The Center's objective, then, is to support the literacy development of children and adults through projects that assist this integrative process.

The Center objectives are focused in four broad areas:

- 1) pre-service/inservice education
- 2) community outreach
- 3) scholarly research

#### 4) professional development

The Center meets these objectives through the following:

- On-site Curricular Resource Center that houses curriculum/resource materials through a professional library with instructional technology, computer lab and tutoring area.
- Clinical intervention programs for literacy development of children and youth.
- Clinical intervention programs for functional and workplace literacy for adults.
- Clinical intervention programs for culturally and linguistically diverse children and adults.
- Service learning experiences for preservice teachers.
- Professional development opportunities for inservice/preservice teachers (pre-K-12).
- Mentoring of University of Akron graduates
- School-university partnerships
- Parent education workshops
- Family enrichment events to support early, delayed and advanced language literacy development
- Uses of technology in literacy education
- Applied and action research in literacy
- Development of programs and community partnerships through federal, state and private grants
- Sponsoring conferences and workshops at the regional and state level
- Sponsoring interdisciplinary university seminars
- Information dissemination
- Partnering with Colleges within the University of Akron
- Partnering with regional universities
- Partnering with community agencies and businesses

### **STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

#### **PHASE I (2000-2001)**

Continue current initiatives (see above):

- Curricular Resource Center (Zook 1): Establish physical facility; expand professional library and curriculum resources, update computer lab, create tutoring and conferencing areas.
- Expand clinical intervention programs

- Develop service learning experiences for all preservice reading teachers.
- Sponsor family literacy events
- Support scholarly research in literacy
- Develop additional programs/community partnerships through federal, state and private grants
- Continue to build school-university partnerships

### **PHASE II (2001-2002)**

Continue Phase I initiatives and add:

- Expand service learning and clinical programs to include adult and ESL literacy
- Improve service learning procedures and curricular alignment with courses and field placements
- Build curricular resources, including expanded technology
- Professional development opportunities for inservice and preservice teachers (pre-K-12).
- Parent education workshops
- Sponsor conferences and workshops at the regional and state level (KSU/UA Annual Reading Conference)
- Expand uses of technology/add electronic classroom
- Increase partnerships with schools/community-based organizations
- Develop a website
- Identify organizational infrastructure

### **PHASE III (2002-2003)**

Continue Phase I and II initiatives and add:

- Expand service learning programs to include troubled adolescents and juvenile offenders with reading difficulties
- Develop CD for orientation and continue to work on alignment of experiences
- Organize curricular materials for student use during open hours
- Develop a system for loaning materials
- Sponsor interdisciplinary university seminars
- Increase partnerships with schools/social service agencies
- Develop off-campus sites for clinical programs
- Expand infrastructure to include Advisory and Executive Boards
- Expand website