



## Empower Subcommittee 8/11/25 Minutes

**COMMITTEE PURPOSE:** Serve as lead learners focus on best practices for literacy preparation and training; policy recommendations; research and strategies to advance educator expertise in literacy; monitor progress of the implementation of Imperative 2 – Empower strategies in the strategic plan.

The committee meet on August 11, 2025, from 4:00 to 5:30 in a virtual format.

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Jeanine Phillips, Dr. Kim Wilson, Dr. Carolyn Carlson, Dr. Brooke Moore, Dr. Laurie Curtis, Dr. Charlene Laramore, Deb Farr, Amber Pagan, Dr. David Fernkopf, Dr. David Hurford, Dr. Cynthia Lane, Rachel Rubio. All members of the committee were in attendance.

### **WELCOME, COMMITTEE PURPOSE, INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS:**

Dr. David Hurford called the meeting to order and welcomed the sub-committee members. He reviewed 3 levers/ movers for ensuring educators have the skills needed to apply evidence-based practices: 1) Science of Reading – the science is now clear, systematic, and explicit instruction is required for all children to learn to read. 2) Individual Change Agents – the committee is challenged to serve as change agents, to identify what higher education and the education system are doing well, and what must improve. 3) Collective effort. Dr. Hurford reminded the members that it will take all of us, researchers, educators, policy makers, and families to work together to realize meaningful investments and improvements.

Each member was asked to introduce themselves and share what was important about this work from their perspective.

Dr. Hurford then reviewed the committee purpose and schedule for upcoming sub-committee and the full advisory committee meetings.

Dr. Lane lead the committee through a quick walk of the strategic plan. She focused on two imperatives: Invest in Literacy and an economic imperative and Empower educators with “high-impact” preparation and professional learning. Lane asked members to open the chat feature and write a quick definition of “high-impact.” Responses included: requires change, instruction that makes a difference, proven to work, evidence-based, empirical evidence-based, strategies that help close the gap and keep the students caught up, consistency in approach, and coherent. The committee will discuss “what makes preparation and professional learning “high impact” at the September 10, 2025, meeting of the sub-committee.

Questions and comments from the committee about the strategic plan included the following:

- What course work pathway improvements are needed to advance preparation outcomes?
- What training are administrators receiving?
- Research conducted by higher education is needed and would be beneficial.
- What are the specific research questions we could advance or explore?
- With limited fiscal resources, how are we supporting learning by educators?
- What actions are taken to impact the use of Quizlet on LETRS exams?

What is the level of rigor desired in the Science of Learning?

The committee will explore how to improve educator preparation and professional learning as a focus on the committee's work leading to recommendations to policy makers as to needed improvements and actions.

The committee then generated a list of question the committee would like to explore:

1. Mis-alignment of Science of Reading and actual practice (system's structures as an example)
2. Removal of barriers; access to high quality instructional materials
3. Alignment around single plan for the education systems
4. System improvements to support effective instruction for all students (i.e., MTSS work with TASN)
5. Focus on programs developing Speech Language Pathologists and School Psychologists.

The Topic Discussion: Research Advisory "Literacy Teacher Preparation" was moved to the September 10<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Additionally, the committee will discuss "The Role of Educator Preparation Programs in Preparing Teachers in the Science of Reading."

Dr. Hurford adjourned the meeting at 5:25.

<b>Upcoming Empower Sub-Committee Meetings – Virtual Only</b>
October 13
November 10
January 12, 2026
February 9
April 13

<b>Upcoming Full Advisory Committee Meetings – In Person</b>		
• September 10, 2025	10:00 – 3:30	Pittsburg State University
• December 10, 2025	10:00 – 3:30	Kansas State University
• March 11, 2026	10:00 – 3:30	Wichita State University
• May 20, 2026	10:00 – 3:30	Washburn University