

**KANSAS BOARD OF REGENTS  
LITERACY ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MINUTES  
February 21, 2025**

The February 21, 2025, meeting of the Literacy Advisory Committee Summit was held in Suite 530 in the Curtis State Office Building, 1000 SW Jackson, Topeka, KS.

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Dr. Cindy Lane
Rep. Nikki McDonald
Dr. Suzanne Myers
Laurie Winter
Idalia Shuman
Dr. Carolyn Carlson
Heather Morgan
Dr. Beverly Schottler
Dr. Laurie Curtis
Martha Mendoza
Dr. Kim Wilson
Rep. Susan Estes
Regent Diana Mendoza
Se, Renee Erickson
Dr. Howard Smith
Sen. Molly Baumgardner
Dr. David Hurford
Amber Pagan
Dennis Burke
Judi Price
Dr. Ben Proctor
Jeanine Phillips
Dana Hensley
Deb Farr
Susanne Martinez
Ed McKechnie

**Call to Order and Approval of Minutes**

Chair Lane called the meeting to order, welcomed members, and reviewed the agenda. Dr. Carlson moved to approve the January 24, 2025, meeting minutes. Judy Price seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

**Legislative Update and Updates from the Director and Committee Members**

Rep. Estes reported that \$2 million was put into the Budget Bill 2007, which came out of the House and passed on the House floor. The funding bill goes to Senate Ways and Means next. After listening to the Senate committee members, she shared her concerns about the bill, including they would rather see the money go directly to classrooms and students, worries about how much it will increase, that KBOR is trying to micromanage schools, that it duplicated service centers, and that it doesn't help older students. She also mentioned that they are concerned that test scores will not improve and are unsure what this bill will do to help students.

Sen. Erickson updated the Senate portion of Budget Bill 2007. It will go directly to Ways and Means to be debated, but it might first have a hearing in the Education Committee.

Rep. McDonald shared her frustration that the \$10 million she thought was committed to this bill has now been reduced to \$2 million. She feels the budget chairs did not educate the new legislators, who vote on the budgets, to understand what the Literacy Advisory Committee is doing. She expressed her concerns that with the funding they have been given, they cannot meet the current criteria of the bill, and she expects the Literacy Committee will have to scale back or modify the statute to reflect the current priorities.

Chair Lane reminded everyone that the plan they submitted was for the centers. The blueprint is about helping teachers so they can help all students to read well. The plan to establish the centers is only one part of what the Blueprint is charged to oversee and implement. The House committee did not fully understand that the plan was required in SB 438 and the committee delivered the plan. The appropriations of \$10 million was intended to support education and professional learning for educators that is required in SB 438.

Heather Morgan expressed that everyone is having their budgets cut, so we are not being targeted.

Ed McKechnie shared that the bill requires universities to shift their teaching to be evidence-based practices. Like all science, reading science has evolved. It is a continuum, and it must start somewhere, and then we can build on that. The centers will help get everyone teaching reading to the best of their ability.

Sen. Baumgardner stated that the courses for existing teachers are at the graduate level because they already have their degrees but do not have the training for the Science of Reading. The bill was designed for a stipend, and tuition would be paid for the existing teachers so they would not have to pay more for something they did not receive when they earned their degrees.

Rep. Estes added that the concerns she stated earlier can become a strength, and people can react to them. Rep. Estes requested that Chair Lane provide time on the agenda so she could share an alternative plan. The time was granted.

Rep. Estes walked the committee through her ideas on the plan to make it something everybody will agree to fund and pass. She suggested starting with the universities sending instructors to a learning center like Phillips Learning Center so that faculty could obtain certification in

Alphabetic Phonics. Rep. Estes suggested Phillips Fundamental Learning Center could offer field experiences for educators. The Blueprint Centers could assist school districts with evaluations and extended learning time for students. To keep it going, they should invite the independent and private schools. KSDE will have to share data to help measure improvement for this to work.

Jeanine Phillips then shared how the Phillips Learning Center was established and what they do to help educate teachers on the science of reading.

Committee members asked questions. No further action was taken.

Chair Lane transitioned the meeting back to the written agenda. Rachel Rubio led the committee through review of four states recommended by the Evidence Advocacy Centers are exemplars for policy to improve literacy education. The committee was organized into four group to review a particular state: Ohio, Alabama, Texas, and Mississippi. Each group shared highlights from a particular state exemplar. Rachel Rubio summarized key takeaways including professional learning or training differentiated by job role or student need, coaching, and accountability.

Chair Lane facilitated discuss of four Imperatives tied directly to the Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis because of the February meeting. The committee members split into groups to rate and comment on four imperatives: Advocate, Equip, Elevate, and Implement. Everyone also rated each concept and provided feedback. The groups then stated what they felt was most important, and all four imperatives were mentioned. Chair Lane explained the feedback would be used to draft the priorities and actions steps to include in the Blueprint's strategic plan. The draft will be reviewed during the March 2025 meeting.

### **Closing Remarks**

Chair Lane proposed changing the March meeting to virtual from 1-2:30 pm. Consensus was reached to move the meeting to an all-virtual format and to reduce the time to 90 minutes.

Chair Lane adjourned the meeting at 4:17 pm.

The next meeting will be on March 14, 2025, 1:00 – 2:30. A link will be provided.