



A GUIDE TO THE OPERATION OF  
CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION  
ADVISORY COMMITTEES

**PUBLISHED BY CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION  
COLORADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE SYSTEM**

**NOVEMBER 2004**

## FOREWORD

Today's rapidly changing society requires that educational entities and the communities they serve work closely together, especially in Career and Technical Education Programs. Career and Technical Education is an organized system of programs which are directly related to preparation, upgrading or retraining for careers requiring other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree.

Excellence in career and technical education is the goal of teachers, administrators and volunteer advisory committee members. Bringing employers and educators together on Advisory Committees provides a format for sharing information and ideas.

Program advisory committees are organized to provide advice and assistance to the teachers and administrators of specific programs. To be sure that students are learning the most current skills, employers are an integral part of designing and updating curriculum.

The Colorado Vocational Act (CVA) prescribes minimum standards for program eligibility for reimbursement from funds provided by the Colorado Vocational Act and the federal Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act of 1998. The Colorado legislation includes the requirement that each Career and Technical Education (CTE) course shall ...“have a Technical Advisory Committee (23-8-103, C.R.S.)” The Governor of Colorado appoints members of the State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education (SBCCOE) which has interpreted that standard to mean that each CTE program shall create and utilize a local Program Advisory Committee to assist school administrators and teachers in planning, conducting and evaluating each CTE program.

During program reviews and other meetings with CTE educators and administrators, CCCS has been asked to advise the schools in how to meet the regulatory requirements pertaining to advisory committees. Previously, the State Council on Vocational Education gave guidance on how best to utilize business and industry representatives on committees. CCCS has updated the Council's materials and prepared the following guidelines for effective utilization of advisory committees for the benefit of individual programs and the overall CTE program within a school district.

In this document we will use the terms “vocational” and “career and technical” interchangeably. Although “career and technical education (CTE) is more commonly used in recent years, the term “vocational” is in both federal and state legislation.

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PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

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## WHAT IS A PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE?

A program advisory committee is a representative group of individuals whose experience and abilities represent a cross section of a particular occupational area. The primary purpose of the local program advisory committee is to assist educators in establishing, operating, and evaluating programs which serve the needs of students, business and industry, and to provide expertise pertaining to technological change.

## WHY ARE PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEES NEEDED?

### Committees are needed:

- to provide an opportunity for discussion among people in education, business and industry
- to focus on how to improve Career and Technical Education (CTE) and make the most of the community resources that are available
- to strive to improve the relationships between CTE, business and industry
- to provide expertise to the program by reviewing curriculum, facilities, budget, student competencies, student placement in related occupations

### Requirements:

- Local schools and institutions that operate CTE programs receive state and federal funds, and are required by the Colorado Vocational Act to establish and operate Program Advisory Committees.
- Each CTE program advisory committee is required to meet a minimum of two times per year.

## WHAT ARE SOME COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES?

The program advisory committee can assist with the following activities:

### Curriculum Development:

- reviewing curriculum materials for state-of-the-art content
- identifying competency levels and performance standards
- identifying employability skills
- reviewing textbooks and other instructional material
- encourage applied education in the classroom

### Public Relations:

- obtaining effective media coverage
- displaying poster and other publicity
- recognizing outstanding Career & Technical Education educators
- recognizing outstanding students
- being visible in support of programs during public and special events
- presenting to civic and community groups
- recommending technical resource personnel
- providing classroom speakers from business and industry

- providing tours and field trip experiences
- providing sample kits and supplies
- maintaining a current library of resource materials
- securing additional funding and donations for materials and equipment
- evaluating realistic safety policies

#### Job Placement:

- providing students with cooperative training opportunities and internships
- providing full and part-time jobs to qualified students
- coordinating potential job openings with other employers
- conducting occupational surveys and employment forecasts

#### Recruiting:

- assisting in recruiting teachers
- assisting in recruiting new students - secondary, postsecondary and adult
- assisting in recruiting new Advisory Committee members

#### Inservice Training:

- providing summer and part-time employment experiences for teachers to upgrade skills
- providing inservice activities for the teacher on current methods and processes
- obtaining counsel and assistance on special problems and new undertakings
- encouraging and stimulating personal initiatives
- supporting departments in sending teachers to professional meetings and conferences

#### Leadership Activities:

- designing skill and testing events
- judging competitive events developed by recognized student organizations
- gathering contributions of equipment/supplies for the events and awards
- sponsoring and recognizing student activities and leadership events

#### Legislative:

- providing tours for legislators through the Career & Technical Education training facilities
- communicating with legislators about the benefits of Career & Technical Education for students and the community, as well as program needs
- staying current on new legislation

#### Program Evaluation:

- reviewing goals/objectives of the Career & Technical Education program
- examining outcomes relating to quality and quantity of graduates and job placement
- participating on program evaluation teams
- assuring that programs are up-to-date and technologically current

## HOW SHOULD GOVERNING BOARD POLICIES AND PROCEDURES AFFECTING PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEES BE WRITTEN?

It is the responsibility of the teachers and administrators to follow established policy or develop policy regarding the program advisory committee. Written statements should be made about the purpose, functions and general philosophy of the school concerning a program advisory committee.

A review of the policies and procedures of the governing board should be made as the first step in organizing a program advisory committee.

Items that should be covered by established policy are:

- approval of committee establishment
- committee membership
- appointment procedures
- length of appointments
- staff responsibilities
- available financial resources
- minimum number of meetings
- communication with the administration

## WHAT ARE THE STEPS IN ORGANIZING A PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE?

It is recommended that teachers and administrators proceed through the following steps when forming a program advisory committee:

1. Determine the need for a program advisory committee:
  - study the duties, functions, and advantages of a program advisory committee
  - visit program advisory committees in operation
  - talk to administration at a school where a successful program advisory committee is in operation
  - if you are considering starting a new program, bring in an ad hoc planning committee to help you determine the need for this CTE program in your community
2. Secure the administration's approval:
  - explain the function of a program advisory committee to the administration
  - point out the need for and advantages of the program advisory committee
  - provide examples of schools where program advisory committees are operating successfully
  - show how a program advisory committee will be an asset to the administration, the school and the teacher
  - ask for assistance in preparing final plans for presentation to the governing board
  - check the final plans with administration
  - notify members and special guests of meeting time and location
  - arrange for special presentations

## HOW ARE MEMBERS CHOSEN?

The committee members should be selected according to established guidelines. A general outline for selecting the committee membership is as follows:

1. Prepare a prospective list that includes:
  - A. Representatives of:
    - business
    - industry
    - other schools' programs
  - B. People who:
    - have recent related experience
    - are available to attend
    - are interested in education
  - C. Diversity in:
    - gender
    - ethnicity
2. Interview the prospective members, explaining purposes, nature and term of membership. Determine if their participation would benefit the program.
3. Send letter of appointment from the chief administrative officer stating the date, time and place of the first meeting.
4. Business and industry representation should comprise a majority of committee membership, and school representatives may only serve in an ex officio capacity.

## HOW ARE THE MEETINGS CONDUCTED?

All meetings should be well organized, with an atmosphere of open participation. A suggested agenda for the first meeting includes the following:

1. Welcome and remarks by the chief school administrative officer
2. Introduction of members
3. Purpose and role of the committee
4. Basic school/institution information
5. Explanation of Career and Technical Education philosophy and objectives
6. Selection of one or more topics/needs to be discussed at the next meeting
7. Organization of the committee:
  - select a chairperson, vice-chairperson and secretary/recorder
  - select time, dates and location for meetings
8. Determine procedures to develop bylaws
9. Tour of facilities
10. Adjourn

In order to prepare for subsequent meetings, a school representative and/or the committee chairperson assume the responsibility to:

- plan an agenda
- prepare items for representation
- arrange for meeting space
- prepare special and progress reports
- send copies of minutes and recommendations to the chief school administrative officer

## WHAT ARE THE ROLES OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND OFFICERS?

### Teachers:

The key to a successful program advisory committee is the teacher. The teacher should be enthusiastic and willing to take on extra responsibilities. This person is the promoter who does most of the detailed work if a program advisory committee is to be successful.

- be sensitive to points of view and suggestions from the committee
- act as liaison from committee to administration

### Secretary/Recorder:

This person should act as the liaison between the school and the community and maintain a close working relationship with members of the committee. The secretary also may assist the chairperson in setting the tone of the committee activities.

The responsibilities of the secretary are:

- keep records of the attendance of members at meetings
- keep a record of discussion and recommendations
- maintain a permanent record file of Advisory Committee activities
- distribute minutes of Committee meetings and copies of other Committee documents to committee members, teachers, and others who may be concerned. He/she shall have the assistance of the school's staff and the use of the school facilities in performing these functions
- send copies of minutes and reminders to the chief administrative officer
- arrange for meeting space
- notify members and guests of meeting time/location
- prepare and mail information to committee members and others associated with the program
- prepare and forward necessary correspondence
- provide statistical information about the school and prepare progress reports
- accompany the committee chairperson to visit school personnel and explain committee actions.

### Committee Chairperson:

- the chairperson may be elected directly into that position, or the vice chair may be elected to serve as the next chairperson
- be a representative from business or industry, elected by the committee members

- be sensitive to the views of the members
- be able to listen critically
- be reasonable
- exercise good judgment and fairness
- be able to work closely with the teacher
- spend more time than other members on the affairs of the committee
- be well informed
- to preside at the meetings of the Committee
- to serve as a chairperson of the Program Advisory Committee
- to appoint special committees as the need arises, which may include persons other than committee members
- to meet with the teacher or program director to prepare an agenda prior to a forthcoming meeting
- arrange for special presentations
- prepare reports

Recommended responsibilities include:

- establish meeting dates and calling meetings to order
- plan the meeting agenda
- encourage a relaxed atmosphere conducive to productive discussion
- plan committee activities and providing sufficient background information when needed
- maintain personal contacts with members and school personnel
- approve all announcements, notices, and other information sent to committee members
- preside over all meetings, leading discussions, and bring closure on key points of discussion

The chairperson should avoid:

- acting as the final authority on all subjects
- putting pressure on the group to agree with his/her own personal views
- chairing subcommittees
- discussing questions or issues that are outside the purpose of the committee

Committee Vice-Chairperson:

- the vice chair may be elected to serve as the next chairperson following a set time as vice chairperson
- work closely with the chairperson on all tasks
- serve as the leader for many of the committee's activities
- perform specific tasks assigned by the chairperson

Committee Members:

- be an active participant of the group
- be sensitive to the views of the members
- be able to listen critically
- exercise good judgment and fairness
- serve on special committees as the need arises

## HOW LONG WILL COMMITTEE MEMBERS SERVE?

An average term is three years with a change of one third of the members each year.

## HOW ARE VACANCIES ON THE COMMITTEE FILLED?

The replacement should be appointed through the same procedure as the original and fill the unexpired term.

## WHAT HAPPENS TO COMMITTEE ADVICE AND RECOMMENDATIONS?

The committee:

- Submits advice and recommendations to the program teacher(s), the administrator of Career and Technical Education, and other appropriate administrators
- Works cooperatively with the teachers, administrators, and governing board to improve the quality of the CTE program
- Presents an annual written plan of action that includes a formal evaluation of the committee's activities and accomplishments each year

***See Appendix F for criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the program advisory committee***

## **APPENDICES**

**APPENDIX A – MANDATE FOR LOCAL PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEES**

**APPENDIX B – SAMPLE APPOINTMENT LETTER**

**APPENDIX C – SAMPLE AGENDA FOR A PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**APPENDIX D – SAMPLE FORMAT FOR MEETING MINUTES**

**APPENDIX E – SAMPLE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

**APPENDIX F – CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

## APPENDIX A

### MANDATE FOR LOCAL PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEES

#### **Colorado Vocational Act of 1970 as amended. Article 8**

##### **State assistance for Vocational Education**

23-8-103 Standards for eligibility for grants

2(c) "shall have a technical advisory committee which functions at the state, regional or local level to assist school districts in planning and conducting their educational curricula."

##### **State Board for Community Colleges & Occupational Education**

Rules and regulations concerning the Colorado Vocational Act of 1970 as amended. Adopted March 1984.

##### **Section IV Minimum Standards of Approved Vocational Programs**

"Utilize a program advisory committee to assist school administrators and teachers in planning, conducting and evaluating each vocational education program."

##### **State Board for Community Colleges and Occupational Education**

Colorado Standards for Vocational Education Programs.

##### **Program Approval**

"Program advisory committees are utilized to assist school administrators and teachers in promoting, planning, conducting and evaluating each program.

##### **Advisory Committees/Councils**

"Occupational education programs shall be developed, conducted and evaluated in consultation with the employing community, the lay public, students, parents, and other appropriate individuals and groups."

## APPENDIX B

### SAMPLE APPOINTMENT LETTER (ON SCHOOL/INSTITUTION STATIONERY)

Current Date

Mr. Bill Smith  
Lark's Construction Company  
3814 Place Drive  
Your Town, Colorado 80000

Dear Mr. Smith:

It is with great pleasure and appreciation that the (school/institutional governing board) welcomes you as a member of the \_\_\_\_\_ Program Advisory Committee. Your appointment is for a three-year term.

Your knowledge and expertise in \_\_\_\_\_ and your interest in career & technical education qualifies you as a highly valuable member of the committee. We hope you will find this a rewarding experience.

Thank you for your interest in career and technical education and your willingness to serve.

Sincerely,

Chairperson  
(Appropriate local administrator or governing board chairperson)  
(school/institution)

## APPENDIX C

### **SAMPLE AGENDA FOR PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

- I. Call to Order
- II. Roll Call
- III. Instructions
- IV. Approval of minutes
- V. Adoption of the agenda
- VI. Unfinished business
- VII. Reports
  - A.
  - B.
- VIII. New business
- IX. Plans for next meeting
- X. Other items
- XI. Adjournment

## APPENDIX D

### **SAMPLE FORMAT FOR MEETING MINUTES**

Minutes of \_\_\_\_\_ Program Advisory Committee Regular Meeting

Date:

Time:

Members Present:

Members Absent:

Guests Present:

Meeting Objectives or Agenda:

Reports:

Decisions Made:

New Business and Future Meetings:

Signature of Committee Secretary and Chairperson

# APPENDIX E

## SAMPLE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

### C O N S T I T U T I O N

(SCHOOL DISTRICT OR INSTITUTION)

#### ARTICLE I - NAME AND PURPOSE

This Committee shall be known as the (school district or institution) Program Advisory Committee for \_\_\_\_\_ (programs).

The Advisory Committee shall provide leadership in and promote the development of the \_\_\_\_\_ program as it relates to and meets the needs of the students, the community, and the public. The Committee shall advise the teachers in the program and the administration on matters related to the program area.

#### ARTICLE II - MEMBERSHIP

##### Number of Members

A simple majority of the members will be representative of business and industry. In addition, representatives should include a student in the program and representatives from the educational community.

##### Appointments and Terms

Each appointment of an program advisory committee member shall be for three years, except when the appointment is to fill an unexpired term.

At least two-thirds of the members shall be retained each year with one-third of the membership being appointed each year. An outgoing member may be reappointed by a majority vote of membership present.

An individual will automatically lose membership on the Committee if he/she fails to attend three successive meetings without presentation, in advance, to the chairperson of the committee, a valid reason for his/her absence.

Program Advisory Committee members may submit names of potential members for the committee. Final recommendations are made by the teacher(s) with the approval of the appropriate administrator. The appointments are made by the governing board.

The term of a new Committee member shall begin on September 1st.

##### Ex Officio Members

Ex Officio members shall be:

1. Appropriate administrators
2. Appropriate program coordinators or supervisors
3. Teachers in the program area

# BYLAWS

## SECTION A - OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES

The officers shall be: a chairperson, a vice-chairperson and a secretary.

The officers shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the Committee members at the last meeting during the school year. Officers may be re-elected to the same office.

The **chairperson** shall be elected from among those members who have served at least one year. The Chairperson's duties shall:

- be a representative from business or industry, elected by the committee members
- be sensitive to the views of the members
- be able to listen critically
- be reasonable
- exercise good judgment and fairness
- be able to work closely with the teacher
- spend more time than other members on the affairs of the committee
- be well informed
- to preside at the meetings of the Committee
- to serve as a chairperson of the Program Advisory Committee
- to appoint special committees as the need arise, which may include persons other than committee members
- to meet with the teacher or program director to prepare an agenda prior to a forthcoming meeting
- arrange for special presentations
- prepare reports

Recommended responsibilities include:

- establish meeting dates and calling meetings to order
- plan the meeting agenda
- encourage a relaxed atmosphere conducive to productive discussion
- plan committee activities and providing sufficient background information when needed
- maintain personal contacts with members and school personnel
- approve all announcements, notices, and other information sent to committee members
- preside over all meetings, leading discussions, and bring closure on key points of discussion

The **chairperson** should avoid:

- acting as the final authority on all subjects
- putting pressure on the group to agree with his/her own personal views
- chairing subcommittees
- discussing questions or issues that are outside the purpose of the committee

The **vice-chairperson** shall be elected from among those members who have served at least one year. The vice-chairperson's duties shall:

- the vice chair may be elected to serve as the next chairperson following a set time as vice chairperson
- work closely with the chairperson on all tasks
- serve as the leader for many of the committee's activities
- perform specific tasks assigned by the chairperson

The **secretary/recorder** shall:

- act as the communication liaison between the school and the community
- maintain a close working relationship with members of the committee
- also may assist the chairperson in setting the tone of the committee activities

The responsibilities of the **secretary/recorder** are:

- keep records of the attendance of members at meetings
- keep a record of discussion and recommendations
- maintain a permanent record file of Advisory Committee activities
- distribute minutes of Committee meetings and copies of other Committee documents to committee members, teachers, and others who may be concerned. He/she shall have the assistance of the school's staff and the use of the school facilities in performing these functions
- send copies of minutes and reminders to the chief administrative officer
- arrange for meeting space
- notify members and guests of meeting time/location
- prepare and mail information to committee members and others associated with the program
- prepare and forward necessary correspondence
- provide statistical information about the school and prepare progress reports
- accompany the committee chairperson to visit school personnel and explain committee actions.

## **SECTION B - MEETINGS**

At least two regular meetings of the Committee shall be held during the school year.

Written or electronic notice of each regular meeting will be sent to members.

Special meetings of the Committee may be called by the chairperson as needed throughout the year. The time of advance notice shall be appropriate in terms of the reason for the urgency of the meeting.

## **SECTION C - RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS**

Any formal resolutions or recommendations from the Committee shall be in written form. They shall include the number of Committee members present and voting, and the number favoring the resolution or recommendation.

All resolutions and recommendations shall be presented to the program coordinator or division chairperson, who shall then present them to the administration, who shall present them to the governing board if necessary.

## **SECTION D - EVALUATING COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS**

The Program Advisory Committee will evaluate effectiveness at the final meeting of each school year.

Goals and objectives will be formulated at the first regular meeting of the school year, utilizing implications from the spring evaluation.

### **SECTION E - BYLAWS CHANGES**

These bylaws may be amended or added to by two-thirds vote of active members at any regular or special meeting if at least ten days written notice has been given to each member.

## APPENDIX F

### CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

|   | Yes   | No    |
|---|-------|-------|
| The committee has held at least two meetings.   | _____ | _____ |
| The committee utilizes an up-to-date constitution and bylaws to govern its operations.  | _____ | _____ |
| The committee elects officers on a regular systematic basis (yearly).   | _____ | _____ |
| The committee reports formally to the appropriate administrators for the school district/institution.   | _____ | _____ |
| The committee is officially recognized by the governing board and members are officially appointed by the board.  | _____ | _____ |
| The committee membership is diverse in gender and ethnicity, and is composed of individuals who represent a broad cross-section of the occupational area; including labor, supervisors, managers, parents and students. | _____ | _____ |
| The committee meeting minutes are maintained as a permanent record and are distributed to the appropriate administrators and members of the advisory committee.   | _____ | _____ |
| The agendas are prepared and distributed in advance of each meeting.  | _____ | _____ |
| Members are notified of meetings in a timely manner.  | _____ | _____ |
| Committee members are aware of the specific purposes of the committee and are familiar with related school policies.  | _____ | _____ |
| Teachers and administrators attend the committee meetings regularly.  | _____ | _____ |
| Committee members are publicly recognized for their service.  | _____ | _____ |

|   | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> |
|---|------------|-----------|
| Committee meetings are well attended by members.  | _____      | _____     |
| The committee has been involved in the development and review of the program curricula.   | _____      | _____     |
| The committee has reviewed the current program curricula to determine if it is meeting the needs of the students and the projected employment needs of business and industry. | _____      | _____     |
| The committee promotes and publicizes the program.  | _____      | _____     |
| The committee develops and carries out a yearly plan of action/program of work.   | _____      | _____     |
| The committee assesses the impact of recommendations yearly.  | _____      | _____     |
| The committee reviews yearly outcome data from the program, including student competencies achieved, placement rates, etc.  | _____      | _____     |

For further information concerning program advisory committees, contact:

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This project/promotional material was made possible through The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act of 1990 federal funding as administered by the Community Colleges of Colorado.

***Originally Published in 1984***

***Revised in 1996, 1997, 2002, 2003, 2004***