

# Advisory Councils

Iowa Department of Education  
Bureau of Career and Technical Education

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# Advisory Councils

This guidance document contains information and suggestions designed to assist administrators and instructors in organizing and facilitating a local (program) advisory council.

Members of the advisory council must consist of representatives of businesses or employers within the occupation or occupational field related to the program, as well as other stakeholders with expertise and knowledge of the occupation or occupational field. All efforts must be made to include the participation of secondary and postsecondary teachers from related secondary and postsecondary CTE programs.

## Advisory Groups within Iowa Code

### 258.9 Local Advisory Council

1. The board of directors of a school district or community college that maintains career and technical education program receiving federal or state funds under this chapter shall, as a condition of approval by the board, appoint a local advisory council for each career and technical education program offered by the school district or community college. However, a school district and a community college that maintain a career and technical education program receiving federal or state funds may create a joint local advisory council. The membership of each local advisory council shall consist of public members with expertise in the occupation or occupational field related to the career and technical education program. The local advisory council shall give advice and assistance to the board of directors, administrators, and instructors in the establishment and maintenance the career and technical education program in providing effective and up-to-date instruction. All CTE program advisory councils must be oriented toward and specific to the program.
2. Notwithstanding subsection 1, a regional advisory council established by a regional career and technical education planning partnership approved by the department pursuant to section 258.4 may serve in place of a local advisory council.
3. Local advisory councils are not subject to the requirements of section 69.16.
4. Members of an advisory council shall serve without compensation.

The rules developed to address the changes in CTE (HF2392) and that also address 258.9 include the following information regarding advisory councils.

### **281 - 46.7 (258) Advisory council.**

**46.7(1).** The board of directors of a school district or community college that maintains a career and technical education program receiving federal or state funds under this chapter shall, as a condition of approval by the board, appoint a program oriented and program specific advisory council for each career and technical education program offered by the school district or community college. The local advisory council shall give advice and assistance to the board of directors, administrators, and instructors in the establishment and maintenance of the career

and technical education program. An advisory council established under this section shall meet at least twice annually.

**46.7(2) *Joint advisory council.*** A school district and a community college that maintain a career and technical education program receiving federal or state funds may create a joint local advisory council which may serve in place of an advisory council required under section 46.X, subsection "1".

**46.7(3) *Regional advisory council.*** A regional advisory council established by a regional career and technical education planning partnership approved by the department pursuant to section 258.4 may serve in place of an advisory council required under section 46.X, subsection "1".

**46.7(4) *Membership.*** The membership of each advisory council established under this section shall consist of public members from multiple businesses within the occupation or occupational field related to the career and technical education program, and other stakeholders with expertise in the occupation or occupational field related to the career and technical education program. There shall be a good faith effort to include secondary and postsecondary career and technical education teachers from related secondary and postsecondary programs on the advisory council. Teachers shall serve in an ex-officio (non-voting) capacity. Members of an advisory council shall serve without compensation. Local advisory councils are not subject to the requirements of Iowa Code chapter 69, section 16.

## **Perkins IV – Five Year State Plan**

The above requirement is reinforced in Iowa's Five Year State Plan under the federal Carl D. Perkins act.

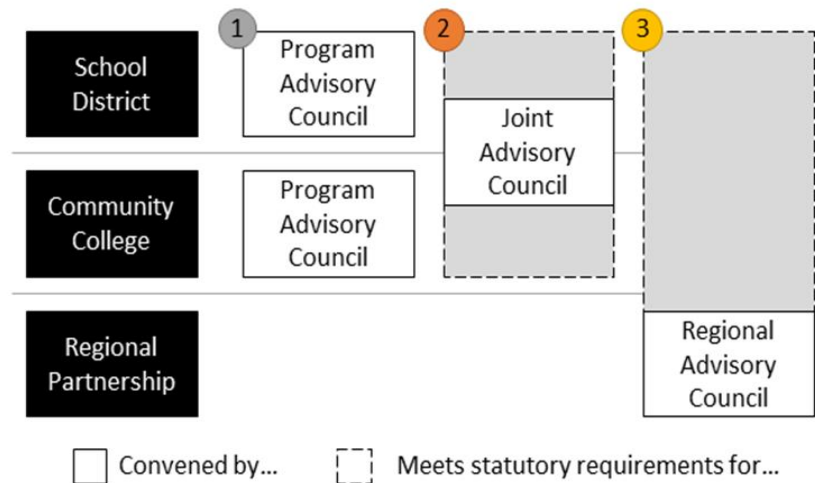
The following statements are written in Iowa's Perkins Five Year State Plan:

- Career and technical education programs will have an advisory council with representation of secondary and postsecondary levels of instruction as well as business and industry as applicable
- Local CTE advisory councils shall assist recipients with the evaluation and selection of appropriate technology
- Improving parental and community/stakeholder involvement, through the use of active advisory committees
- Advisory councils at the local level will be utilized to obtain input from CTE stakeholders
- The technical skills assessed, the instrument utilized to assess those skills, and proficiency level to be attained to pass the assessment must be approved by a third party. The third party may be a nationally or state recognized industry organization, a provider of reliable and valid third party assessment instruments, or a regional or local advisory council for the career and technical education program being assessed.

## Types of Advisory Councils

Program advisory councils may be configured in one of three ways:

1. A standalone program advisory council maintained independently by the school district or community college. To date, this is the primary way by which program advisory councils operate;
2. A joint program advisory council shared by the school district and community college. Any district and community college that maintain CTE programs in the same occupation or occupational field may form a joint program advisory council. The joint program advisory council may serve in place of the local program advisory council, fulfilling the statutory requirement for maintaining a program advisory council.
3. A regional program advisory council established by a Regional CTE Planning Partnership on behalf of district and/or community college may serve in place of a standalone or joint program advisory council. A district and/or community college which utilizes a program advisory council established by a Regional CTE Planning Partnership would fulfill the statutory requirement for maintaining a program advisory council.



## Advisory Potential Activities

The purpose of the advisory council is to ensure CTE programs remain relevant and responsive to the broader community. Expert advice developed in dialogue among advisory members representing employers, employees, and the general public can contribute to program relevance and responsiveness. When this advice is conveyed to those in the educational system and the community through deliberations focusing on common needs and goals. In

addition to advocacy for the CTE program, which is first and foremost, activities in which councils and/or councils are typically involved include the following opportunities:

- Advice and recommendations regarding
  - career planning and orientation, pre-employment instruction needs
  - professional development
  - placement services
  - curricula planning
  - resources: people, curriculum materials and publications
  - projects or activities
  - sources of teaching materials and equipment
  - proposed physical facilities and adequacy of equipment and supplies
- Assist with
  - establishment of sequence of courses to enable students to develop job competencies
  - job analysis and task analysis in specialized areas, including updating instructors on industry current events and knowledge
  - addressing the program-related needs of disadvantaged students
  - providing or assisting in locating externships for instructors
  - cost/benefit studies
  - future planning of CTE program(s)
  - career guidance activities
  - student recruitment
- Provide career observation experiences or internships
- Evaluate the effectiveness of CTE program(s)
- Aid in maintaining course content which is consistent with the changing skill requirements of the industry through planned evaluations of the program offerings
- Provide learning resources for exhibits and instructional purposes in classrooms
- Review and suggest content for Programs of Study (POS) (Required by Perkins legislation)
- Review and approve (Required by Perkins legislation)
  - Critical competencies within CTE program(s)
  - Assessments used to measure critical competencies
  - Required levels of proficiency for each critical competency
- Seek the cooperation, when needed, of other agencies working with CTE programs

## **Advisory Member Roles & Responsibilities**

Advisory members have the following major roles within the council:

1. Attend meetings
2. Suggest agenda items
3. Provide information
4. Participate in advisory council's discussion, analysis, and deliberation of program issues
5. Provide recommendations for program(s) improvement
6. Represent the council at official functions and meetings
7. Accept council appointments

## **Advisory Membership**

*A Model Process for an Effective Council:* The program advisory council has as their main responsibility to review current program content, performance indicator validation, operations, and suggest recommendations of needed program changes. The school personnel, in turn, take the recommendations under advisement and put into action those recommendations for change approach by the administration and governing board.

The visionary role of the overall council, members should represent, as nearly as possible, all facets of the employment community; in addition, there should be members who represent those sectors which have concerns about the human development of the individual and economic development of the community. Usually the number of school/college employees serving on this type of council are fewer in number than employers

**Program Advisory Council:** Career and technical educators have found that effective program advisory councils seldom have fewer than five (5) members and no more than 15 members.

Seek members who will: connect with area industry and employers, give an outside-in look at program to avoid a "silo" look at programming, be advocates as members of key audiences (external and internal advocates), and connect to current and future workforce needs.

Suggested membership includes: larger, more established employers; smaller, innovative, cutting-edge companies; post-secondary; trade unions/professional associations; senior executive with board management experience; chamber of commerce; media experts; past/present students; program vendors.

## **Nominations and Appointment of Advisory Members**

The purpose of an advisory council is to broaden the base of business, individuals, and community involvement in the education enterprise. Although nominations are welcome from any source, the membership of a council will most likely be nominated by the instructor, appointed by administration, and acknowledged by the board(s) of education/trustees. After

the council has been operational and when changes in membership are necessary, recommendations for replacement members should be solicited from the council.

In the case of the initial appointment of an advisory council, usually one third is appointed for a one-year term, one-third for a two-year term, and one-third for a three-year term. The appointment of a council member to two three-year terms seems to be a common practice. Rarely does a council member serve more than six years, since this limits the opportunity for expanding the community's base of knowledge about the program. Practicing professional educators should serve only as ex-officio advisory council members.

The appointment of members (new or replacement) should be made by official action of the school chief administrator and, in some cases, the governing board. The candidate lists for membership of career and technical program councils are usually assembled by the career and technical instructors. Where a program council exists, the instructor may solicit the present membership for names of candidates to fill future vacancies on the council.

Advisory Council Members should/can be recognized in a variety of ways:

- Publication of Articles
- Invitations to participate in school activities
- Letters of Appreciation

## **Responsibilities of School/College Administrators and Faculty**

Schools and colleges have the following responsibilities to their advisory council:

- Serve as a liaison between school leadership and the advisory council
- Offer the school/college viewpoint on any issue or activity considered, or offer to try to obtain the answer by the next meeting
- Arrange for the use of the school's/college's facilities and equipment
- Arrange for meetings outside of the school
- Provide needed research and information
- Prepare special reports as needed
- Establish a working relationship with all members
- Involve the advisory council when a new program or change in curriculum is considered
- Arrange for recognition of council members and the accomplishments of the council
- Provide Guidebook of official advisory meeting procedures
- Serve in an ex-officio (non-voting) capacity.

## **Orientation of Advisory Members**

The school administration should acquaint all council members with the total education program of the school, and more specifically, the breadth and scope of the career and technical program and how the specific mission of the school system attempts to fulfill these goals with the local



education program. Time should be spent discussing how the system or school attempts to meet the individual needs, interests, aptitudes, and abilities of the student with specific reference to the role of the career and technical program. The administration should also explain the role of the council as it relates to the role of the instructor, administrators, and the board of education/trustees.

Communication within the Advisory council must be 2-way communication. Each member is asked to remove themselves from their respective silos.

## **Advisory Handbook**

A handbook is an effective tool in gaining greater understanding and involvement of the members. The contents of the handbook usually include:

- Table of organization of the school district/college
- Directory of the membership of the advisory council
- Calendar of council meeting dates (sometimes enfolded in the program of activities)
- Program(s) standards, benchmarks, performance indicators (competencies)
- Program(s) performance data—enrollment, achievement, completion, placement, student and employer surveys
- Program(s) evaluation findings and recommendations
- Program(s) instructional materials
- Inventory of major instructional equipment
- Program(s) budget
- Current strategic plan
- Previous advisory council minutes
- CTSO Handbook
- Guidelines to operate using Robert's Rules of Order

A review of the contents of the handbook during the orientation is useful in providing new council members with the "big picture" of the current status of CTE program(s). Such information will allow council members to study information pertinent to the program(s). The items in the Handbook should be updated regularly.

## **Officer and Members**

### ***Chairperson***

The primary function of the Chair is to provide leadership at all meetings. The chairperson is elected from the council's membership who is a representative of business, industry, or labor. This person who accepts this responsibility should not be a school/college employee or an employee's spouse.

This person will lead the charge for the Career and Technical Education program so make sure they have the time, passion and energy to lead.

Responsibilities of the Chair will vary depending on the needs of the school/college; some possible activities are listed below.

1. Cooperate with the college representative and members in choosing meeting dates, securing needed information and following up on activities.
2. Prepare and distribute an agenda for each meeting with the assistance of school/college representative.
3. Preside at advisory council meetings.
4. Develop a desirable working relationship among council members.
5. Give advisory council members an opportunity to express their opinions.
6. Obtain general agreement of members by group decision.
7. Verify that council recommendations appear correctly in the minutes.
8. Represent the advisory council at official functions and meetings.
9. Organize and appointing work groups or committees within the council.
10. Assist in identifying new advisory council members.
11. Assist in identifying the council goals, objectives, agendas, calendar and dates in conjunction with council members, instructors, and school administration.

The school/college may also want to consider additional roles such as a Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair would serve in the absence of the Chair. A Secretary may also be used. The secretary would be responsible for recording and timely submission of minutes. The Secretary may also be responsible for the sending of minutes, meeting agenda, and other correspondences.

## **Advisory Meetings**

It is recommended that advisory council utilize [parliamentary procedure](#) for council meetings. Advisory councils shall conduct annual meetings to discuss the condition of CTE program(s). If conditions require, additional meetings may be needed. For effective meetings, the following activities are recommended:

- Agendas sent and delivered to council members prior to meetings
- Minutes of each council meeting recorded and distributed to members
- School/college reports on status of previous recommendations from the council
- School/college shares program(s) performance indicator data
- Consider having student presentations or demonstrations
- Voting needs to take place when changes are required to the curriculum, etc. Minutes should identify and indicate the voting and the outcomes and should not just be the discussion items.

### Hints for Productivity

- Tie back to the big picture
- Set clear expectations
- Timely communication
- Be accountable
- Offer continuous education
- Focus on return on investment

*The following pages contain sample letters and agendas that can be used with your Advisory Council.*

## Sample Agenda for First Meeting

- School district representative on the council serves as the facilitator and appoints temporary secretary until a chair can be selected.
- Introduce all persons in attendance
- The facilitator explains the purpose and functions of an advisory council and the activities with which it will be charged. A representative of the board of education, possibly the superintendent, informs the council of their relationship to the district. Duplicated copies of the school board's statement of policy should be distributed.
- The facilitator may distribute a sample of rules of operations, such as:
  - Time and length of meetings
  - Method of notifying members
  - Method of calling special meetings
  - Assessment form for use in evaluations
  - Adopt constitution (first or second meeting)
  - Adopt parliamentary procedure
  - Elect officers (first or second meeting)
  - Set priorities
- The facilitator suggests program areas most urgently in need of immediate evaluation
- The council sets date, time, and place of next meeting indicating that permanent officers will be elected at that time
- Tour of facilities
- Adjournment

## Sample Agenda for Meeting to Organize Advisory Meetings

[Title] Advisory Council

XXX High School, Room \_\_\_

Date, time

Call to Order [Council Chair]

Welcome and introduction of members and guests [Council Chair and high school staff]

Approval of Minutes

Role of the [title] Advisory Council

Overview of the [title] Program and Tour of Facility

Unfinished Business

- Report of response to previous council recommendations

New Business

- Review and recommend content for Programs of Study
- Establish time, date, and location of next meeting
- Assess equipment and facilities
- Technical skill attainment assessment
  - What is assessed?
  - Assessments used?
  - Proficiency level needed?
- Other

Scheduling of Next Meeting [Council Chair]

Adjourn

Source (AZ CTE Local Advisory Committee Leadership Guide)

## Sample Agenda for Second Meeting

- The facilitator calls meetings to order
- Roll call by temporary secretary
- Minutes
- Election of permanent officers; facilitator serves until end of meeting
- Determine permanent rules of operation which should include meeting time, place, and dates
- Plan long-range program of work
- Set up priority of areas to be considered
- Assess CTE program(s) components and requirements; make recommendations
  - Assess course competencies
  - Assess course outlines
  - Assess career development skills
  - Assess textbooks, software, and other instructional material
  - Assess program's existing technology and future requirements
  - Make recommendations based on these assessments
- Establish committees to assess the program components
- Explain present CTE program(s)
- Adjournment

## Sample Notice of Meeting

Date

Name

Business

Address

Address

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. XXXXXX:

The next meeting of the [title] Program Advisory Council will be [time/date] at [location].  
Enclosed is a copy of the agenda for the meeting. We plan to tour the facility and discuss curriculum concerns. We want to provide a [title of program] that will satisfy community needs. Your input is important and valued.

We look forward to seeing you. Please notify me if you cannot attend – [phone number].

Sincerely,

Name, title

XXX High School

Source (AZ CTE Local Advisory Committee Leadership Guide)

## Sample Form for Minutes of Meetings

The meeting was held (month/ day/year) at (location).

The following were in attendance:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Actions: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Actions: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Actions: \_\_\_\_\_

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

Actions: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Next Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Meeting Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Arkansas Department of Workforce Education, Career and Technical Education, Office of Assessment and Curriculum)



## Sample Thank-You Letter to Council Members

Date

Name

Business

Address

Address

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. XXXXXX:

Thank you for your dedicated service on the XXXXXX Advisory Council. This program's effectiveness depends upon the cooperation and participation that you have so freely given.

With your help and recommendations, we have developed a better program that will prepare students for successful careers. Our students have already benefited from your ideas, and we plan to make other improvements resulting from your suggestions.

Please accept my sincere appreciation.

Sincerely,

Name, title

XXX High School

Source (AZ CTE Local Advisory Committee Leadership Guide)

## Sample Letter to Council Member's Supervisor

Date

Name

Business

Address

Address

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. XXXXXX:

Iowa Career and Technical Education and the XXXX High School administration appreciate the important role that [council member] of your organization has played in helping to develop the [program title] program at XXXX High School. [She/he] has faithfully attended the [program title] Advisory Council meetings throughout the school year and participated in related activities. With [council member's] help, we have improved learning experiences for students.

We are grateful that [council member] served on our [program title] Advisory Council.

Sincerely,

Name, title

XXX High School

# Sample Certificate of Appreciation

[Sample Certification of Appreciation](#) (click on title to open template)



## Sample Letters of Invitation

Date

Dear: \_\_\_\_\_

The Anytown High School is committed to excellence in its Computer Operations program. To help us achieve this aim, we reach out to leaders and to parents and students in our community, and ask them to work with us in improving our education curriculum and facilities.

Your name has been suggested for possible membership on our Advisory Council. By participating in this council, you will have an opportunity to guide the Anytown High School in preparing students for entry-level jobs or postsecondary education in career and technical education.

The Advisory Council will meet two-four times during the school year. Meetings are usually held at 7:00 PM at \_\_\_\_\_. In addition, information calls upon council members are occasionally made, as the need arises.

If you are interested in serving on this council, please complete the attached Letter of Intent and return it to me at your earliest convenience. Please do not hesitate to call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Name, title

XXX High School

Date

Name

Business

Address

Address

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. XXXXXX:

You have been recommended for membership on the Local Advisory Council for the [title] program. The council is composed of business, industry, and civic representatives from the community. The goal of the council is to improve career and technical preparation for students by developing closer cooperation between business and education. Your knowledge of training needs and worker competencies would be valuable to the program.

There will be [number] meetings a year. I will telephone you later this week about your potential commitment and to answer any questions you may have.

We invite you to become a member of the advisory council. We look forward to working with you to advance the goals of our program and broaden opportunities for youth in the community. If you need additional information, please feel free to call me at [number].

The council looks forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Name, title

XXX High School

## Sample Confirmation Letter

Date

Name

Business

Address

Address

Dear Mr./Ms./Dr. XXXXXX:

XXXX High School thanks you for your willingness to serve on the Local Advisory Council for the [title] program. Your experience in this field and active participation on the council will contribute significantly to our effort to offer the best [title] program possible.

[name] will contact you to provide you with a tentative agenda and other materials. This meeting will help you better understand the role of the council and how you can contribute. Thank you for your interest in career and technical education.

Sincerely,

[Administrator]  
XXX High School

## Sample Letter of Intent

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I wish to become a member of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Council at XXX High School

\_\_\_\_\_ No, I do not wish to become a member of the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Council at XXXX High School

If Yes, please provide the following information:

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Business Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Organization/Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## References

Iowa Department of Education/Career & Technical Education

<https://www.educateiowa.gov/adult-career-and-community-college/career-and-technical-education>

“Building Advisory Boards that Matter”, ACTE Publication

[https://iweb.acteonline.org/Purchase/ProductDetail.aspx?Product\\_code=BADVISORY](https://iweb.acteonline.org/Purchase/ProductDetail.aspx?Product_code=BADVISORY)