



*Program Advisory Committee
Tool Kit*

*For Secondary State-Approved
Career and Technical Education Programs*

Office of Career and Technical Education

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Program Advisory Committee Tool Kit Overview

This publication contains guidelines for secondary Career and Technical Education (CTE) Program Advisory Committees as they work to improve CTE programs.

The Office of Career and Technical Education (OCTE) Program Advisory Committee Tool Kit details key roles of Program Advisory Committees and offers a general process to follow, as well as templates. The information contained within the Tool Kit has been designed to help facilitate communication and to enhance the Program Advisory Committee process.

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Rationale

Program Advisory Committees effectively support successful Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. The primary purpose of these Program Advisory Committees is to serve as a resource and a connection to the workplace for CTE teachers and administrators. Program Advisory Committees at the individual CTE program level can make important contributions by keeping faculty apprised of business and industry needs, providing professional development opportunities and assisting the school in planning and implementing relevant Career and Technical Education programs for students.

Program Advisory Committees are an important part of CTE. The expertise of individuals from business and industry plays an integral role in providing high-quality CTE programs, in addition to fostering the development of a trained and educated workforce.

For more information on Program Advisory Committee requirements, go to <http://www.michigan.gov/mde>, then to:

Offices → Office of Career and Technical Education → Notable Resources → Resources and Publications

Program Advisory Committees must meet a minimum of twice a year; one meeting may operate (providing attendance requirements are met) in a regional format to foster collaboration. **(HOT LINK to CIP Self-Review) (Reg def) (OCTE recognized)** The chair of the Advisory Committee **MUST** be from business/industry. The chair is responsible for assuring that:

- Current roster is maintained
- Agendas are developed
- Attendance is recorded
- Minutes are taken and on file

Advisory committees consist of local representation, including business, industry, labor, parents, academic and CTE teachers, administrators, faculty, and counselors.

Program Advisory Committees

Program Advisory Committees provide assistance and recommendations for the continuous improvement of (CTE) programs. They can also offer assistance to instructors in developing activities and completing requirements for CTE programs. A Program Advisory Committee is required for each CTE program approved by the Office of Career and Technical Education. Professionals with specific knowledge and experience in business and industry and post-secondary partners who advise the CTE instructor and CTE/school administrator to ensure programs are current and relevant to workforce needs.

Selecting Program Advisory Committee Members

Successful CTE programs are the result of cooperative efforts by key partners. Program Advisory Committees should include representatives from relevant businesses and industries that reflect the occupation. Representation on the committee should reflect populations within a local community, including persons from both genders and racial and ethnic minorities. The majority of four to six Program Advisory Committee members present must come from business and industry (only business/industry members vote for recommendations). When a meeting is conducted, the majority (of voting members) must be from business and industry. These business advisors may include local business owners, directors of chambers of commerce, community college and university instructors, etc. Business advisors may also be found through local Rotary and Kiwanis clubs, trade schools, and companies. Solicitations for business advisors may also be placed in school and district newspapers.

Other required members include:

Postsecondary Faculty	Labor
Parents	Administrators
Counselors	CTE Instructors
Teachers of Related Academic Courses	

Additional members may include:

Students (alumni or current)	Special Populations Representatives
Placement Coordinators	Career Education Coordinators
Articulation Partners	CTE Paraprofessionals

For requirements on membership, go to <http://www.michigan.gov/mde>, then to:

Offices → Office of Career and Technical Education → Applications and Guidelines → Administrative Guide for CTE in Michigan

Steps in the Selection Process

The CTE instructor, CTE/school administrator and current Program Advisory Committee chairperson should agree upon the potential candidates. Potential Program Advisory Committee members must possess knowledge, skills, and experience in the CTE program they serve.

A letter should be sent to potential members, notifying them of the goals and purpose of the committee and offering them the opportunity to serve as a member (see Appendix A).

A telephone call should be made to the potential member to determine his or her availability and willingness to serve.

NOTE: It is sometimes more effective to make the phone call before sending the letter.

Terms of Service

Most schools prefer to set a time limit for Program Advisory Committee member terms. This procedure promotes a continuous flow of new ideas that helps keep the committee's advice current and relevant. The most common organization is three-year terms of service staggered so that one-third of the members is replaced each year. While teachers are encouraged to update Program Advisory Committee membership and recruit new members periodically, they should also encourage effective Program Advisory Committee members to serve consecutive terms. Organizing terms in this manner offers the following advantages:

- Terms are long enough for members to become thoroughly familiar with the committee's purposes and potential.
- Members in the second or third year of their terms have the benefit of experience while newly appointed members add fresh ideas and perspective.
- Members are more likely to give their time freely when the term of service is predetermined.

Please refer to Appendix B for sample letter of appointment.

Roles of Program Advisory Committees

Program Advisory Committees can perform a wide variety of functions. Program Advisory Committee members serve without pay and have no legal status to change or implement policy. Teachers should work with Program Advisory Committee chairs to determine appropriate roles and direction on an annual basis. The following lists include activities that may provide direction on how Program Advisory Committees help improve CTE programs.

Curriculum and Instruction

- Identify and expand the use of new technologies.
- Compare content with occupational competencies and tasks.
- Analyze course content and sequence.
- Assist in developing and validating tests.
- Advise on labor market needs and trends.
- Review and recommend instructional materials, as well as assist in obtaining them.
- Recommend safety policies and procedures.
- Promote and assist in maintaining quality programs.
- Review curriculum to ensure that it meets business needs and industry standards.
- Assist with incorporating employability skills in the curriculum.
- Review technology standards in the curriculum.
- Endorse new program applications as appropriate.

Program Review

- Participate in OCTP Technical Review Assistance Review program CIP self-reviews.
- Review and recommend program goals and objectives.
- Participate in program evaluation and recommend evaluation criteria.
- Assess student performance standards to ensure they are in line with business and industry standards.
- Assess, recommend, and/or provide equipment and facilities.
- Review student follow-up reports.
- Conduct community and occupational surveys.
- Identify new and emerging occupations.
- Recommend new programs or elimination of obsolete programs.
- Participate in long-term planning.
- Assist in short and long-term planning for program improvement.

Recruitment and Job Placement

- Notify instructors of entry-level job openings for students.
- Provide or obtain cooperative work experiences, internships/externships, work/study or work-based learning opportunities for students.
- Assist students in developing resumes and interviewing skills.
- Develop strategies to recruit non-traditional students and expand placement opportunities.
- Assist in identifying work-based learning experiences.

Student Organizations

- Assist in developing and judging leadership/CTSO competitive skill events.
- Sponsor student organization activities.
- Conduct leadership development activities.
- Assist students with career development.
- Evaluate student portfolios.
- Assist in student competency assessment.
- Provide sponsorship opportunities and funding through your organization for students to attend competitions.

Staff Development

- Invite CTE instructors to participate in industry professional development activities.
- Provide instructors with retraining/back-to-industry and summer opportunities for technical upgrading.
- Review professional development plans.
- Support staff attendance at conferences.
- Conduct workplace tours.

Community/Public Relations

- Promote the CTE program to employers, communities, and the media.
- Assist in recognizing outstanding students, teachers, and community leaders.
- Assist in developing a marketing plan.

Resources

- Establish scholarships.
- Provide tours and field trips, job shadowing experiences and speakers.
- Leverage community resources and broker community partnerships.
- Provide input on budget, facilities and equipment needs.

Legislation

- Advocate for CTE programs with legislators.
- Arrange tours of programs for legislators.
- Involve legislators in program events.
- Support local millage to enhance CTE programs.

Responsibilities of the Career and Technical Education Instructor

The duties of CTE instructor include:

- Serving as a co-facilitator with the Committee chair for the Program Advisory Committee.
- Recommending potential Program Advisory Committee members to the CTE/School administrator.
- Providing a CTE program overview to Program Advisory Committee members annually.
- Informing committee members of their roles and functions.
- Convening meetings and notifying committee members of future plans.
- Preparing an agenda for Program Advisory Committee meetings (see Appendix C) in consultation with the chairperson and/or CTE/school administrator.
- Filing agenda and minutes in TRAC folder.
- Distributing committee minutes within two weeks to the CTE/school administrator and membership for review and action.
- Fostering communication with committee members via e-mail, phone, and/or personal visits to business sites.
- Determining meeting time that accommodates the majority of the membership.
- Incorporating business and industry partners into the classroom and program (see Appendix D).
- Assure “All Aspects of the Industry” are within the curriculum/program.

Responsibilities of the Program Advisory Committee Chairperson

The role of the committee's chairperson is to provide direction and to serve as a spokesperson for the Program Advisory Committee. The chairperson of the committee must be an individual from business and industry who possesses knowledge of the needs of business and industry. This person should be appointed annually (usually at the first meeting of the school year).

The duties of the chairperson include:

- Coordinating with the CTE instructor in planning and developing an agenda for each meeting.
- Presiding at committee meetings, giving members the opportunity to express their opinions, give advice, and make recommendations.
- Providing input, when appropriate, to the CTE/school administrator regarding the committee's findings and recommendations.
- Serving as the spokesperson for the committee in meetings with CTE/school administrators as necessary.
- Appoint representative to facilitate the meeting in the chair's absence.

Responsibilities of the Career and Technical Education/School Administrator

The administrator must provide leadership in establishing and maintaining Program Advisory Committees and give the necessary support and assistance to CTE instructors as they carry out their duties and responsibilities. Realizing the important contributions that business and industry participants can make to improve the total education process, the CTE/school administrator should place a high priority on Program Advisory Committees.

The duties of the CTE/school administrator include:

- Providing administrative support for CTE instructors.
- Reviewing and approving committee members for each program.
- Meeting with the Program Advisory Committees as necessary.
- Reviewing the Program Advisory Committee minutes.
- Responding to Program Advisory Committee recommendations as requested by the CTE instructor.
- Monitoring CTE programs to assure compliance with Office of Career and Technical Education advisory committee requirements, including two (2) meetings annually.
- Providing funds for advisory committee meetings and recognition.
- Ensuring committee members are recognized and thanked for their participation (see Appendix E).
- Assisting CTE instructors in identifying potential advisory committee members.

Sample Letter of Invitation to Join Program Advisory Committee

[Letterhead]

[Date]

Ms. Betty Sue Lowe, President
Serial National Bank
1555 Towaway Road
Detroit, MI 43434

Dear Ms. Lowe:

[School Name] is in the process of selecting individuals with workplace knowledge and experience to assist in improving the state-approved [CTE Program] program. We are seeking advice and assistance from key partners to keep our state-approved programs relevant.

We would like to invite you to become a member of the [CTE Program] advisory committee, which meets a **minimum** of two (2) times a year. The purpose of the advisory committee is to provide assistance and recommendations for the continuous improvement of career and technical education programs.

I will be contacting you in the near future to discuss this opportunity. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at [phone number] or [email].

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Administrator
[School Name]

Instructor
[CTE Program]

Letter of Appointment to Program Advisory Committee

[Letterhead]

[Date]

Ms. Erin Sumer
Personnel Manager
Smith Insurance Company
Lansing, MI 60000

Dear Ms. Sumer:

Thank you for your willingness to serve on _____.

This letter is to inform you that your appointment to the _____ Program Advisory Committee is effective beginning _____, 20__, and ending _____, 20__.

The [first/next] meeting of the committee will be held at [place] in [room number] on [date] at [time].

We wish to thank you for accepting this committee appointment. We appreciate your willingness to assist us in supporting career and technical education opportunities for students in our community.

Sincerely,

Administrator and/or Chair of Committee

cc: Appointee's Supervisor

Note any enclosures and add any specific information to your school such as parking, security, etc.

Sample Agenda for First Program Advisory Committee

[Letterhead]
[Name of School]
Program Advisory Committee Meeting
[Name of Program]
[Date]

Agenda

[Time] Meeting Called to Order

Introductions

Approve Minutes

Program Updates

Unfinished Business:

1. Report follow-up data
2. Status of CIP program review

New Business:

Select topics from the “Roles of Program Advisory Committees”
(detailed on pages 3-4) such as:

1. Scholarships for students
2. Industry standards

Items for Next Meeting

Next Meeting Date

NOTE: Meetings should be held in a classroom/school at least two times per year (mid year and end of year) on a date mutually agreed upon by the chairperson and the school. Local school district professional development days work well as advisory committee meeting dates.

Invitation to Business Partners to Present in the Classroom

[Letterhead]

[Date]

Contact Person
Organization
Address
City, ST Zip

Dear Program Advisory Committee Member:

I currently teach [subject]. One of my goals this year is to provide my students with top-quality lessons by professionals in the field they want to pursue.

One unit/skill that is very important to my students is the area of [topic]. I would like to invite you to come to my class to give a lesson on [topic]. You are welcome to bring your own equipment, or you can use the classroom equipment we have in our lab. I believe learning about [topic] from someone in the field would offer more depth and significance for these students than a traditional lesson could provide.

If you are willing to provide a lesson/demonstration, please call me at [phone number] to schedule an afternoon that is convenient for you. We can also discuss what sort of preliminary knowledge my students would need and/or any tasks my students should complete prior to your arrival.

Thank you so much for sharing your time and experience. For your information I am also enclosing a flyer about [school name]'s programs, and I would welcome any other suggestions you might have for how you might share your expertise. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

[CTE Instructor's Name]
Email Address
School Address
Phone Number

Recognition of Program Advisory Committee Members

The following strategies and techniques have been used in the past to reward and recognize members:

1. Publicly recognizing members by name and introducing them at meetings.
2. Sending a letter of appreciation to the program advisory member's supervisor.
3. Issuing press releases to the media, announcing member appointments.
4. Sending members personal letters of appreciation upon completion of tasks at the conclusion of the terms of service.
5. Awarding members a framed certificate of appreciation or plaque at the conclusion of their service.
6. Holding a recognition dinner each year to thank members.
7. Recognizing the contributions of individual members or subcommittees in the media.
8. Writing committee minutes so that the member's name is included with significant ideas offered by that person.
9. Sending holiday and birthday greetings to members.
10. Inviting members to program events such as student banquets, competitions, or graduation.
11. Displaying members' names on a plaque in classroom or lobby of school.
12. Recognize Program Advisory Committee members at Board of Education meeting.

Tips for Instructors Working with Program Advisory Committees

- Poll members to determine the most convenient meeting time.
- Determine the preferred method of communication of each member.
- Develop a “rough” agenda prior to a meeting and consult with the chairperson for input.
- Facilitate rather than dominate. Ensure that meetings are a forum for input and not simply reporting out of information.
- Foster direct communication between those giving advice and those using it; act as the recorder, not as the chairperson.
- Follow up on recommendations from Program Advisory Committee members, and communicate the results to them. This enhances members’ sense of importance.
- Encourage members to visit the school’s CTE programs and/or invite students to a meeting for an open question-and-answer session with members.
- Avoid asking members to complete work that can be handled by school staff.
- Keep members informed of current and pending legislation affecting CTE.
- Send reminder announcements of meetings one month in advance.
- Send agendas out two weeks in advance of meetings and call or email members the day before the meeting.
- Ensure that meetings do not last more than 90 minutes. Shorten meetings that begin to run long by saving remaining business for the next meeting, scheduling an interim meeting, or appointing a subcommittee to handle a complex issue.
- Disseminate minutes within two weeks after meetings.
- Provide members with current committee rosters. Keep rosters revised and current.
- Replace inactive members.
- If issues that require immediate attention arise, meet individually or with at least two or three members at a time.

- Keep the committee active. Continually solicit and consider its advice.
- Publicly recognize Program Advisory Committee members, not only through certificates and letters, but through Board of Education recognitions, introductions at public events, newsletter publications, etc.
- Inform members of goals and objectives each year.
- Meet often enough to establish working relationships and accomplish work plan.
- Have Board recognize membership on Program Advisory Committee.

Michigan Department of Education
Office of Career and Technical Education

Statement of Assurance of Compliance with Federal Laws

The Office of Career and Technical Education complies with all Federal laws and regulations prohibiting discrimination and with all requirements and regulations of the U.S. Department of Education. It is the policy of the Office of Career and Technical Education that no person on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, gender, or disability shall be subjected to discrimination in any program, service, or activity for which it is responsible, or for which it receives financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Education.

Contact: Civil Rights Compliance Coordinator
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