

# *Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee Handbook*



*With special thanks to Killingly High School for  
providing this sample document*

# Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee Handbook

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# Introduction to CTE Advisory Committees

A CTE Advisory Committee is a group of individuals with a common interest in a particular CTE area (Business, Manufacturing, Agricultural Education, Construction, Education and Training, etc.). This group is made of local business and community professionals, teachers, students, administrators and parents. The purpose of the advisory committee is to support educators, students and businesses in developing, establishing and evaluating CTE programs to ensure students are well prepared for the world of work.

According to the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Grant Improvement Act of 2006, a school that has at least one CTE program, which is receiving federal funds from this grant, is required to develop and maintain an Advisory Committee. Teachers often ask how to start an Advisory Board and what to do at meetings? This CTE Advisory Committee Handbook will guide you through the process from beginning to end. You will find guidelines and templates to make the planning process and meetings effortless and meaningful. You will discover that the advisory committees will support your efforts to improve your programs as well as connect your school and students with the local business community.

As a CTE teacher you will be required to develop and sustain an Advisory Committee for your CTE department. Your CTE Advisory Committee must meet at least twice a year. In addition, if your CTE department is looking to create a new CTE course, then an Advisory Committee should assist you with the development of the new course or CTE program.

A CTE Advisory Committee is essential to the future success of our students as well as the workforce. In our CTE programs we are preparing our students today, as tomorrow's future business and community leaders. It is vitally important that we understand the ever-changing knowledge and skills needed in the world of work. Local business and community professionals can support our students by sharing their expertise with us through the Advisory Committee. The future success of our students is not only essential to themselves, but to the local, state and national economy. Organizing and maintaining an advisory committee in your CTE program will give your students the unique advantage as they enter post-secondary schools and the world of work.

This Career and Technical Education Advisory Committee Handbook will give you the information needed to establish your committee, invite business members to join your committee as well as conduct and record meetings for documentation. The guidelines and templates will ensure a valuable experience for each member of your committee as well as effective communication to improve and align your CTE programs with the today's world of work.

## **Advisory Committee Members Should:**

**Advise:** Advisory Committee members advise educators and students as to the skills, knowledge, tools, technology and tasks needed in today's careers. They can share information about education, conferences, workshops, visits to local businesses, equipment, curriculum, safety, resume, and interview skills for a particular career.

**Advocate:** Advisory Committee members advocate to sustain local CTE programs in their schools. They can meet with school administration to stress the importance of the skills and knowledge students' gain in CTE programs. Furthermore, they can advocate locally, within the state and nationally to share their experiences by preparing students for the world of work.

**Support:** Advisory Committee members can support teachers and students through the meetings, networking events, visits to local businesses, donations of equipment, tools or supplies which would benefit students as they learn the skills and knowledge needed for a particular career. Participation in CTE Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO) competitions, meetings or events as well as visiting classrooms would also support students in their career paths.

# **DEVELOPING YOUR CTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

## **How and Who to Choose As Members**

To ensure you have a successful and effective CTE Advisory Committee you need to identify individuals in your school and community who have a common interest in your CTE program area. Choosing just anyone to be on the committee will make your committee ineffective and unsustainable. First and foremost you need to think about your particular CTE program and the content you teach. Which local business and community members can support you and your students' best? The following list offers suggestions of who the members should be on your advisory committee:

- Local Business Professionals from your CTE program area of study
- CTE teachers in your department
- Carl D. Perkins Grant Administrator
- School Administrator
- Guidance Counselor
- Career Center Director (if applicable)
- Post-secondary School Representatives
- Special Education teacher or administrator
- Academic teachers (as you see relevant for your CTE program area)
- Parents
- Students

## **Number of Advisory Committee Members**

Your Advisory Committee should be comprised of a diverse group of people and have enough members to be effective. However, keep in mind that a small advisory committee will not offer you diverse information and collaboration needed to be effective. An Advisory Committee comprised of between 8 -14 members works best.

## **Committee Member's Length of Membership**

Establishing membership terms for the CTE Advisory Committee members can ensure the committee is in a constant state of new ideas, skills and knowledge. Many schools choose to set terms of membership so members are replaced every 2-3 years, rather than changing the whole committee in one term. When recruiting new members you should ask them to commit to a term of membership; this will ensure continuity within the group. A committee that begins to lose members will become ineffective and difficult to sustain. If members are given a term of membership, they will become vested in the collaborate process. Moreover, if a schedule of meeting dates are determined at the first meeting of the year and adhered to, then members will be committed to the committee as well. Many changes in the meeting schedule or agenda can make members disenfranchised with the committee, which subsequently ends in an ineffective committee.

## **Inviting Members to Join the CTE Advisory Board Committee**

It is suggested that you contact business and community members personally to begin the discussion about the CTE Advisory Committee at your school. A business or community event is a great place to begin to network and discuss your advisory committee. You can then follow-up with a letter of invitation to your CTE Advisory Board. (See the Advisory Committee Member Invitation Sample Letter in the Appendix) When sending a letter of invitation, be sure to include information about your school and your CTE programs so they have some background information to make their decision. Within your letter you can also include an orientation meeting date to give potential members a tour of your school and your program. You can also schedule time to answer any questions they may have about the advisory committee and their membership. If you choose to hold an orientation meeting, plan it at a time when potential members can meet students and other potential members.

## Where and When to Meet With Your Advisory Committee

Deciding where and most importantly, when to meet with your Advisory Committee can be difficult for both educators and business professionals. Educators teach during the day and sometimes do not have a common planning time with all teachers. Business professionals have a full day of work and it may be difficult to attend meetings in the evening. To sustain an effective advisory committee, the meetings should be planned at a time convenient for all members. Many schools hold meetings at the beginning of the school day or during lunch. A quick survey, which includes a question about preferred, meeting times, is an excellent way to collect preliminary information from committee members.

When deciding on a location, you should look at both business locations as well as the school itself. Meeting at the school for the first meeting of the year will allow businesses to view student's classroom environment and to meet teachers as well as administrators. Subsequent meetings can take place at local businesses, so teachers, students, administrators and parents can get a close look at what that business industry looks like today.

Some ideas for meeting venues or formats are:

- Your school
- A local community venue
- At a post-secondary school in your area
- At a local business or community building
- Online Meeting Resource for individuals who may be out of town

You can also choose to hold an Advisory Committee meeting in the evening on occasion. In the evening you could invite your local Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club or Town Business Association for a networking evening.

# **CTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

## **Meeting Schedule and Protocols**

Your meetings should be scheduled for a minimum of two to four times a year. One meeting should be scheduled at the beginning of the year for introductions, planning, review of program etc. Another meeting should be planned for the end of the year to wrap-up the year, celebrate accomplishments, recognize students and advisory members as well as preliminary planning for next year. As for meetings in the middle of the year a variety of topics can be discussed to review programs, skills, knowledge and the latest industry trends. (See the Sample Advisory Committee Meeting Topics and Schedule in the Appendix).

The CTE program department head or lead teacher should prepare the agenda with colleagues and/or students for each meeting. The meeting agenda should be prepared prior to each meeting and sent to each of the members at least one week prior to the scheduled meeting.

The CTE teacher or lead teacher will lead each meeting or determine who will lead each meeting. You should involve students as well as business leaders in the process of leading the meetings. The agenda should be followed and notes must be taken at each meeting. When CTE Advisory Committee members arrive for a meeting, have them sign in to document their attendance. (Please see the Sample Advisory Committee Attendance Sheet in the Appendix). The attendance list and notes must be forwarded to the CTE Carl D. Perkins Grant Administrator for documentation. Any events, activities or additional information, which occurs outside of the meeting, should be forwarded to the Perkins Administrator as well for documentation. The notes should also be sent to all members of the committee for their review and records.

The CTE program Advisory Committee should continuously disseminate information from the meetings to all CTE teachers within a department. This will ensure that the work of all stakeholders on the advisory committee is heard, reviewed and implemented.

## **Creating the CTE Advisory Committee Agenda**

When creating the agenda for a meeting, review the notes from the previous meeting for any old business or questions that arose which need to be discussed at this meeting. Remember that everyone's time is valuable and take this into consideration when creating your agenda. The agenda should be well organized and relevant to the CTE program as well as the members. The main purpose of these meetings is to: share information; review the CTE programs; and work to improve the CTE program and student's learning experiences. Initial meetings may begin with introductions and review of the CTE program as a whole, but meetings after the initial meeting should include time for all members to share information relevant to their experiences and knowledge within the CTE program area careers. (Please see the Sample CTE Advisory Meeting Agendas for examples)

# DEVELOPING AN EFFECTIVE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## Suggested Activities and Topics

To have an effective advisory committee you must know the purpose of the committee, the goals, the tasks and work involved on an advisory committee. The following are some suggested topics/ideas/activities to keep you CTE Advisory Committee involved and working toward improvement and success within your CTE program area.

The CTE Advisory Committee...

- ***...must ensure that in each CTE program there is no discrimination and there is equality in all Career and Technical Education Programs.*** The Carl D. Perkins Grant requires that districts take ensure that all students have equal access to all programs within their school. This includes students of special populations and non-traditional. Every effort should be made to promote CTE program areas to various special population members. The promotion of CTE areas for special populations as well as the discussion revolved around the planning of promoting these CTE areas should be clearly documented.
- ***...will review curriculum for CTE program area to ensure that instruction and learning experiences are up-to-date.***
- ***...will review course material and evaluate them as well as give commendations or recommendations.*** The Advisory Committee will review textbooks, tools, equipment software, etc., to determine if the most up-to-date information and learning experiences are being utilized. The Advisory Committee can make recommendations to revise, update or change the instruction and/or learning experiences to meet the needs of students CTE program areas in the world of work.
- ***...may advise on the development of new programs.***  
An Advisory Committee can recommend if a new program should be implemented or if one should be expanded. The Advisory Board should be an integral part of the development of any new CTE program, whether they recommended the changes or the changes are planning to be implemented by the CTE department.
- ***...may donate materials, equipment and services.***  
The business and community professionals can offer to donate equipment, materials or services that will help to improve the CTE program area.
- ***...assist with periodicals, magazines, manual or brochures.***  
The business and community professionals can share any literature or information they receive in their industry to support students and teachers in the CTE program area.
- ***...will recommend professional development, speakers, conferences, workshops or activities for educators and students.***  
Business and community professionals can share information regarding any outside activities or events, which will benefit teachers and students.
- ***...can offer CTE program opportunities to work on special projects within the business industry.***
- ***...may offer to plan and implement workshops and/or professional development to the school.***  
Business and community professionals can plan and host any area of professional development for schools staff to enhance their knowledge and skills related to the CTE program area.
- ***...can plan field trips and events for other local businesses and community leaders as well as parents and the community as a whole.***  
Business and community leaders can work with the teachers, students and parents to plan events to promote CTE and businesses.
- ***...can keep teachers / Career Center Coordinator informed of any job openings for high school students and for graduating high school students.***
- ***...may support student CTE Student Organizations and plan Competitive Events for students within their CTE program area.***

- *...may advocate for CTE programs as a whole on the local and state levels*

**(Effective Advisory Committee continued)**

- *...may seek legislative support for CTE programs.* Over the years there has been discussion about the importance of the Perkins Grant at the federal level. We need to continue to advocate for the Perkins Grant and discuss the impact these programs have on the success of every student. Advisory Committee members can help to influence state and federal legislators and may be able to speak on behalf of the needs of CTE programs in general.
- *...may support students through Mock Interviews, Resume review and feedback on skills.* Advisory committee members can participate in mock interviews, which assist students in gaining valuable interview skills. The member can review a student’s resume, cover letter and possible Career Portfolio to give them feedback, which will prepare them for the world of work.

**Evaluating the Effectiveness of the CTE Advisory Committee and the CTE Programs**

It is important that after a year or less of your CTE Advisory Committee operating, that you reflect and evaluate the effectiveness of the committee. Review all the notes, events and activities from the past. Have you accomplished your goals? Could anything be improved to ensure an activity or event was more successful or meaningful? Does anyone have recommendations for meetings, invitations, communication or events? Everyone from the committee should be heard in regards to the evaluation of the committee. You may choose to put out an anonymous survey to ensure everyone is comfortable with sharing his or her thoughts and ideas.

In addition, the advisory committee along with CTE teachers and students can evaluate the effectiveness of the CTE program areas. The committee should look at the relevance between learning experiences and instruction to the real world of work with that CTE program area. Are we effectively instructing students and offering them learning experiences as well as many opportunities to gain the skills and knowledge for post-secondary and careers?

**End of Year Recognitions**

Throughout the year, the advisory committee members are donating their time, knowledge, skills, and in some cases, materials to ensure students have the best opportunities to prepare for a career. At your last meeting of the year, it is important to recognize all the hard work the advisory committee has done to improve the CTE program area. At this time you should recognize business and community members for sharing their expertise with the school. You should also recognize all other members for their participation and input. Furthermore, don’t forget to congratulate and recognize seniors who will be graduating and beginning their pathway to a career.

Some additional ways to recognize business and community members are:

- Write and publish a press release in the local paper or on your local television station
- Recognize them at Chamber of Commerce meetings or events
- Post on your webpage, twitter or Facebook account for your CTE program area
- Share their recognition with the BOE or state
- Give certificates or plaques
- Hold an end of year breakfast, dinner or celebration



## Professionalism

Remember this is a professional group, therefore being a role model for every member is important to our student's success. This advisory committee is an experience for students where they can receive a first-hand look at what is required in the world of work and what it means to be professional.

For business and community professionals to work together effectively, they must understand diversity, communication skills, work ethic, soft skills and hard skills. The environment in your meetings will determine whether it can be truly effective.

### **To Ensure the Advisory Committee can be effective you will need:**

- Support from School Administration
- Support from CTE teachers and the Carl D. Perkins Administrator
- Dedicated community members
- An organized plan for your committee: How will you communicate? How will you ensure meetings will be held when scheduled? What will be the roles of individuals on the committee? How will you ensure everyone has equal time to contribute and be heard?

Create a Working Agreement at your very first meeting to agree on how you will treat one another, how you will resolve conflicts and agree upon the meeting times. You can also create a mission statement and goals to refer to when deciding on events and activities planned by the committee.

- **Establishment of a "paper" committee only to meet state requirements** As an advisory committee member:

Effective CTE program advisory committees will create partnerships between CTE programs, the local businesses, industries and the community as a whole. The relationships and communication between advisory committee members and the CTE educators is essential to the success of the CTE programs and the students. The collaboration and dedication between all stakeholders is vitally important to the local and regional economy, as our students become our future business and community leaders.

# **APPENDIX**

# Example of an Invitation to Join the CTE Advisory Committee

*Please keep a copy of letters sent to prospective advisory committee members and give a copy to the Perkins Administrator.*

Date

Mrs. Jane Smith  
JB Early Childhood Center  
000 Room Drive  
City, CT Zipcode

Dear Mrs. Smith,

Killingly High School's Early Childhood Education Career Pathway is beginning to create an Advisory Board made up of local business and community members to support students who are interested in this career. We are looking for individuals to serve on an Advisory Committee for at least two years and meet at least two times a year. These members will advise, support and assist educators with providing the best learning experiences to meet students of their career goals.

As a local business professional with first-hand knowledge in the Early Childhood Education career field, we would like you to join us on the Advisory Committee. We know that your expertise and experience will support our teachers and students as they learn about the field of Early Childhood Education.

Enclosed please find the informational brochures about the Career Pathways program, the Early Childhood Education program and the KHS Career and Technical Education Advisory Committees.

We will be having a Career and Technical Education Open House for local businesses to learn more about our CTE programs, meet students and get a tour of our school. I will be contacting you shortly to discuss the Advisory Committee and the Open House. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at (Phone Number and Email).

Thank you for your consideration of this opportunity.

Sincerely,

(Teacher Name)  
Killingly High School  
Early Childhood Education Career Pathway

## Example of CTE Advisory Committee Appointment Letter

*Please keep a copy of letters sent to appointed advisory committee members and give a copy to the Perkins Administrator.*

Date

Mrs. Jane Smith  
JB Early Childhood Center  
000 Room Drive  
City, CT Zipcode

Dear Mrs. Smith,

On behalf of the Killingly High School staff and administration we would like to thank you for agreeing to be on the Advisory Committee for the Early Childhood Education Career Pathway Program.

We will have an informational meeting on Friday, September 4, 2015, 5PM-6PM to meet all members of the Advisory Committee, students, parents and teachers. At this time we will discuss the timeframe for appointments as well as create our meeting schedule for the year.

The first meeting of the committee will be held at Killingly High School in my classroom, (Room 1712) on October 4, 2014 from 9:30AM -10:30AM. I will send you the agenda one week prior to our meeting. When arriving at KHS, please go to the main office and sign in. I will have a student greet you in the office and assist you in finding my classroom.

Thank you again for agreeing to be on our Advisory Committee. We value your expertise and look forward to the partnership between teachers, students, business and community members to improve the learning experiences in our Early Childhood Education Program.

Sincerely,

(Teacher Name)  
Killingly High School  
Early Childhood Education Career Pathway

# Example of Meeting Attendance Form

*Please keep all attendance forms and turn them into the Perkins Administrator.*

## Advisory Committee Meeting Attendance 2016-2017 School Year

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Location of Meeting :** \_\_\_\_\_

Career Pathway/CTE Program \_\_\_\_\_

Career Pathway/CTE Teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Attendees Names Sign In	Career Title	Business/School/ Affiliation	Guest/Guest Speaker	In Attendance?
CTE Perkins Grant Administrator/Career Center Director				
CTE/Career Pathway Teachers				
Business/Community Members				
School Counselor				
Postsecondary School				
Pupil Services Director/Assistant Director or Representative				
Students				
Parents				

# Example of an Advisory Committee Meeting Agenda

*Please keep a copy of all agendas and give a copy to the Perkins Administrator.*

## **Agenda for your First Advisory Committee Meeting**

### *Early Childhood Education Pathway*

1. Welcome by the lead CTE/Career Pathways Educator
2. Introductions: background and Affiliation/Business
3. Review the purpose of the Advisory Committee, as well as timeline/meeting schedule
4. Members and responsibilities of Advisory Committee members
5. Review the CTE programs offered in our school with the program of studies
6. Share the Career Pathway Brochures from your CTE area, as well as information about all CTE
7. What is new in our program? What we would like to accomplish on our Advisory Committee?
8. Goals for students in the program
9. Information regarding any CTSO (Career and Technical Student Organizations) present in your CTE area.

## **Agenda for your Second Advisory Meeting**

### *Early Childhood Education Pathway*

1. Welcome by lead CTE/Career Pathways Educator or student or business/community member
2. Review minutes from last meeting
3. Ask for members to share any thoughts related to last meeting
4. Teachers/Students share any upcoming news, events or changes within the program
5. Offer the program of studies for review again, along with the CT CTE Standards for review
6. Review materials, textbooks and educational learning experiences for students
7. Discuss goals that you're working toward, accomplishments on these goals and/or data
8. Ask Advisory Committee members for their feedback on skills, knowledge and employment outlook in their career areas
9. Ask Advisory Committee members if they have any advice for seniors entering college, courses offered at the high school or experiences to enhance students learning experiences inside and outside of school
10. Inquire about field trips, job shadows, mentoring and internships available
11. Explore Professional Development and Externships for educators
12. Future events for business/community to network with students or assist students in exploring careers

## **Agenda for your Third Advisory Meeting**

### *Early Childhood Education Pathway*

1. Welcome by lead CTE/Career Pathways Educator or student or business/community member
2. Review minutes from last meeting
3. Ask for members to share any thoughts related to last meeting
4. Teachers/Students share any upcoming news, events or changes within the program
5. Discussion of Career Fair planned by the Advisory Committee
6. Review of Job Shadows and Internships
7. Discussion about the support from the postsecondary schools, businesses, parents throughout the year.
8. Plans for the summer and next year; new appointments, seniors graduating.
9. Gifts and plaques awarded to members
10. Congratulations to Seniors: share postsecondary plans and accomplishments throughout the year
11. Recognize advisory members; any members whose term has ended
12. Refreshments for celebration and informal conversations

# Example of Meeting Note Template

*Please keep all attendance forms and turn them into the Perkins Administrator.*

## CTE/Career Pathways Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Meeting # \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ for 2016-2017

CTE/Career Pathway: \_\_\_\_\_

Starting Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Ending Time: \_\_\_\_\_

Location of Meeting: \_\_\_\_\_

Members in Attendance:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Members Absent:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Guests and their Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Member taking notes: \_\_\_\_\_

Agenda (attached)

Discussions: Topic and Who

Actions/Goals/Recommendations

Unfinished Business

Before Next Meeting

## Ideas for Advisory Committee Meeting Topics/Schedule

Time Frame	CTE/Career Pathway Committee Task
September -October	Introductions, review of programs, review of advisory committees' duties, set goals and meeting schedule for the year.
Nov. - January	Review materials, textbooks, learning experiences. Share events, skills, knowledge and technology in the workplace. Plan events to bring students, businesses, community members and educators together.
January - April	Review goals, data and accomplishments. What needs to be done to meet goals by the end of the year? Advisory Committee assists with improving programs and supporting students learning experienced through recommendations for the Carl D. Perkins Grant that is due in May.
May-June	Review of the Grant, recognition of Advisory Committee Members, students graduating, accomplishments of the advisory committee from this year. Plan for next year as well as review terms for Advisory Committee members.