An Information Sourcebook for assisting educators to organize and use...

Program Advisory Committees

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Program Advisory Committees

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Why Involve Business and Industry in Education?

Business and industry need employees skilled enough to produce efficiently, and customers literate enough and self-sufficient enough to consume responsibly. This is the “bottom line” reason for business and industry to invest in education: it is simply good business.

Employers are increasingly demanding employees who are able to think on their feet and learn on the job, and who possess the basic skills needed to do so. An increasing mismatch is developing between jobs and skills.

Schools today exist in dramatically different environments than they did twenty, ten or even five years ago. The complex and interconnected problems that confront schools and educators require a fundamental change in the way this country supports and provides education. Increased investment and involvement by the nation’s business and industry communities are essential. Without fundamental changes and major improvements in the way schools prepare young people, employers will pay an increasingly high price for the educational deficit. Business investment in education is more than altruism; it is a fundamental economic and social necessity. Every community is unique,
and every partnership experience is different, but some common elements exist in many of the successful partnerships which appear to contribute to their success.

It is not possible to provide a magic formula for success, or to prepare a simple “how-to” manual to recreate successful business/industry partnerships or advisory committees. The goals must be sufficiently high to be a challenge to all parties involved, but not so high as to be unrealistic. In addition, while the natural tendency is to tackle everything at once, it is important to set a limited number of goals that everybody can understand—the schools, business/industry partners, community persons, and students.

Publications on the subject of business/industry partnerships have different ways of categorizing or describing the types of partnerships that can be developed. The Fourth R: Workforce Readiness, published by The National Alliance of Business, identifies six levels of business and industry involvement in education. (See next page) The highest level of involvement, level six, represents a substantial and sustained financial and executive leadership commitment that can be usually offered by large corporations and foundations. While the lower levels

The higher the level of involvement and investment in education, the greater the opportunity to bring about lasting improvements in education, and the greater the likelihood of significantly improving the workforce readiness of our nation’s youth.

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<tr>
<th>Levels of Business/Industry Involvement</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LEVEL ONE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Partners in Special Services</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Special service business/industry partnerships provide short-term project or student-specific activities or resources to help with a specific problem or need, such as scholarships, fundraising, donating or sharing equipment or educational material, sponsoring career fairs or sponsoring student teams. These partnerships are generally short term, are confined to one school, one teacher, or one class, and they involve less time and money.</td>
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<td><strong>LEVEL TWO</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Partners in the Classroom</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom partners are business volunteers who improve the learning environment by bringing their business or occupational expertise directly into the classroom for students and teachers, or bringing the classroom to the business. The activities are planned and coordinated with the school staff, generally are tied to the school year or semester and can focus on the needs of the school or of the individual students.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LEVEL THREE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Partners in Teacher Training and Development</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Businesses involved in teacher and counselor training and professional development provide opportunities for school personnel to update, upgrade, or maintain their skills. Educators have the opportunity to learn more about the labor market, industries and businesses in the community, workplace needs and/or career opportunities.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LEVEL FOUR</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Partners in Management</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Management assistance partnerships provide school officials with management support and business expertise in a broad range of areas. State and local career and technology education initiatives need business/industry partnerships to achieve this level.</td>
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<td><strong>LEVEL FIVE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Partners in Systemic Educational Improvement</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Systemic educational improvement partnerships are those initiatives in which businesses, education officials, and other community leaders identify the need for reform or improvement in the educational system, and then work during the long term to make those major changes happen in the system. These partnerships generally affect large numbers of youth, combine and channel resources in a different way, and bring about lasting institutional change.</td>
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<td><strong>LEVEL SIX</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Partners in Policy</strong></td>
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<td>Policy partnerships are collaborative efforts at national, state, or local levels among businesses, schools, and public officials that shape the public and political debate. These policy partnerships may bring about substantive changes in state or federal legislation or local school governance and affect the overall direction of the educational system.</td>
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require incrementally less investment of time and money from business and industry, each level can address and solve problems that an educational institution acting alone would find difficult if not impossible. All levels are important and many business/industry partnerships defy categorization. Many multi-level partnerships cannot be characterized by any one level of involvement.

Regardless of the level of involvement a business or industry has with education, the fundamental fact remains that today’s workers and the workforce of the future must have the ability to analyze, think, reason, communicate, adapt quickly, and work in teams. Unfortunately, many of today’s workers do not possess these skills, creating deficiencies in technological advancement and productivity rate.

The following findings and statistics illustrate the current status of education and workforce relationships. This information can provide a backdrop for involving business and industry in the education process.

- Each year, twenty percent of all the nation’s at-risk school-age children drop out of high school without job skills.
- One in five American children—one fifth of our future frontline workforce—is born in poverty.
- Less than one-third of American employers believe recent high school graduates are adequately prepared for the current workplace.
- While it is estimated that only fifteen percent of the jobs of the future will require a college diploma (bachelor’s degree), more than half of all jobs will require some type of postsecondary education and training.
- Between forty and sixty percent of high school-age students are working at any one time; for most there is no connection between school and work.
- From 1950 to 2000, the need for unskilled, entry-level workers decreased from sixty to fifteen percent, while the need for skilled, entry-level workers doubled, from twenty to forty percent.
Developers of Texas's 2000-2002 State Plan for Career and Technology Education developed objectives and strategies to answer the challenges facing education and the workforce. The involvement of partnerships consisting of business, industry, community persons, educators and other stakeholders received particular emphasis as follows:

Plan, develop, and implement partnerships that support efforts to help students develop the basic knowledge and skills necessary for managing the dual roles of family member and wage earner, gaining entry-level employment, and continuing the student's education or training at the postsecondary level.

Texas career and technology programs consist of agricultural science, business, marketing, family and consumer science, trade and industrial, health science technology, and technology education. Career and technology education teachers are encouraged to maintain advisory committees or other partnerships for program improvement.

Procedures in the following sections are suggestions for securing successful advisory input from partnerships. Actual implementation methods will vary by differences in local education agency administration and policy, community needs, and program and teacher characteristics. Successful and sustained input from advisory committees or partnerships is highly dependent on securing cooperation of local education agency and community persons.

**Strategies suggested in the Texas State Plan:**

- Develop partnerships among teachers, counselors, administrators, parents, postsecondary education, the community, business and industry, and other entities to assist students in mastering the knowledge and skills needed to succeed.
- Encourage all school personnel to actively participate in partnership efforts.
- Utilize partnerships with community organizations, business/industry, parents, and other individuals and groups to implement support programs and services for students.
- Involve partnerships in developing work-based career development experiences for all students.
- Partner with two- and four-year colleges to provide students with seamless links to postsecondary education through articulated credit, dual enrollment, coordinated curriculum, Tech-Prep, or other programs and practices appropriate to local needs.
- Utilize partnerships to promote community support for career and technology education programs.
- Involve partnerships in identifying and securing resources.
- Make career and technology education opportunities available to all students through partnerships with other school districts, public or private postsecondary institutions, and/or trade or technical schools.
Organizing and Using Business/Industry Advisory Committees

To ensure quality program delivery and maintenance, each Texas career and technology education program is recommended to establish and maintain its own industry-unique business/industry advisory committee.

The Texas State Plan for Career and Technology Education includes strategies designed to assist local education agencies in creating occupational and technical programs that have meaning and substance for students. The process includes the development of outcomes and competencies for each course within a program of study, the integration of basic skills as well as workplace readiness skills, and equipment/facility review and evaluation to ensure up-to-date technology instruction.

To accomplish these goals, program administrators are to draw upon the expertise of business and industry within the general area of program focus. The general functions of the

There must be a two-way system of understanding and communication between business, industry, and education in order to keep education programs realistic and to meet the changing needs of the world of work.
Business/Industry Advisory Committee are to act in an advisory capacity for the development of technical programs, and to advise local school administration in developing preparatory programs, tech-prep programs, and adult education programs needed by the employment community. An advisory committee is a group of persons outside the education profession, made up of representative laypeople, recognized and respected in their own fields of work, who advise technical educators, administrators, and local board of education members regarding programs, based on the employment needs of the community, state, regional, national, and international marketplace. Partnerships, closely resemble advisory committee, but are recommended to include partners within the educational community.

Successful career and technology programs are often dependent upon advisory and partnership inputs.

The critical eyes, creative imaginations, and combined strengths of a good business/industry advisory committee can really make things happen. One of the most important services a Business/Industry Advisory Committee can offer is to provide advice on new technology. The committee members can review existing equipment, facilities, and resources and make appropriate recommendations. The committee can also assist instructors in updating and refining educational outcomes and competencies. Their help in validating competency...
listings as well as reviewing and evaluating technical content of course materials can help to ensure the student is receiving accurate and current instruction. Entry-level job requirements, basic skills, and work attitudes are also areas of expertise the committee will possess.

Organizing and using a Business/Industry Advisory Committee can assist educators and administrators in answering the following questions:

- Are students being prepared for the future job market?
- What should instructors be teaching?
- Is curriculum addressing industry needs?
- How can instructors verify competencies to industry standards?

Business/Industry Advisory Committees can offer many services to the education community:

- They provide advice that is not easily obtainable elsewhere.
- They have important public relations potential.
- They offer different points of view.
- They can actively aid in the placement of graduates.
- They assist in keeping educational programs up-to-date.

Should all programs organize Business/Industry Advisory Committees?

The size of the school, geographical location, and number of technical programs offered are factors that influence establishment of advisory committees within a school or district.

*According to the Vocational-Technical Education Handbook (1996), a program is “a sequence of competency-based courses which integrate academic and technical education competencies directly related to the preparation of individuals in paid or unpaid employment in current or emerging occupations requiring other than a baccalaureate or advanced degree.”*
Preliminary Planning

Preliminary planning is the first step in establishing a Business/Industry Advisory Committee. During the preliminary planning stage, consideration should be given to the following.

- The technical education instructor should become thoroughly familiar with the purposes, procedures of organization, and the functions of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee before starting to organize.

- The instructor should secure the approval of the administration.

- The instructor with the assistance of administrative officials, should develop a written statement of policy regarding the operating guidelines for the committee. The operating guidelines should include such items as:
  - The purpose and duties of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee
  - The area or field in which it operates
  - The committee’s limitations
  - The number of committee members to be selected
  - The method to be used in selecting members
  - The length of term for committee members
  - The relationship of the committee to the school administration

The following three pages will assist in preliminary planning, particularly in determining the purposes and duties of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee.

These objectives and suggested activities are intended to generate ideas for ways to use members of a Business/Industry Advisory Committee for greatest benefit to the local education program.
## Objectives and Activities of A Business/Industry Advisory Committee

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<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Suggested Activities</th>
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| Analyze the course content to meet the changing needs of the businesses and industries | • Review and suggest content for courses of study and standards of proficiency in areas which are essential to becoming successfully employed in a career path.  
• Review sequence of courses that comprise the program.  
• Review course outlines, occupational, program and course competencies, and workplace basic skills.  
• Help develop educational objectives.  
• Review software packages, textbooks and other supplementary materials.  
• Advise on the extent to which basic skills and work attitudes should be taught.  
• Review career exploration and awareness courses offered K-8.  
• Recommend standards for work-based learning experiences and programs.  
• Inform the school of opportunities to place students in full- or part-time jobs as part of their school-to-career transition program. |
| Evaluate the physical condition of facilities and technology of program equipment | • Review existing equipment, facilities, and resources.  
• Review lab equipment (computers, printers, etc.) and compare with current and future technology and industry standards.  
• Review lab (or shop) safety program.  
• Review room (shop, lab) layout, space requirements, workstations, lighting, ventilation, etc., and compare with industry norms. |
| Assist in maintaining and improving instructional and learning experiences | • Advise on methods of instruction most appropriate for course content.  
• Provide plant tours and field experiences (i.e., shadowing) for students and teachers.  
• Identify or suggest resource personnel to enrich the instructional content. |

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<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Suggested Activities</th>
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<td>Assist in determining job opportunities</td>
<td>• Assist in establishing training stations where students can obtain the appropriate occupational work experience.</td>
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<td>• Assist in locating sample kits of raw materials, finished products, charts, posters, etc. for exhibit and instructional purposes in the classroom, lab, and shop.</td>
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<td>• Assist in obtaining school equipment and supplies on loan, as gifts, or at special prices.</td>
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<td>• Support student organizations and sponsor student incentives, prizes, and scholarships.</td>
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<td>• Suggest qualified persons for teacher vacancies or as substitutes.</td>
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<td>• Participate in team teaching to enhance the instructional process.</td>
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<td>Assist in promoting career education in the school and community</td>
<td>• Assist in surveying manpower needs and new and emerging occupations.</td>
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<td>• Advise on the changing nature of the competencies in occupational fields.</td>
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<td>• Assist in placing graduates or program completers.</td>
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<td>Assist in providing current occupational information for student counseling purposes</td>
<td>• Provide news stories concerning career education programs to the local news media.</td>
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<td>• Participate in radio and television programs designed to promote career education.</td>
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<td>• Testify in support of career education at meetings which may be called by local and state officials, boards, and legislative groups.</td>
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<td>• Encourage other businesses to stimulate development of work experience programs.</td>
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<td>• Build interest and understanding between the school and community organizations.</td>
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<td>• Serve as a liaison between rural and urban interests.</td>
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<td>• Establish and maintain a current library of visual aids, magazines, and books concerning career opportunities.</td>
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<td>• Provide relevant information to teachers and counselors concerning desirable aptitudes, education, and experience background which applicants need for entry-level jobs.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td>Suggested Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advise on the development of short- and long-range plans for school-to-work education</td>
<td>• Review existing local and state board of education policies on career education.</td>
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<td>• Review local district education plan.</td>
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<td>• Help schools set priorities for budgetary expenditures.</td>
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<td>• Review state Career and Technology Education plan.</td>
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<td>• Review local needs assessment and recommend actions based upon the findings.</td>
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<td>• Assist local board of education with development of program evaluation procedures.</td>
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<td>Assist in providing evaluations and recommendations</td>
<td>• Provide objectively written evaluations and recommendations on needed program improvements for the local board of education.</td>
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<td>• Evaluate actions concerning previous recommendations.</td>
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<td>• Evaluate effectiveness and direction of committee activities.</td>
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<td>Provide local education agencies with written recommendations</td>
<td>• Prepare an annual report to the local board of education stating the observations, findings, and recommendations of the committee majority and include supportive data.</td>
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**Selecting and Recruiting Members**

In selecting a Business/Industry Advisory Committee, groups having diversified interest as the following should be considered.

- Geographical location—all parts of the community should be represented.
- Employers who are representative of local economy.
- Professional and business persons serving the area who have an interest in education.
- Members of professional organizations.
- All age groups above the high school level.
- Persons of different economic levels.
- Different religions, political and nationality groups having an interest in education.

Continued on next page...
It should be noted that a Business/Industry Advisory Committee member may be a representative of two or more of the groups listed on the previous page. It should also be emphasized that a committee member should not think of himself/herself as representing a particular group, but instead be interested in the whole community. A business/industry advisory committee should not contain members of the school board or other school administrators or officials except on an ex-officio basis. Parents, educators, and former and current students may serve as members of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee. However, if they are selected as committee members, they should be in addition to members from business and industry. (A worksheet for selecting committee members is in the Appendix, p. 29-30.)

Individuals on the Business/Industry Advisory Committee should represent a cross-section in terms of gender, ethnicity, occupation, age, and socio-economic status. Other important factors to be considered when nominating members for the committee include their capability, available time, and level of interest.

After identifying potential business and industry committee members, the next step is to elicit their support. This may be done through written communications. (Examples of a letter of invitation to join the committee and a response letter of intent to join are presented in the Appendix, p. 31-32.) A more effective means of attracting potential members attention and then selling them on participating would be through face-to-face, personal contact. Whatever the strategies used, keep in mind the following pointers:

The size of the Committee should be determined by local needs. It is suggested that the range be from five to thirteen members (odd number to follow parliamentary procedure); however, it should not be too large for productive work. Five to seven members may be more productive.

Source: Functions of An Advisory Committee, KSDE Technical Education Team
### Strategies for Recruiting Business/Industry Committee Members

| Target both large and small firms | Large and small businesses/industries may differ in what motivates them to participate. However, firms of all sizes can participate fully and effectively. Keep in mind, small businesses are the largest private sector of employers. |
| **Profile*** the employer’s business/industry before approaching the employer | Demonstrate an understanding of the employer’s business/industry. Preparation will enhance credibility with the employer. It will also help to address the employer’s concerns effectively. |
| **Anticipate the concerns and questions of interested employers, and be prepared to respond** | This is not simply common sense. It shows that you value the employer as a partner and that you respect the employer’s commitment of time. Applying this strategy will help establish credibility with employers. |
| **Center recruitment activities (especially discussions with the employer) around the potential benefits to the employer** | One of the greatest benefits for participation on the committee would be to create or maintain a positive company image. Participation could provide employers access to an expanded pool of applicants having adequate technical and work-readiness skills. Participation would also validate an employer’s commitment to education. |
| **Keep in contact with employers who initially decline to participate** | Initially, some employers may decline to participate regardless of your recruitment effort. Conditions may change, however, which prompt the employer to reconsider. Sometimes, inviting these individuals to attend a committee meeting can influence their decision to participate. |

*Consider preparing yourself with the following information before you approach potential business/industry committee members:

- Product or service (description)
- Industry designation
- Size (number of employees)
- Unions represented (if applicable)
- Economic impact (on local communities)
- Company history (major milestones)
- Industry outlook (forecasts, developments)
- Related occupations
- Employment outlook
- History of involvement in partnerships
- Civic leadership (major commitments)
- Educational leadership
- Mission statement (if published)
- Strategic goals/objectives (if available)
Appointment of Committee Members

Be sure to nominate persons whose opinions are respected. The value of any recommendation of the committee will be essentially equal to the collective respect that the community, school, and administration have for the members of the committee. Consider having the members of the committee formally appointed by the appropriate administrator or school personnel.

Appointments to local Business/Industry Advisory Committees should be made for definite periods of time. One method of rotating the membership on the committee is that one-third of the members are replaced each year.

Procedures should be established to address members’ appointment, dismissals or resignations, and the possible use of alternates.

Usually the original members are selected by lot for terms of one, two, and three years, and thereafter, members are selected for a full three-year term. A second method is that members shall be appointed for one-year renewable terms. It is valuable to recruit new members regularly. New members bring new ideas and perspectives. Rotating committee membership helps prevent “burning out” valuable volunteers. Recruiting new members will also increase awareness of the program within the industry and the community.

The first two meetings of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee are crucial to the overall success of the endeavor.

Creating a positive first impression, exhibiting careful planning and skillful organization, and providing a sufficient amount of member orientation are essential.

Suggested activities for the first and second meetings are presented on the following page.
Suggested Activities for the First and Second Meeting of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee

FIRST MEETING

- A school district representative on the committee serves as temporary chairperson and appoints a temporary secretary.
- Introduce all persons present.
- The temporary chairperson explains the purpose and functions of a Business/Industry Advisory Committee and the activities with which it will be concerned.
- A representative of the board of education, possibly the Superintendent, informs committee of its relationship to the district. Distribute copies of the school board’s statement of policy.
- A representative of school district describes the technical programs in the school.
- The temporary chairperson may distribute a sample of rules of operations, such as:
  - Time and length of meetings
  - Method of notifying members
  - Method of calling special meetings
  - Method of developing agenda for meetings
  - Establish priorities
- Establish the date, time, and place of the next meeting indicating that permanent officers will be elected at that time.
- Provide a tour of facilities.

SECOND MEETING

- Temporary chairperson calls meeting to order.
- Roll call by temporary secretary.
- Approval of Minutes.
- Election of permanent officers; temporary officers serve until end of meeting.
- Adopt constitution (or operational guidelines).
- Determine permanent rules of operation (should include meeting time, place, and dates).
- Plan long-range program of work.
- Set up priority areas to be considered.
- Assess technical program components and requirements; make recommendations.
- Establish committees to assess the program components (optional).
- Arrange for Executive Committee meeting before next regular meeting.
Committee Operations

Business/Industry Advisory Committees are more likely to be effective if formal operational guidelines are established. Additionally, each Business/Industry Advisory Committee should elect or appoint a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and a secretary from its membership. It is the responsibility of these officers to work with the school facilitator to develop agendas and manage meetings.

The career and technology education teacher(s) can serve as facilitator(s) to the committee. In general, this individual conveys the concerns or priorities of the education program at the school to the Business/Industry Advisory Committee and assists its members in carrying out the established purposes. The facilitator and school administration are not voting members, but rather liaisons between the school and education program and the Business/Industry Advisory Committee.

The facilitator of the committee plays a major role in ensuring the success of the committee. The facilitator is sometimes asked to gather data to assist the committee in their reviews. The facilitator also coordinates the logistics of committee meetings.

“The facilitator must be a catalyst to constantly move the committee forward without detracting from the prestige of the Chairperson or committee members, and without assuming the direct, overt leadership of the committee.”

Source: Functions of An Advisory Committee, KSDE Technical Education Team

Committee Leadership

Chairperson
- The primary function of the Chairperson is to provide leadership at all meetings.
- The Chairperson should demonstrate public speaking and human relations skills, and the ability to organize and conduct orderly/productive meetings.
- The Chairperson should not be a member or employee of the education agency.
- The Chairperson should involve all members to participate in the decision-making process.

Vice-Chairperson
- The Vice-Chairperson is to serve in the absence of the Chairperson and will assist in the planning and development of all committee activities, including the regular meetings.

Secretary
- The Secretary is responsible for recording the minutes of each meeting and for the timely preparation and mailing of the minutes, meeting agenda, and correspondence. These documents should be sent to all interested parties.
The goals, objectives, rules, and the procedures of the committee are the operational guidelines. These were initially developed by the local education agency during the planning and organization for forming the committee. It is during the first or second meeting of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee that these operational guidelines are finalized and adopted.

The primary reason for having formal policies or written operational guidelines is to ensure continuity in how the Business/Industry Advisory Committee is created and maintained. If responsibility for managing a Business/Industry Advisory Committee should change hands within the school or education program, there should be a reference to guide a newcomer. Formal policies provide an important foundation if there are challenges to the process. (An example of committee operational guidelines is included in the Appendix, p. 33-35.)

Operational guidelines governing a Business/Industry Advisory Committee should contain the following elements:

- Persons/program the committee is to advise
- Purposes and duties
- Number of members
- Manner of selecting members
- Length of term of members
- Provision for eliminating inactive members
- School personnel representation at meetings
- Special committees
- Officers and committees and their duties
- Requirements minutes of meetings
- Number and frequency of meetings
- Length and time of meetings
- Place of meetings
- Preparation of the agenda for meetings
- Term limitation for committee membership
- Method of calling special meetings
Once the committee has identified its goals, the discussion should become more specific in terms of exactly what it is the committee will accomplish. *(The objectives and activities listed on pages 10-12 can help the committee prioritize activity.)* To be an effective advisory committee, the work of the committee must be organized. The local advisory committee may wish to categorize their activities into these (or other) objectives:

- Curriculum activities
- Community resource activities
- Recruitment activities
- Student organization activities
- Job placement activities
- Staff development activities
- Legislative or political activities
- Program review activities

*“The number of meetings is determined locally. It is recommended that a minimum of four meetings be conducted annually; goal oriented meetings will provide productive results and will ensure an efficient utilization of the time and potential of Committee members.”*

Source: *Functions of An Advisory Committee, KSDE Technical Education Team*

Well-planned meetings are the key to a successful Business/Industry Advisory Committee. The frequency of meetings should be determined by the committee members. A definite regular meeting date should be set.

Business/Industry Advisory Committee members should be notified of meetings well in advance. The date should have been set at the previous meeting. Some schools begin by sending a written invitation to all committee members and others whose presence is desired.

*Continued on next page...*
This is followed by telephone calls within one week of the meeting to remind the members of the date and confirm their attendance. Other schools use the opposite approach. They call first and follow up with a written invitation or postcard. All, however, confirm the importance of the personal contact and “memory jog” in encouraging attendance.

Along with the written invitation, a proposed agenda for the meeting should be included. These agendas are usually prepared by the chairperson in conjunction with the committee facilitator. One reason for sending an agenda is to spark interest in the meeting. Some committee chairpersons like to be fairly specific about the issues they expect to address; other prefer a very general topic guide. To encourage additional input from the members, some agendas routinely include an item for “new business”; alternatively, committee members can be asked to submit additional agenda items in advance of the meeting date. (Possible agenda items for the first two meetings are presented on page 16.)

It is the responsibility of the committee facilitator to keep minutes of the meeting; that is, if a secretary is not elected from the membership of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee. To simplify this process, some use the agenda itself as a tool for organizing their notes; others have developed special forms for the purpose. Minutes generally include a listing of those who attended the meeting, a summary of each issue that was discussed, and any decisions or recommendations that were made. (A sample form for recording minutes as well as an example of meeting minutes are included in the Appendix, p. 36-37.)

An agenda should be prepared for each scheduled meeting and distributed to members when the notice of a meeting is sent. The agenda items may include:

- Roll Call
- Introduction of guests
- Approval of previous minutes
- Financial report (if any)
- Special presentations
- Communications
- Committee reports
- Unfinished business
- New business
- Adjournment

Good documentation can be used to guide the decision-making process, track accomplishments, evaluate goal attainment, support grant applications, and report to the school’s governing body the activities of the committee.
There are a number of ways to ensure a productive meeting. All rely on some form of meeting management. It is highly recommended that the committee adopt ROBERT’S RULES OF ORDER as the parliamentary authority or similar written rules of procedure. The committee may want to select a parliamentarian to aid, advise and consult during meetings. Many schools hold relatively informal Business/Industry Advisory Committee meetings, but they follow a routine pattern. The committee facilitator may welcome the committee members and other visitors, distribute name tags and make sure that everyone has been introduced, and give a general overview of the purpose of the meeting before turning over control of the meeting to the chairperson.

“Meetings should have a definite starting and adjournment time. The Chairperson must make a strong effort to begin the meeting on time, move through the agenda in a businesslike manner allowing for sufficient discussion, and adjourn the meeting at the scheduled time.”

Source: Functions of An Advisory Committee, KSDE Technical Education Team

In informal committees, decisions or recommendations are reached by consensus. More structured meetings may prefer to take votes on important issues so that the results can be recorded in the minutes. The method that works best for a committee will depend on the personalities of the leadership and the dynamics of the group. The committee chairperson and facilitator should consistently exercise judgment and tact in steering the committee to follow the agenda, reach decisions, and make recommendations where appropriate.
An effective committee is one that knows in advance that something positive will occur as a result of its work. To have something occur, the committee must be goal directed. One of the best ways to encourage attendance and participation is to give the committee real situations to discuss.

The outcomes of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee activities will be either committee recommendations or specific committee action. If the committee initiates an activity which relates to an “advising” role, the outcome would be a recommendation for the school or program to consider. On the other hand, if the committee initiates an activity which relates to an “assisting” or “advocacy” role, the outcome would result in the committee’s carrying out some specific committee action.

**School officials should be kept informed of recommendations or actions taken or planned by the committee.**

The school officials should take the time and effort to officially review and consider the recommendations of the committee and respond accordingly. The official response to committee recommendations should be written and dispatched to the local Business/Industry Advisory Committee as soon as possible and any denial of a recommendation should include a reason and alternatives for meeting the intent of the recommendation.

Feedback on recommendations is perhaps the most important motivational tool for all who

*Continued on next page...*
are involved in a Business/Industry Advisory Committee. Committee members derive great personal satisfaction from “getting a job done”.

Feedback mechanisms can be direct or indirect, formal or informal. Some schools have developed formats that allow direct feedback from administrators and/or teachers to the Business/Industry Advisory Committee members regarding their recommendations.

Other techniques used by school administrators to give feedback to members of a Business/Industry Advisory Committee are letters of appreciation and verbal thanks at general advisory council meetings such as campus and district site-based decision meetings.

Business/Industry Advisory Committee members need to know that school personnel are, at least, listening, and that their suggestions are taken seriously.

Whatever technique is selected, the importance of recognizing the committee’s accomplishments cannot be overstated. Even if recommendations are not acted upon, it is helpful to explain the reasons.

Recognition of Committee Members

The best types of rewards and recognition are those that improve communication with the committee and increase member satisfaction. Most members are willing to attend regularly and work hard, as long as their talents are used in tasks that involve them in the program, their
recommendations are seriously considered, and they are given feedback about their recommendations and efforts.

Evaluating Committee Effectiveness

A periodic review of the local Business/Industry Advisory Committee can help the committee in determining:

- the extent to which it is accomplishing its goal
- the extent to which the recommendations and actions have strengthened the education program
- future direction and activities for the committee

This review can be either formal or informal. The goal of the review is to help the committee determine its overall effectiveness. The teacher and others can be a valuable resource in this review process.

The following two pages contain a compilation of frequently asked questions concerning developing and using a Business/Industry Advisory Committee to support career and technology education. The answers have been generalized to encompass most approved program standards.
**Frequently Asked Questions Concerning Career and Technology Education and Business/Industry Advisory Committees**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Can the technical program coordinator/instructor or school administrator serve as Chairperson (or any other appointed position) of the Business/Industry Advisory committee?</td>
<td>Program coordinators, instructors, and administrators can only serve in an “ex officio” capacity. They are non-voting members of the committee but serve important functions relative to providing advice, offering consultation, and organizing/facilitating meeting requirements. Keep in mind that one of the primary purposes for a Business/Industry Advisory Committee is to bring into the education arena a different perspective, practical expertise, and alternative points of view. Business and industry representatives must have a certain degree of “ownership” of the committee to become change agents. This is achieved through committee governance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many instructors and/or administrators should serve on the Business/Industry Advisory Committee?</td>
<td>Business and industry representatives, parents, and students should make up the majority (at least 60%) of the committee members. Limiting the number of faculty and administrators (one to four people, depending on the size of the committee) will further reinforce the sense of “ownership” on behalf of the business/industry representatives. It will also guarantee a degree of impartiality in the decision-making process. (A worksheet for selecting committee members is included in the appendix.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many meetings should be held during the school year?</td>
<td>Advisory committee meetings should be held on a regular basis. It is recommended that the committee meet three or four times a year (minimum) with special meetings called as needed. It is also recommended that a meeting schedule be developed and published. Adhering to a published meeting schedule has many benefits. Members can schedule their time in advance; they sense purpose and continuity in their efforts; and it assists in long range planning for decision making and goal attainment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Should minutes be kept for every Business/Industry Advisory Committee meeting?</td>
<td>It is important that a record be kept of all committee meetings and/or activities. An example of a “minutes” format is included in the appendix. Using this format, advisory committee recommendations can be noted in the minutes, as well as responses to any recommendation made.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix

Contents:

- Worksheet for Selecting Business/Industry Advisory Committee Members .................................. p. 29-30
- Letter Inviting a Potential Committee Member ................................................................. p. 31
- Letter of Intent .................................................................................................................. p. 32
- Example of Operational Guidelines .......................................................... p. 33-35
- **Example:** Minutes Form ......................................................................................... p. 36
- **Example:** Committee Minutes ................................................................. p. 37
# Selecting Members of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee

I. Determine the number of members to serve on the Business/Industry Advisory Committee. The committee should consist of at least 3-5 members from the community or school district area.

II. List potential members for the Business/Industry Advisory Committee. It is suggested to compile a list of a larger number of people than the desired number of members. Someone may not elect to serve on the committee when invited.

## Business/Industry Representatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Name of Business</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Nature of Business</th>
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</table>
If parents and/or students are included as members, they should be in addition to the 3-5 business and industry representatives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Name_______________________________________</td>
<td>Name________________________________________</td>
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<tr>
<td>Address____________________________________</td>
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<td>Telephone Number____________________________</td>
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</table>

III. Mail a letter to the desired number of potential members inviting them to become a member of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee. (Examples of a letter of invitation and a letter of intent are included in the appendix.)

IV. If someone from the first round of invitations does not agree to serve, repeat step III until the desired number of committee members has been reached.
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 Business/Industry Advisory Committee. By participating in this committee, you will have an opportunity to guide the Anytown High School in preparing students for entry-level jobs.

The Business/Industry Advisory Committee will meet four times during the school year. Meetings are usually held at 7:00pm in the school library. In addition, information calls upon committee members are occasionally made, as the need arises.

If you are interested in serving on this committee, 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,
Sample Letter of Intent

______YES, I wish to become a member of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee at Anytown High School.

______NO, I do not wish to become a member of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee at Anytown High School.

If YES, please provide the following information.

Check one: _____Business/Industry Representative
           _____Parent
           _____Student

Home Address: __________________________________________
              __________________________________________
              __________________________________________
              __________________________________________

Business Address: ______________________________________
                  ______________________________________
                  ______________________________________
                  ______________________________________

Phone:_____________  Phone:___________________________

Business Title:_______________________________________

Signature:________________________

Date:__________________________
Section 1  The Business/Industry Advisory Committee shall exist only during such time as it may be authorized to serve by the duly constituted school board.

Section 2  The purposes and duties of the named business/industry advisory committee shall be to:

a.___________________________________________________
b.___________________________________________________
c.___________________________________________________
d.___________________________________________________
e.___________________________________________________

Article II—Business/Industry Advisory Committee Membership

Section 1  Appointments to the Business/Industry Advisory Committee shall be made by (appointing group).

Section 2  The Business/Industry Advisory Committee shall consist of a minimum of _________ members from the related industry in the community.

Section 3  The Business/Industry Advisory Committee membership shall be selected as representative of the interests in the area or region served.

Section 4  The term of appointment for members shall begin on ____________________________

Section 5  Members shall be appointed for terms of ____________________________
Article III—Leadership

Section 1 The officers of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee shall be the chairperson, vice-chairperson, and other such officers as may be required.

Section 2 The election of officers shall be at the _______________ meeting each year. The officers shall be elected by a majority vote of the committee membership.

Section 3 The chairperson shall:

a. preside at all committee meetings;
b. appoint special subcommittees as the need arises;
c. work closely with the school staff and administration in organizing committee activities; and,
d. represent the Business/Industry Advisory Committee at all meetings of the general advisory council

Section 4 The vice-chairperson shall perform the duties of the chairperson in his/her absence.

Section 5 The technical education teacher will serve as facilitator. The facilitator shall:

a. keep records of attendance;
b. disseminate and organize minutes, meeting notices, agendas, and other documents;
c. maintain a permanent record of all committee activities.

Article IV—Meetings

Section 1 ___________ regular and/or special meetings of the Business/Industry Advisory Committee shall be held during the year.

Section 2 Written notices of committee meetings shall be mailed to all members at least ___________ days before each meeting.
### Article V—Amendments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section 1</th>
<th>These operational guidelines may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of active members at any regular committee meeting, provided that notice of such proposed change has been included in the call of the meeting.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Section 3** Meetings shall be no more than _____ hours in length unless such meetings are continued by the vote of committee membership.

**Section 4** Agendas shall be prepared and disseminated by the facilitator.

**Section 5** Standing or special subcommittees shall be appointed by the chairperson as the need arises.
Example Form

Minutes of Meeting
Business/Industry Advisory Committee

The meeting was held _____________________ at ______________________________.

The following were in attendance.

1. _____________________________ 6. ______________________________
2. _____________________________ 7. ______________________________
3. _____________________________ 8. ______________________________
4. _____________________________ 9. ______________________________
5. _____________________________ 10. ______________________________

Subject ______________________________________________
Action ______________________________________________________________________________

Subject ______________________________________________
Action ______________________________________________________________________________

Subject ______________________________________________
Action ______________________________________________________________________________

Subject ______________________________________________
Action ______________________________________________________________________________

Subject ______________________________________________
Action ______________________________________________________________________________

Date of next meeting ____________________ at _______________________________.

Special notes: ________________________________________________________________________
Example:

Minutes of Meeting
Business/Industry Advisory Committee

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

The following were in attendance:

John Moore, Chairperson  Berta Garza, Secretary  Owen Clark  Elizabeth Allen
Diana Long, Facilitator  Carl Reed  Barbara Cook  Larry Ermis
Manuel Valadez  Louise Troy  Jean Shepard

I. Review shop facilities and equipment
   Equipment needs updating to reflect emphasis on modern technology. More work stations are needed.

II. Review course of study
   With more work stations, the learning process would move more efficiently. Now students must learn one at a time.

III. Student enrollment
   The program has seen 30 percent increase in enrollment over the past three years. Industry wants more graduates. With more stations, we could boost public relations to attract more students.

IV. New trends in the occupational area
   Modern equipment and technology continue to dominate the industry.

V. Employment outlook
   Excellent

VI. New business
   May wish to begin exploring training programs in technology

VII. Recommendations
   Invite one or more representative of modern technology to join the committee to advise on trends.
   Seek donations and funds to expand modern technology.
   Invite industry representatives to speak to exploratory students.

Date of next meeting ________________ at ________________.
(month-day-year) (location)

Special notes: ___________________________________________________________________

Please review and evaluate new course syllabi distributed at the close of the meeting.
Craft Advisory Committees, developed and published by the Kansas Competency-Based Curriculum Center, 1994.

Creating Schools That Work, developed and published by the Kansas Competency-Based Curriculum Center, 1996.


The School-to-Work Sourcebook, developed and published by the Kansas Competency-Based Curriculum Center, 1995.

http://www.tea.state.tx.us/Cate/publicat.html
http://www.tea.state.tx.us/Cate/

Work-Based Learning, published by the Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education, 1996.