



North Dakota State Board for Career and Technical Education Program Advisory Committee Guide

Updated: 11/2025

The purpose of this guide is to help educators and business/industry representatives to strengthen career and technical education programs within a career pathways system through the use of advisory committees. This toolkit has been divided into sections so that members can have the option of going to the section that has the most meaning or priority for them. Many members may wish to read and work through the toolkit in its entirety.

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Purpose of Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee’s purpose is to strengthen the Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs it serves. Each advisory committee is made up of individuals with experience and expertise in the occupational field(s) that the program serves who advise educators on the design, development, implementation, evaluation, maintenance, and revision of Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs within a career pathway.

The committee exists to advise, assist, support and advocate for career and technical education. It has no legislative, administrative or programmatic authority and is **advisory only**. Advisory Committees work cooperatively with school officials in planning and carrying out committee work. Members are volunteers who share an expert knowledge of the career tasks and competency requirements for specific occupations. The committee may serve a specific CTE program or a combined committee may serve several programs.

An advisory committee is required for every approved career and technical education (CTE) program in North Dakota as it is considered to be an invaluable part of the program, and ultimately, the student’s success in a given career path.

Advisory Committees:

- **Advise** – Advisory Committees assess specific areas of the CTE program. Suggestions are designed to improve specific content areas. Such suggestions could include industry standards, the updating of curriculum, purchase of new instructional materials or equipment to modernize the classroom and to adopt safety policies. Suggestions should be presented in writing to the Administration.
- **Assist** – Advisory Committees help the Instructor or Administrator carry out specific activities. These activities could include judging competitive skills events, setting up a scholarship program or obtaining media coverage for special events.
- **Support and Advocate** – Advisory Committees promote CTE programs throughout the community. Promotion or marketing could include identifying industry and community resources, advocate programs to committees and legislators, speaking for career and technical education at board meetings, and promoting communication among education, business, and industry.

Effective Committees:

- Know the needs of the program and develop a plan of action.
- Target specific activities and set priorities for action that will have the greatest impact on the CTE program.
- Allow the community to be linked to the educational system via business, industry, and labor representatives that add expertise and resources to the CTE program;
- Promote communication among education, business, and industry regarding employment needs of the community;
- Identify new and emerging fields (both local and global) and modify existing programs;
- Strengthen programs by providing student competency lists and reviewing curriculum;
- Review student outcomes (completion rates, placement rates, and state licensing examination outcomes);
- Ensure that programs are relevant and up-to-date by assessing the equipment and facilities available and make recommendations as needed;
- Provide work-based learning experiences for learners;
- Provide training opportunities for educators;
- Advocate programs to communities and legislators and seek legislative support for career pathways if needed;
- Assist with placement of program completers; and
- Leverage community resources (equipment, facilities, materials, and broker community partnerships).

Committee Structure:

- It is required that each program have an advisory committee, but the committee may be combined to serve multiple CTE programs, with a minimum of three representatives from each CTE program, unless program standards require a separate committee to serve a specific program.
- The committee should meet a minimum of two times each year to receive state funding.
- It is recommended that the committee be gender balanced with representation from special populations.

Duties of Instructor and/or Administration

The program instructor and/or administration are keys to the effectiveness of the committee. To be an effective committee, the instructor and/or administration should believe in the philosophy of CTE and in the concept of advisory committees and consider their suggestions. The instructor and/or administration should:

- **Appoint Committee Members** – Select members from the community who can contribute technical assistance to the program.
- **Provide Information** – Provide accurate and concise information so members can make informed suggestions and decisions.
- **Provide Guidance and Support** – The committee's success depends on how well the members understand their role. New members should be informed of their responsibilities and tasks. The instructor and/or administration should also meet with the newly elected chairperson to review this guide, committee bylaws, past accomplishments, and to answer any questions the chairperson may have. If clerical or other services are available to the committee, members should be informed.
- **Expect Results** – Committee members should be informed that they are a valuable and integral part of the program. The committee meetings should be well organized and solicit the input of all members with the expectation of program improvement.
- **Recognize Outstanding Members** – Rewards should be based on actual contribution to the committee's activity. The best types of rewards or recognition are those that can stimulate productivity, improve committee interaction and increase member satisfaction. The following are some suggested ways to recognize your committee members:
 - News releases announcing member appointments
 - Invite members to visit programs
 - Invite and introduce members at CTE meetings or events
 - Send each member a letter of thanks and appreciation signed by school official at the end of the year
 - Hold an activity in honor of the committee members and present a certificate of service to each member
 - Schedule a meeting that the school administrator can attend

Establishing Your Advisory Committee

Creating the Committee

Advisory committees are established by the instructor and/or administration with technical assistance provided by State CTE staff.

Each Advisory Committee is unique, so the organizational structure and operating procedures should be developed by the committee members. The structure and procedures are generally outlined in the committee's bylaws or operating procedures. The following areas should be considered as rules and procedures are developed:

- **Size of the Committee** - Effective advisory committees are large enough to reflect the diversity of the community, business and industry, yet small enough to manage effectively. A minimum of three representatives from each CTE program is suggested if using a combined committee to serve multiple CTE programs. A minimum of five members is suggested if the committee serves a single CTE program. Committees with fewer than five members may have limited perspective, inadequate information on the career fields and too little diversity.
- **Term of Service** - A rotational, three-year term of service allows for both continuity and change. One-third of the total membership changes each year. To establish this rotation with a new committee, the members draw for one-year, two-year or three-year terms, with one-third of the committee in each category. New members are appointed as terms expire. It is suggested that members not be appointed to successive terms and that at least a one-year absence be considered before reappointment.
- **Selection of Member** - To provide effective communication between CTE programs and the community, Advisory Committee Membership should be representative of the total school service area. Members should include the following:
 - Representatives of local business and industry, including both labor and management
 - Citizens within the geographical area served by the school
 - Parents of CTE students
 - Current and former CTE students
 - Gender balance
 - Representatives of special populations

Member representation will include the viewpoints of segments of the community being served by career and technical education. A CTE instructor and a representative of the administration should serve as non-voting, consulting members. Although the administrative representative need not be present at all meetings, the CTE instructor should attend all meetings to provide information and participate in discussion. If the program has multiple instructors, one or two representative instructors may participate.

Attributes that are desirable in members include:

- Interest – Appoint motivated persons who express sincere interest in the program. Members must be willing to devote the energy and attention required to do a good job. This means being dedicated both to their occupation and to the training process.
- Availability – Members are expected to attend meetings, work on projects and work in the community on behalf of the educational program.
- Character – Appoint members who have earned the confidence of others in the community. Their good reputation will enhance the program's standing within the community.
- Skill/Experience – Appoint members who are knowledgeable about the target occupations of the career and technical education program. Usually this means selecting members who have work experience in the occupation.

Process

Members are appointed. One procedure for selecting members is for the CTE instructor and the appropriate administrator to recommend a list of possible members to the Advisory Committee Chairperson. Another procedure is for the school/institution to contact specific businesses or organizations and have them select someone from their business or organization to serve on the committee.

A confirmation letter should be sent to committee members from the Advisory Committee Chairperson or school administrator following the acceptance to serve on the committee. A news release listing committee members should be provided to local media.

The Advisory Committee Chairperson should contact the new members to welcome them to the committee and to provide them with appropriate material.

Duties of Officers

The success of the committee depends in part on the leadership ability of the officers. Election of officers needs to take place each year. Elections held during the last meeting of the previous school year are preferred. In this way, officers are experienced members and they can use the summer to plan for the next year. The first meeting of the year can be reserved for orienting new members and for establishing the **Program of Work**. Officers include the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary.

- **Chairperson** – The Chairperson’s leadership is the key to the committee’s success. Committees should be chaired by a member other than a school representative. The Chairperson should possess the following skills and characteristics:
 - Experience in business/industry in the community served by the CTE program.
 - Ability to manage meetings, plan and adhere to schedules, involve members in ongoing activities and reach closure and consensus on issues.
 - Skill in oral and written communications as well as willingness to make appearances before school and community representatives to present, explain and justify recommendations.
 - Ability to delegate responsibility as well as willingness to accept responsibility for the committee’s actions.
 - Personal characteristics such as empathy, fairness, tolerance, sound judgment, and attentiveness.

Responsibilities of the Chairperson:

- Work with committee members to plan and carry out the committee’s Program of Work.
 - Prepare meeting agendas and assist instructor in handling details regarding meetings.
 - Preside at meetings.
 - Provide accurate information to all committee members.
 - Keep committee focused and involve all members in tasks.
 - Delegate tasks and follow-up work.
 - Arrange for presenting of background information and reports to the committee.
 - Appoint standing committees and subcommittees.
 - Represent the committee at official meetings and functions.
 - Submit recommendations of the committee to appropriate administrators and groups.
 - Follow-up on committee recommendations or actions.
- **Vice Chairperson** – The skills and responsibilities of the Vice Chairperson are identical to those of the Chairperson, since the Vice Chairperson takes charge when the Chairperson is absent or cannot serve.
 - **Secretary** – The secretary records meeting minutes and performs clerical duties. Responsibilities include:
 - Take minutes at meetings, prepare and distribute minutes.
 - Mail agenda, announcements, minutes and other information to members.
 - Help assemble and distribute necessary background information to members.
 - Correspond with representatives of school and community as needed.

Orientation of Members

Orientation for all members should include:

- Review of the Program Advisory Committee Guide
- Committee’s Bylaws
- Summary of past accomplishments
- Tour of facilities
- Program presentations by the instructor(s), current students and graduates
- Program Standards

Bylaws

Effective Advisory Committees are guided by policies and rules that describe the purposes of the committee, its scope of responsibility and limitations and what is expected of committee members. These policies are written documents and are generally organized as Bylaws. Bylaws should be tailored to the needs and requirements of the program and the school or institution in which the program operates. Bylaws should be reviewed and discussed as part of the committee operation process at the beginning of each school year.

Bylaws are formal, written descriptions of how the committee operates. At a minimum, they include:

- Committee Name
- Purpose
- Members
- Officers
- Meetings
- Subcommittees
- Parliamentary Authority
- Amendment of Bylaws

Advisory Committee Members

Committee Members have the responsibility to advise, assist, support and advocate for activities designed to strengthen and modernize career and technical education. It is important that members:

- Plan and carry out a Program of Work.
- Attend and participate in all meetings.
- Suggest and develop agenda items prior to meetings.
- Help to determine committee priorities and ways to achieve them.
- Become familiar with the career and technical education programs and how they fit into the overall educational structure.
- Respect the rights and opinions of other committee members.
- Accept and carry out assignments.
- Promote career and technical education programs.

Planning and Conducting Advisory Committee Meetings

Planning Meetings

Committees must meet at least two times per year. The spring meeting should consist of a motion and approve the continuation of the program the following year. Tentative meeting dates for the year may be set by the group during development of the Program of Work. It is recommended that the dates and times of Advisory Committee meetings be publicized. The meetings are open to the public. The Committee should consult with the administrator regarding procedures that are followed in the school system.

Each meeting should focus on specific content or issues. The general planning process involves reviewing minutes of the last several meetings and the Program of Work in order to create the *meeting agenda*.

Meetings could be held at various locations. Holding meetings at the school enables committee members to gain a better picture of how the program operates. Meeting at business or industry sites gives recognition to committee members and their organizations and brings the instructor to the sites where students may be placed.

To prepare for the meeting, the Chairperson:

- Schedules meetings well in advance.
- Establishes and publicizes time, date and location of each meeting.
- Arranges for comfortable meeting room and any equipment.
- Notifies committee members and appropriate school officials in writing of meeting date and agenda. Unless sent previously, include minutes of the last meeting with the agenda.
- Arranges for refreshments, meals, special presentations, etc. if appropriate.

- Confirms all arrangements several days before the meeting.
- Calls committee members and staff to remind them of the meeting.
- Prepares materials on the issues that are on the agenda.

Conducting Meetings

- State the purpose of the meeting and review the **agenda**.
- Follow parliamentary procedures. Roberts Rules Website: www.robertsrules.com
- Encourage open and informal discussion.
- Distribute and explain work assignments throughout the committee.
- Set a tentative date for the next meeting prior to adjourning.
- Keep members informed of activities and progress.

Minutes of Meetings

Meeting minutes include:

- Decisions, recommendations or motions made by the advisory committee.
- Responses to questions or recommendations made at previous meetings.
- Assignments to be carried out following the meeting (include what is to be done, who is in charge and the completion or reporting date).
- Items to be addressed at the next meeting (both new items and tabled items from the current meeting.)

It is the duty of the Secretary to distribute meeting minutes as soon as possible following the meeting.

Program of Work

Committee members should keep two things in mind as they develop a Program of Work, the needs of the program and the requirements of the business community. To help Advisory Committees plan an effective Program of Work the following sequence of planning can be used:

Establish Priorities

Advisory Committees are usually involved in some or all of the following areas:

- Community Relations
- Community Resources
- Curriculum Review and Updating
- Career and Technical Student Organizations
- Job Placement
- Staff Development
- Legislative Process
- Program Standards
- Program Review
- Recruitment

These areas of Advisory Committee involvement are not meant to be all-inclusive, but are a starting point for discussion to determine the overall needs of the program. Four items should be considered as the committee discusses the priorities:

- Past accomplishments
- Current and future needs of the program
- Current and future needs of the community
- Student outcomes

Specify Committee Activities

Consider the following activities for each priority:

- Community Relations
 - Increase coverage of CTE programs in newspaper, radio, TV and other media.
 - Present programs to civic and service groups.
 - Establish events to recognize outstanding students, teachers and community leaders.
 - Obtain contributions to promote programs.
 - Participate in and promote school events.
 - Provide information at school board meetings.
 - Help develop and carry out a local marketing plan for career and technical education.
 - Set up and support a scholarship program.
- Curriculum Reviews and Updating
 - Identify and verify job tasks.
 - Compare content of program with job tasks.
 - Review instructional materials for technical accuracy.
 - Assist in obtaining instructional materials.
 - Suggest equipment and supplies.
 - Suggest core curriculum content.
 - Suggest safety policies.
 - Provide equipment and facilities for specialized training needs.
 - Encourage curriculum mapping.
 - Integrate the use of applied academics.
- Community Resources
 - Identify community resource people.
 - Provide tours, field trip experiences and student job shadowing opportunities.
 - Provide speakers.
 - Provide teacher externship worksites.
- Recruitment
 - Assist in recruiting potential instructors.
 - Assist in recruiting potential students.
- Career and Technical Student Organizations
 - Assist in developing competitive skill events.
 - Judge competitive skill events.
 - Sponsor student organization activities.
 - Sponsor or collect contributions of equipment and supplies for skill events.
 - Arrange for display space to promote student organizations and special events.
- Job Placement
 - Organize employer/student conferences.
 - Notify instructors of job openings for students.
 - Provide cooperative training sites for students.
 - Encourage employers to provide cooperative training sites.
 - Assist students in developing interview skills.
 - Recommend the employability skills to be included in curriculum content.
 - Conduct occupational surveys.
 - Hire Career and Technical Education graduates.
- Staff Development
 - Provide in-service activities on current business/industry methods and processes for instructors.
 - Provide skilled technicians to supplement instructor's experience.
 - Provide summer or part-time employment experience to instructors for technical upgrading.
 - Support instructor participation in career workshops or factory schools.
- Legislative Process
 - Communicate with legislators regarding Career and Technical Education needs.
 - Promote tours for legislators.
 - Promote and support legislation for Career and Technical Education.

- Program Review
 - Review program goals and objectives.
 - Participate on program evaluation teams.
 - Review the State Automated Reporting System (STARS) data for program improvement.
 - Compare program accomplishments with program objectives.
 - Compare student performance standards to business/industry standards.
 - Review adequacy of facility as a training site.
 - Evaluate quality and quantity of graduates and job placements.
 - Make suggestions for program improvement.
 - Give periodic reports to administration or school board.

This list of activities is not all-inclusive, but should give the advisory committee some ideas to consider. The functions and activities chosen for the Program of Work should match the needs of the program and community.

Develop Planning Tasks

Once committee activities have been selected, identify steps to carry out the activities. Several factors need to be considered, including time, cost, people power, and community/school support. Some of these factors may influence how the committee carries out a given activity. It may be necessary to develop alternative planning tasks to accomplish the same end. List these planning tasks in the order in which they are to be carried out. Depending on the complexity of the task, there may be several steps under each task.

Assign Responsibilities

The committee chairperson should review and discuss each planning task with the entire committee so that there is a clear understanding of each task. Individuals assigned should have a clear understanding of what is expected.

Establish Timelines

Timelines allow the person(s) assigned to a given task to plan for its completion. Each person assigned to a specific planning task should know when the task is to be completed. Status reports should be presented at advisory committee meetings.

Formulate Advisory Committee's Recommendations

A committee recommendation or a specific committee action is the desired outcome of any Program of Work. Committee recommendations should be formulated after members have had sufficient time to study and discuss a specific issue. It should be recorded in the minutes that the committee discussed the recommendations and that it approved them either by consensus or majority vote. Recommendations should be brief, clear and concise. Some recommendations may need to be preceded by a rationale which includes why such recommended changes are needed and how they would be beneficial to the program, school and/or community. The number of recommendations should be kept to a minimum. Recommendations should be submitted in writing to the school administrator for his/her review and consideration.

The committee members must remember that they have no programmatic, administrative or legislative authority. Their recommendations are advisory in nature.

Progress Review

A Program of Work evaluation should be completed periodically to determine:

- The extent to which the committee is accomplishing the Program of Work.
- The extent to which the recommendations and actions have strengthened and improved the career and technical education program.
- Future direction, functions and activities for the committee.

The evaluation and tentative direction for next year should be part of the agenda for the Advisory Committee's final meeting of the school year.

Confirmation Letter Sample

Date

Ms. Julie Smith
4930 East Avenue G
Bismarck ND 58315

Dear Ms. Smith:

Thank you for your willingness to serve on the Advisory Committee for the _(program area)_ program. Your knowledge and contribution will be valuable as we work to enhance the program.

Your three-year term will begin on July 1, 20___. We will hold _____ meetings a year with the first meeting scheduled for August 1 at 7 p.m. at the school gym. I would like to meet with you prior to our first meeting to review the agenda and other materials. Please call me at your earliest convenience at ###-###-#### so we can set up a time.

We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Advisory Committee Chairperson

Meeting Notice Sample

Date

Ms. Julie Smith
4930 East Avenue G
Bismarck ND 58315

Dear Ms. Smith:

The next meeting of the _(program) Advisory Committee will be _(date) at _(location and time)_. Enclosed is a copy of the minutes from the last meeting and an agenda for the upcoming meeting. If you have any questions, please give me a call.

Please notify me by _(date) if you are unable to attend the meeting.

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Sincerely,

Chairperson

Bylaws Sample

_____(Name of Program)_____ Advisory Committee Bylaws

Article I: Name

The name of this Advisory Committee shall be _____.

Article II: Purpose

The purpose of this Advisory Committee shall be to advise, assist, support and advocate for the _____ program on matters that will strengthen instruction and expand learning opportunities for students.

Article III: Members

- Section 1. Members shall be selected and appointed by the Board and/or Administration. The current Advisory Committee may suggest potential members.
- Section 2. Members shall represent a cross-section of the industry or occupation for which training is provided and the community served by the program. (Instructor(s) and/or administrator(s) may serve as ex officio members of the committee.)
- Section 3. Member terms will be three years with one-third of the membership appointed each year. No member will serve consecutive terms. A former member may be reappointed after a one-year absence from the committee.
- Section 4. Membership terms will begin immediately following the final meeting of the school year.

Article IV: Officers

- Section 1. Officers shall be a Chairperson, Vice Chairperson and Secretary. These officers shall be the Executive Council for the Advisory Committee. The duties of Officers shall be those commonly ascribed to these offices.
- Section 3. Officers shall be elected by simple majority at the final meeting of the school year and shall assume their offices immediately following the meeting. Officers may be reelected.

Article V: Meetings

- Section 1. The Advisory Committee shall comply with the Department of Career and Technical Education program requirements for minimum number of meetings. Additional meetings shall be scheduled as necessary to accomplish the Program of Work.
- Section 2. A quorum shall consist of a simple majority of appointed members.
- Section 3. Decisions will commonly be made by consensus. A formal vote shall be taken when a decision is to be forwarded to the instructor or administration as a recommendation.

Article VI: Subcommittees

- Section 1. Subcommittees shall be appointed by the Chairperson as needed to accomplish the Program of Work.
- Section 2. Subcommittees shall be of the size necessary to carry out their assigned tasks.
- Section 3. Subcommittees shall elect their own chairpersons.

Article VII: Parliamentary Authority

Except as otherwise provided in its Bylaws and standing rules, the Advisory Committee shall be governed in its proceedings by the current edition of Robert's Rules of order, Newly Revised.

Article VIII: Amendment of Bylaws

These Bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the Advisory Committee by a two-thirds (2/3) vote, provided that the amendment has been submitted to Advisory Committee members in writing at least thirty (30) days in advance of the meeting.

Bylaws adopted __ (date) __

Bylaws amended __ (most recent amendment date) __

Initial Meeting Agenda Sample

Family & Consumer Sciences Education Advisory Committee

Central Public School, Room 7

September 19, 20__

7:00 p.m.

Call to Order	School Representative
Welcome/Introduction of Members	Administrator
Role of the Advisory Committee	School Representative
Overview of FACS Program	FACS Instructor
Description of Total Education Program	Administrator
New Business	School Representative
• Appoint Bylaws Subcommittee	
• Discussion of a Program of Work	
Next Meeting Date, Time and Location	
Adjournment	

Regular Meeting Agenda Sample

Marketing Education Advisory Committee

Central Public School, Room 7

October 19, 20__

7:00 p.m.

Call to Order
Approval of Minutes
Old Business
• Report of Recommendations Committee
• Program of Work Update
• Other
New Business
• Establish Subcommittee on new technology
• Assess equipment and facilities
• Other
Next meeting date, time and location
Adjourn

Meeting Minutes Sample

Health Sciences Education Occupations Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
South High School, Room B
October 7, 20__

Members Present: Helen Chen, Charles Dunn, Mattie Welk, Karen Smith and William Johnson

Members Absent: Elizabeth Alexander, Brad Luftus

Others Present: Rodney Beckman, True Value Manager

Call to Order: Chairperson William Johnson called the meeting to order and expressed appreciation for attendance and participation. He stressed the importance of the committee's continuing support and assistance. Introductions were made.

Minutes: Minutes of the last meeting were approved as submitted.

Unfinished Business: The committee discussed the need for more up-to-date computers in the health labs. The committee feels that students should be taught on the kind of equipment they will be using in the work place. Helen Chen volunteered to do some research and perhaps have Dr. Smith, Director of Nursing at the South Medical Center, present at the next meeting.

New Business: Chairperson Johnson asked that the committee look at and make a suggestion regarding adding more rooms for the lab. After a lengthy discussion, it was postponed for the next meeting.

The next meeting will be November 10, 20__ at the South High School, Room B at 7 p.m.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m.

Karen Smith, Secretary