

School District of Philadelphia
Office of Career and Technical Education
Occupational Advisory Committee Requirements, Goals and Expectations

What are Occupational Advisory Committees (OAC)?

The OAC plays an important role in strengthening and supporting Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs by providing specific advice and guidance for each of their respective programs. The main purpose of an OAC is to make recommendations for program improvement and provide technical assistance to assure the most up-to-date curriculum content and appropriate applications of technology are being implemented in the CTE program.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) regulation governing CTE – *Chapter 4 - Academic Standards and Assessment* – requires the establishment of local advisory committees and occupational advisory committees as a condition for CTE program approval by the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Bureau of Career and Technical Education (BCTE).

Who are the Members of the OAC?

OAC members representing business, industry, labor and the general public bring a unique perspective to education and training programs. They provide a viewpoint, which is invaluable to the CTE program. OAC members serve in an advisory capacity only. The committees assist in assuring the relevance of the CTE program to the community and increase public awareness.

Who Should be Considered to Serve on the OAC?

Each OAC should have representation in the following areas:

- Representatives of business, industry, and labor groups
- Coordinator of the local workforce development center and other business education partnerships
- Employees and employers in the occupation for which CTE program is training students.
- Owners of small businesses
- Professional and technical employees, workforce development members, and/or their staff
- Parents, students (non-voting), graduates and a member of the public
- Skilled employees, including those who are self-employed
- Staff members of other educational agencies and institutions
- Representatives of racial and ethnic populations from the community served

What is the Schedule of Meetings Throughout the School Year?

It is required that a minimum of two (2) meetings per school year take place, with at least one of them at the school so that committee members can review the program’s classroom and lab area. Although it is not recommended, meetings may take place via conference or video, with the

understanding that at least one meeting take place at the school. Meeting times vary according to the schedule of the school, school administration, teacher and the other committee members.

The first meeting of the school year must take place prior to December (Fall) and May (Spring). Topics of focus that should be discussed at each meeting are as follows:

Fall Meeting: Equipment, Program of Study (POS) review, facilities, safety checklist, student employment/internship opportunities and employment outlook.

Spring Meeting: Review recommendations from previous meeting, program performance data and program activities.

What are the Goals and Objectives of the OAC?

- Provide recommendations to update, modify, expand, and improve the quality of the CTEI program
- Support and strengthen the relationship between business, industry, the community and education
- Make recommendations to strengthen and expand the curriculum and provide assistance in implementing these recommendations
- Articulate long-term goals and objectives of the CTE program to parents, employers and the community
- Assist in identifying needs, determining priorities, and reviewing and evaluating curriculum

What are Specific Areas that OACs Can Assist?

Student Recruitment

- Speak at student orientation meetings
- Participate in school and community career fairs
- Help conduct events recognizing students, employers, or others active in the occupation
- Assist in the development of admissions criteria for the occupational program

Student Placement

- Identify the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to compete in the job market
- Place students in part-time jobs during the school year or summer months
- Conduct mock interviews with students to prepare them for actual job interviews
- Participate in licensing/certification examinations (industry certification and/or NOCTI)
- Help program graduates secure jobs
- Provide work-based learning opportunities to assist in the transition from school to work
- Assist in the development of articulation agreements with post-secondary institutions

Curriculum Development

- Review the CTE program's philosophy, mission statement and goals
- Assure curriculum, course content, student competencies, and safety procedures meet current industry standards
- Recommend curriculum modifications or new course offerings as needed
- Inform teachers of new methods, procedures, products and technologies in the workplace
- Give classroom presentations/demonstrations
- Promote student visits to work sites in the community
- Provide supplies (such as raw materials, finished products, charts or posters) for exhibit or instructional purpose
- Assist in shadowing experiences and professional observation days
- Promote qualified program graduates as candidates for higher education
- Assess student performance on skill tests (e.g. NOCTI)

Facilities and Equipment

- Identify facility and equipment needs
- Help obtain needed equipment and supplies

Staff Development

- Offer specialized training programs for teachers
- Identify community resource persons to assist career and technical teacher in the classroom
- Foster communications among teachers and employers to establish cooperative relationships between education and industry
- Help teachers find summer employment related to their teaching assignment
- Provide internship opportunities, job shadowing, or professional education activities in industry for CTE teachers

Public Relations

- Foster positive communication between the school and community
- Distribute information describing the CTE program area
- Recommend effective ways to communicate with parents and provide information on the occupational program and related career opportunities
- Publicly commend business, employers, unions or other organizations making significant contributions to the CTE program and students

Community Needs

- Assess student interest and community support for CTE
- Evaluate the program with respect to employer requirements and individual graduates' skill accomplishments
- Conduct surveys to identify present and anticipated employer needs and job availability

- Identify the economic and workforce needs of the community
- Represent the business community in the strategic planning process

Legislative and Financial Involvement

- Support the adoption and implementation of state and federal legislation to strengthen career and technical education
- Establish scholarships or other financial assistance for outstanding graduates who wish to continue their education or training
- Review and recommend budget requests for equipment and supplies

CTSO Involvement

- Support the efforts of career and technical student organizations
- Review criteria for student contests and awards
- Judge contests held by career and technical student organizations
- Secure prizes or equipment donations for contests
- Attend special events for career and technical education

OAC Self-Evaluation – How Does Your OAC Measure Up?

1. Does the OAC consistently schedule a minimum of two meetings per year?
2. After each meeting, are meeting minutes being maintained and kept on file by the CTE teacher? Are the minutes from the previous meeting reviewed by the OAC for accuracy?
3. Does the OAC have a diverse membership on your OAC? Are all of the members currently working in industry?
4. Do the OAC members attend meetings regularly and are there a minimum of 7-10 industry members present at each meeting?
5. Does the OAC members assist with NOCTI testing particularly serving as an evaluator for the Performance exam?
6. Does the CTE teacher invite OAC members to school events and do they attend?