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**ABSTRACT** Intended for persons appointed to local advisory councils or committees and for educators and/or administrators of vocational, educational, or technical education, this booklet is designed to serve as a brief guide and initial source of information on local advisory councils. The first section, Overview, is a general discussion of vocational and technical education and the requirements of the 1976 legislation pertaining to councils. Other sections cover types of councils, counsel functions and activities, membership (size, qualifications, and selection/appointment), effective operation (leadership, meetings, agenda, scope of responsibility, supportive service, formalized procedures, term of membership, and liaison by designated educator), and the role of the educator in working with advisory councils. Information on other councils and a brief bibliography are also included. (HD)

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THE Little BOOK

ON

Local VOC/TEC Education  
Advisory Councils: A Guide

March, 1977

Columbia, S. C.

By: The South Carolina Advisory Council on  
Vocational and Technical Education

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## INTRODUCTION

This booklet is intended for persons appointed to local advisory councils or committees and for educators and/or administrators of vocational education or technical education. It is not an exhaustive, inclusive source of information on the purpose, structure, creation and operation of local advisory councils, but may serve as a brief guide and as an initial source of information on the topic. Further, it should be adopted, adapted, modified or revised by individual councils or individuals to their particular needs. Other references are also cited which would provide additional information to persons interested in the topic of advisory councils on vocational or technical education.

The State Advisory Council on Vocational and Technical Education which produced this guide has specified responsibilities under the federal legislation for vocational education. The State Advisory Council, however, is interested in encouraging the effective operation of local advisory councils. For additional information on the State Advisory Council, or to obtain copies of any reports issued by the State Advisory Council, call or write the office.

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## OVERVIEW



This is a long tradition of involvement of local advisory groups in vocational education and also in technical education. This pattern of citizen involvement has been given new impetus recently. If it is true that "the past is but a prologue to the future," it may be helpful to be aware of the precedents in this area.

### Vocational Education

Vocational education teachers at the secondary and adult level have utilized local advisory committees with varying degrees of intensity through the past three or four decades. Vocational agriculture teachers may have been among the earliest programs to successfully capture the advantages of advice from local committees. By the time of the late forties to early fifties, the concept of local advisory committees was being regularly encouraged by state supervisory personnel and

by vocational teacher education departments at the colleges. Since this was usually an option left to the individual teacher, committees were organized in some communities and not organized in other instances.

With the emergence of the first of the area vocational education centers in the mid. 1960's, the competent directors of these centers almost immediately began to create curriculum advisory committees and sometimes committees concerned with the overall operation of the vocational centers. As other vocational centers were built and opened to the students, these too usually established local advisory committees, although there was no direct requirement to do so.

At the state level, the director of vocational education established a state advisory council between 1963 and 1968. Following passage of the Vocational Education Amendments of 1968, the separately created State Advisory Council on Vocational Education was appointed by the Governor, and the predecessor advisory committee was dissolved. From 1963 to 1968, there was no requirement for local advisory committees, only encouragement. From 1968 until 1977, there was no requirement for local advisory committees, but there was a stipulation in the application for federal and state funds that each school district submitted to the State Department of Education, that it be signed by the local advisory committee

representative. Moreover, some of the details for specific occupational areas in the local application requested information on local advisory committees. These actions strongly encouraged local advisory committees.

### Technical Education

The technical education system was conceived in 1961, one and one-half decades ago. From the beginning, there has been active utilization of the advice of community leaders through appointment of advisory committees. Since the administrative responsibility for the overall direction of most of the centers/colleges rests with a local area commission in most instances, the emphasis has been on craft, or curriculum committees. Some institutions have also created overall advisory committees with representation from each of the craft committees.

Within the technical education system, the emphasis and priority given to maintaining useful advisory committees has tended to rise and wane, depending on the importance attached to that activity locally. In the Fall of 1976, the State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education reasserted the importance of maintaining active advisory committees.

At the State level, technical education does not have an advisory committee other than the State Advisory Council on Vocational and Technical Education. The State Board for

Technical and Comprehensive Education does rely on the concept of advice from others, in that the Board's operational pattern of expanded committees brings many other persons into the decision making process.



### General Comments

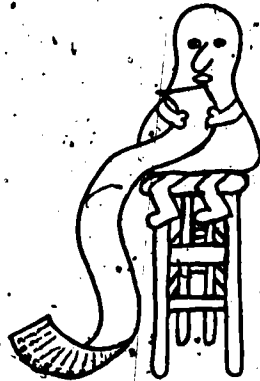
Vocational education, as a broad term used here to encompass vocational and technical education, has perhaps been more aggressive than any other segment of public education in utilizing advisory committees. The excellent publication produced by the American Vocational Association (AVA) in 1969 entitled "*The Advisory Committee and Vocational Education*," contains some of the historical development and many of the reasons for use of advisory committees. Virtually all of that publication is still valid today. Regardless of the extent to which advisory committees

have been utilized in the past, even more emphasis will be placed here in the future, and in ever widening facets of education.

### Committee and Council

The reader will find the words "council" and "committee" used interchangeably in the publication.

Committee used to be the preferred term, but since council is used in the new legislation, this will probably be the common term in the future.



### Requirements

The 1976 legislation for vocational education will become effective in 1977, and be in force at least through

1982, unless amended prior to 1982. Among the myriad of provisions of that law (Public Law 94-482) is included the following: Section 105 -

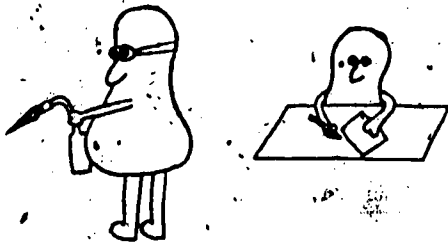
*"(g). (1) Each eligible recipient receiving assistance under this Act to operate vocational education programs shall establish a local advisory council to provide such agency with advice on current job needs and on the relevancy of courses being offered by such agency in meeting such needs. Such local advisory councils shall be composed of members of the general public, especially of representatives of business, industry, and labor; and such local advisory councils may be established for program areas, schools, communities, or regions, whichever the recipient determines best to meet the needs of that recipient."*

This requires, for the first time, specifically that local school districts will have local advisory committees to remain eligible for federal funds for vocational education.

The State Board for Technical and Comprehensive Education is also dedicated to the desirability of maintaining active advisory councils at the local level.

## TYPES OF COUNCILS

While there is considerable confusion and ambiguity regarding focal advisory councils, they can usually be regarded in two groups: those dealing with certain types of programs, and those concerned more broadly with institutions or school districts.



### Craft or Curriculum

This is the type of advisory council which usually considers the educational program of a specific area, such as agriculture, or welding, or any other specific program. While usually the council will relate to a single program in one institution or school, it may function for a broader area such as county-wide. A committee of this type may encompass one or more secondary programs, and also be advisory to a technical institution in the same geographic area. Other titles may be used, including program committee, or a more specific

title used, such as computer science council, or automotive mechanics advisory council, for example.

### Institution

Some councils are constituted to proffer advice on the overall operation such as for an area vocational education center, for example. These committees would encompass the operation and needs of an institution, school, center, or district, and may be identified by any of several names. A common designation is "\_\_\_\_\_center advisory committee" but may be called a steering committee, or given some other designation.

A common arrangement is for the chairperson of each curriculum committee to be a representative to the institution committee. As chairpersons of their respective curriculum committees, they would be advisory to the teacher(s) or department. When sitting in on the institution committee, these same persons would then be advisory to the institution's administration.

The role, functions, and characteristics of these two general types of committees are different, thus the necessity to clarify the types.

### PURPOSE

To provide a link between the school or institution and the community that will assist the school or institution in



maintaining and improving desirable vocational or technical education programs.

This is true regardless of the type of committee, whether it is for a single teacher program or responsible to several institutions in an area. Only the functions or activities will vary according to the situation.

## FUNCTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

### Craft or Curriculum Council

#### Assist Educators by -

1. Reviewing and advising on relevancy of course content
2. Advising on the adequacy of facilities and equipment
3. Assisting in obtaining available equipment
4. Arranging summer employment of teachers to up-date qualifications

5. Advising on the changing nature of job requirements in the occupational field
6. Providing plant tours and field experiences for classes or students
7. Suggesting qualified persons for teacher vacancies or as substitutes
8. Serving as substitute teachers, consultants or resource personnel
9. Evaluating programs.

#### Assist Students by -

1. Supporting student organizations
2. Providing training stations for cooperative work experiences
3. Assisting in student selection and in providing placement for program completers
4. Being visible and supportive to students during special events

5. Sponsoring student contest, prizes or scholarships.

Assist the Community and School by

1. Providing objective evaluations and recommendations
2. Making such recommendations as the council sees appropriate
3. Advising on additional programs needed or closing of superfluous programs
4. Providing better communications

by

- a) Carrying the story of their programs to community members and political leaders
- b) Serving as speakers to school, community or business groups
- c) Advising their employees of the availability of programs

- d) Submitting council recommendations to higher authorities

- e) Encouraging community participation in special events, such as open schools, awards presentations, etc.

5. Identifying community and business/industry needs

6. Identifying information from other sources with short range impact on programs.

Institutions or Steering Committee

Assist Administrators by

1. Advising on the overall priorities for facilities and equipment
2. Assisting in identifying sources and in helping to obtain available equipment

3. Advising on the changing nature of occupational requirements in the area
4. Providing plant tours and field experiences for students
5. Suggesting qualified persons for vacant teaching positions or for substitute teaching.
6. Identifying program priorities and needs
7. Providing objective, periodic evaluations, with recommendations presented to proper authorities
8. Supporting, and encouraging the administration and faculty.

Assist Educators by -

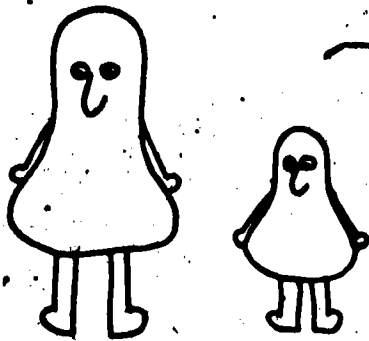
1. Assisting in providing for updating occupational competency through periodic work experience
2. Helping to plan special events

3. Serving as guest speakers or consultants.

Assist the Community by -

1. Helping to turn possible criticism into constructive advice
2. Reviewing plans for future changes or modification of programs
3. Providing objective evaluations and recommendations
4. Advising on programs needed or closing of superfluous programs
5. Identifying community and business/industry needs
6. Encouraging community participation in special events at the institution/school
7. Contributing in other ways identified by the council.

## MEMBERSHIP



### 1. Size

The size of the advisory council is left to the appointing authority. Consideration should be given to the functions of the committee, the size of the vocational program, and the number of groups that should be represented. Generally a craft or curriculum committee consists of 5 to 7 persons, while an institution committee may be larger. A committee above 12 to 14 persons may become less functional than smaller committees, due to group interaction characteristics.

### 2. Qualifications

The membership of a craft or curriculum committee should include lay people (non-educators) who

possess knowledge and work experience in the program area for which they will serve. One suggestion is that the committee include employers and employees, including a recent graduate of the program area.

The membership of an institution council should also be primarily composed of non-educators, as indicated in the current legislation. Rather than representing specific occupational areas, it may be of greater value for the members of this committee to be persons of influence and respect in the community.

### 3. Selection - Appointment

The advisory council members for craft committees should be appointed by the administration. A majority of the members may be from nominations by the instructor or department head, but to avoid 'in-breeding', additional members nominated by the administration, board members, or from other nomination sources should be included.

The council members for institution advisory councils should be appointed by the board (if a local board exists) from nominations made by the administration. Other sources of nominations should not be overlooked, however, and these may include trade groups, business