



# **CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION LEADERSHIP CONNECTIONS:**

*A Guide To Effective  
Working Relationships*



THE MISSION OF THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IS TO ACADEMICALLY PREPARE CHILDREN AND ADULTS TO SUCCEED AS PRODUCTIVE CITIZENS. THE DEPARTMENT SEEKS TO ENSURE THAT THE TECHNICAL SUPPORT, RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES ARE IN PLACE FOR ALL STUDENTS, WHETHER CHILDREN OR ADULTS, TO RECEIVE A HIGH QUALITY EDUCATION.



January, 2013

Dear Colleagues:

We are fortunate to have almost 80 career and technology centers (CTCs) located throughout Pennsylvania, offering hundreds of career and technical education (CTE) programs to our students. These programs are designed to meet a dual mission -- developing students with college readiness skills and a career path.

The foundation of a successful CTE program starts with local leadership. We are pleased to share with you this resource guide on building and maintaining strong working relationships among CTC administrators, governing bodies, and sending school administrators. It contains practical and useful tips and advice from education leaders across the Commonwealth.

We look forward to continuing to work closely together to achieve a shared vision for the future of Pennsylvania CTE: to develop student who are college ready, career skilled, and fueled for innovation.

Sincerely,

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## Introduction

*“The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual.”*

—Vince Lombardi

In 2012, under the direction of the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s (PDE’s) Bureau of Career and Technical Education (BCTE), the Meeder Consulting Group (MCG) set out to identify and document key factors that contribute to a positive working relationship among career and technology center (CTC) directors, Joint Operating Committees (JOCs), and sending-school superintendents.

To gather input, we conducted a series of interviews and focus groups with CTC directors, superintendents, and JOC members who volunteered to share their insights and experiences. We also reviewed resources and met with leaders and staff from BCTE, the Pennsylvania Association of Career and Technical Administrators (PACTA), the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA), and the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA). Much of the input has been combined and condensed, and therefore not attributed to specific individuals. However, in cases where information was specific to a CTC or individual, we cited the names to lend credibility.

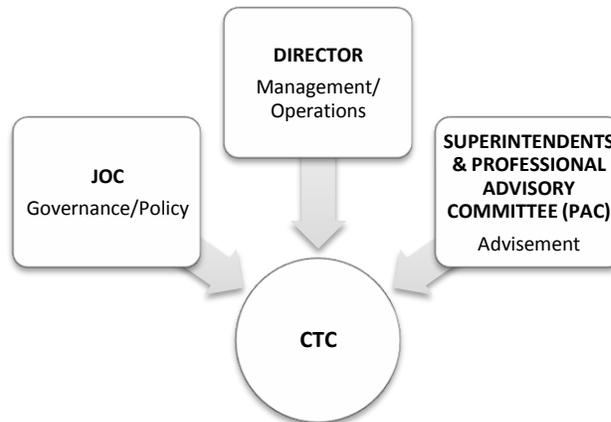
The following guidebook is the result of those efforts. The purpose of this guidebook is to share ideas and practical examples of “promising practices” that CTC leadership stakeholders can implement to improve their working relationships. In summary, these practices include:

- Open, transparent, ongoing communication
- Sharing resources (financial, programmatic, etc.)
- Collaborative approaches to challenges
- Flexibility and coordination
- Common understanding of purpose of, and goals for, the CTC

Although the focus of this guidebook is on sharing promising practices rather than legal and statutory requirements, it does make sense to begin with a brief overview of career and technical education (CTE) in Pennsylvania and the respective responsibilities of the CTC director, JOC, and superintendents.

At almost 80 CTCs throughout the Commonwealth, and also through hundreds of programs offered through typical high schools, CTE programs are built around high expectations for student learning. These expectations include the development of strong reading, writing, numeracy, problem-solving, and teamwork skills, in addition to the practical and tangible career skills that motivate students and help them develop a career path for future education and work.

The responsibilities of the JOC and the superintendent of record are defined by state statute and the Pennsylvania School Code. A school's JOC procedures may provide specific direction about additional responsibilities. Although the specific responsibilities may vary from school to school, in general, the roles of the director, the JOC, and the superintendents can be classified as such:



This guidebook has three sections, each targeted to a specific audience: CTC directors, superintendents, and JOC members. However, stakeholders may find it helpful to review all three sections to gain insight and perspective into the responsibilities and challenges associated with each role.

## SECTION 1: Guidance for CTC Directors

### 1.1 Building a Strong Foundation

*“I forgot to shake hands and be friendly.  
It was an important lesson about leadership.”  
—Lee Iacocca*

As a CTC director, the relationships that you establish with your JOC members and sending-school superintendents will set the tone for your ongoing professional interactions. Although you may not have control over who your leadership stakeholders are, you do have the opportunity to build strong, supportive working relationships.

#### **Get to Know Your Leadership Stakeholders**

Some CTC directors have the advantage of working with an established JOC and longstanding superintendents. However, in some cases, board appointees and superintendents may change each year. In either situation, getting to know your stakeholders’ individual backgrounds and priorities can strengthen the working relationship.

For each of your leadership stakeholders, take a moment to consider:

- **Professional background** – How might this person’s professional background impact their opinion of CTE? What type of experience or expertise can they contribute?
- **Personal background** – What type of experience, if any, has this person had with CTE?
- **Priorities** – What are the top issues for this person’s school district or board? What are his/her personal priorities?

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#### *Helpful Hint*

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*Because JOC members and superintendents are probably very busy, consider scheduling a one-on-one meeting either immediately before or after a regular JOC or PAC meeting when they will already be traveling to your site.*

#### **Hold In-Person, Individual Meetings**

Veteran CTC directors recommend holding regular, in-person meetings with the JOC and sending-school superintendents. This helps you remain informed about issues taking place in the local districts, because these issues will likely “spill over” into discussions about the technical center. Specific suggestions for effective communications are listed in the following section.

#### ***Meet Regularly with the JOC Chair and the Superintendent of Record***

Two of the most critical leaders with whom a CTC director must build strong working relationships are the JOC chair and the superintendent of record. Typically, these roles shift on a yearly basis, so the CTC director should meet as soon as possible with the new leader to discuss working styles, expectations, and scheduled preparatory meetings.

At **Erie County Technical School (ECTS)**, Director Aldo Jackson and the JOC chair meet each month on the Friday before the board meeting to review the agenda and discuss other pertinent items.

#### *Give Personalized Attention to New Stakeholders*

When there is a new leadership stakeholder, either a JOC member or a superintendent, it is critical to get on their calendar as soon as possible for an individual meeting or small group meeting. Ideally, if time permits, these should be one-on-one sessions and include a school tour. This provides an opportunity to establish camaraderie and to gather in-depth feedback.

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#### *Helpful Hint*

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*If you have a culinary program at your CTC, consider inviting your JOC members and superintendents to join you for a meal, individually or in small groups. This provides a great opportunity to meet informally while showcasing the work of your culinary program. If time permits, include a school tour and give the JOC member(s) and/or superintendent(s) the opportunity to observe and talk with students from their district.*

#### **Host an Orientation Session or Retreat**

Because the agendas for regular board meetings are often full, one approach to building deeper awareness and understanding of the CTC is to host an orientation session or retreat. This more intensive session is particularly useful when there are several new JOC members who need to learn background information about the CTC before delving into the monthly meetings and decisions that are considered there. An orientation session can range from an informal one-on-one meeting, to a two-hour session with several new members, to a full-day or multiday off-site retreat.

Obviously, the best-case scenario is that the JOC members or superintendents attend in person. However, even if a superintendent or JOC member is unable to attend the session, providing a binder of CTC school information would be a helpful reference tool. Include a copy of your budget, Articles of Agreement, a school Fact Sheet or Highlights sheet, and other information that projects a positive image of your school, your programs, and your students. *(More information on written orientation documentation is provided later.)*

At **Somerset County CTC**, a JOC orientation is held every year in December/January when new JOC members are appointed. The session, which is open to all JOC members, is typically scheduled as a three-hour meeting.

At **Indiana County Technical Center (ICTC)**, director Carol Fry organized a sending-school "Superintendent's Retreat" in the fall of 2010. This one-day, offsite event enabled ICTC administrators to provide a "CTC 101" briefing. Each superintendent received a binder of background information about ICTC, including a report showing trend data on their students' performance on the PSSA and NOCTI assessments. Other agenda items included the following: adult education, intergenerational students, recruitment, enrollment, retention, BCTE Technical Assistance Program, and Perkins performance data. During the retreat, the superintendents talked about various issues that impact the students that they share.

Although the group was not able to cover all of the items on the planned agenda, they agreed to continue the conversation at future monthly PAC meetings. The binder is a valuable tool that they continue to expand and reference throughout the year.

The administrators at **Forbes Road CTC** hold two general sending school stakeholder meetings each year in addition to monthly PAC meetings. Invitations are issued to superintendents, principals, assistant principals, guidance counselors, and special education/transition coordinators. The agenda includes: Director's Report, Program Information, NOCTI, Public Relations (Open House, Recruitment, National Technical Honor Society, Scholarships, Student Organization Reports, Senior Certificate Ceremony), Special Populations Report, Guidance Report, School-to-Work Report, and Open Discussion.

### **Stay Abreast of Local District Issues**

Being aware of local district activities will help you to better understand the positions that your leadership stakeholders may take and help you to anticipate any concerns.

For each district, consider the following:

- **Demographics** – What is the socioeconomic situation in the district? Have there been any significant changes?
- **Business environment** – Have there been any new businesses entering or leaving the district? Be sure to know the top five employers in each of your sending-school districts. Solicit information from your cooperative education coordinator, if necessary.
- **Financial situation** – Is the district managing its financial resources effectively?
- **Political environment** – What type of local leadership is in place?
- **“Hot” issues** – Are the school board and superintendents dealing with any controversial issues or negative press?
- **“Good press”** – Have there been any recent accomplishments in the district (academic/ sports/clubs/etc.)?

### **Serve as a Resource for Local Districts**

To further strengthen relationships and build awareness among local districts, consider ways that the CTC can serve as a resource. For example:

- Invite sending school boards to hold a meeting or work session at the CTC
- Offer assistance on projects that can be completed using CTE tools or equipment, such as building shelves or printing newsletters
- Attend a school board meeting for each of your sending-school districts and provide them with information about your school.
- Consider having a student-presenter to talk about their specific CTE program.

In 2011, **Eastern Westmoreland CTC** hosted a professional development day for all three of its sending districts plus the CTC. In addition to the main professional development program, every teacher from the partner sending schools had the opportunity to tour the facility and listen to presentations from the CTE instructors. In addition, sending-school math teachers met with related CTE instructors.

In **Erie County**, the participating school districts have come to rely on the technical school to provide other services as well. ECTS is the local agent for an alternative education program and a special education transitions training center. Both programs are operated and supervised by ECTS staff.

### **Show Appreciation/Recognition**

Keep in mind that your leadership stakeholders are usually serving on your committees without pay. As volunteers, they will continue to serve if they believe that their experience and talents are used effectively.

The following examples<sup>1</sup> are ways in which you may choose to show appreciation for and recognition of the participation and contributions of your leadership stakeholders:

- Welcome letter to new stakeholders
- Public recognition at meetings and school functions
- Letters of appreciation
- List leadership stakeholder names in school publications and on the school's website
- Post the names of stakeholders prominently in the school or post their pictures in the board meeting room or common school area
- Invite stakeholders to school functions and give them the opportunity to speak, if appropriate
- Provide certificates, plaques, or other mementos upon completion of members' terms

**York County School of Technology** holds an annual school board recognition dinner in January for JOC representatives and alternates.

**Lehigh Career & Technical Institute (LCTI)** holds a holiday dinner every year prior to the December JOC meeting. The meal is prepared and served by the Culinary Arts students. Invitees include the local community college president, the IU executive director, JOC members, sending school superintendents and spouses. At the event, the director recognizes perfect attendance of JOC members with a certificate and a small gift made in a CTE program at the school.

### **Specific Considerations for Relationships with JOC Members**

As director, you are accountable to the JOC. Keep in mind that JOC members often come from diverse backgrounds and experiences. Some of them may have been CTE students, perhaps at a time when CTE was just focused on immediate preparation for careers after high school, not for CTE postsecondary training. Other JOC members may not have had any direct experience with CTE except one or two "shop" or "home economics" courses.

As members of their sending district's school board, JOC members also have other stakeholders to respond to, including their home school board, school

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from the BCTE local advisory handbook

administrators, superintendents, teachers, parents, and community members. Keep in mind that they may represent very diverse districts, with a range of socioeconomic conditions and student populations.

Building strong working relationships with JOC members begins with getting to know them and understanding their backgrounds, views, and opinions. Some discussion questions for the CTC directors and JOC members could be:

- What do you think are the general strengths of CTE, and what are the key challenges facing CTE?
- From what you've heard in the past, how do you think our CTC is perceived by the general community, by students and parents, and by educators in the sending district you represent?
- Why did you accept the nomination to be a JOC member, and do you have any specific objectives that you would like to pursue?
- What kind of activities and approaches do you think make for an effective board experience?

The following suggestions are additional examples of opportunities to build relationships with JOC members:

- **Send a welcome letter to new JOC members** – Include the schedule of upcoming meetings and an invitation to take a tour of the CTC.
- **Invite JOC members to school functions** – Include JOC members on the invitation list for all school events.
- **Visit JOC members at their jobs or businesses** – Meet with JOC members in their work settings to get a sense of their professional roles, responsibilities, and working styles.
- **Maintain a directory of current and former JOC members** – Include contact information, with details about their professional backgrounds/occupations. This can be a useful resource when you need specific program guidance, resources, and industry contacts.

Because of the time constraints associated with monthly JOC meetings, you may opt to invite JOC members to participate on a JOC subcommittee. Although not all members may have time to volunteer additional hours, those who do can serve as a vital sounding board for issues that arise between full committee meetings.

At ECTS, the PAC agenda always includes time for Study Council—designated time for superintendents to place questions/topics of interest/concern to them before their counterparts. The topics usually involve local politics, state funding or regulations, internal operational issues, etc.

#### **Specific Considerations for Your Relationship with the JOC Chairperson**

Although all JOC members make valuable contributions, the chairperson is a key member of the committee. The chairperson is elected by board members

to serve as the leader of the JOC. As a director, your regular, ongoing communication with the board chair is very important, as are your efforts to reach consensus on a vision for the school. The chairperson can be a powerful ally in ensuring that JOC members attend meetings regularly, contribute meaningfully, and stay within the parameters of the JOC's role.

When a new chairperson is elected to the JOC at **Cumberland-Perry Area Vocational Technical School (AVTS)**, Director **Mary Rodman** meets individually with him or her before the first JOC meeting. She uses this meeting as an opportunity to get to know the background and communication style of the chairperson, as well as to discuss her own leadership style and vision for the school. She gets direction on the type of working relationship the chairperson expects, including:

- Does the chairperson want to get together in advance of meetings?
- Does the chairperson want to approve the meeting agendas in advance of distribution?
- What will be the administrative director's role at JOC meetings under the new chairperson?
- What type of communication method does he or she prefer: e-mail, phone calls, meetings in person, other?
- What is his/her management style?

#### **Specific Considerations for Relationships with Superintendents**

Depending on a superintendent's background and experience, he or she may be very familiar with, or only somewhat aware of, your CTC.

- **Send a welcome letter to new superintendents** – Include the schedule of upcoming meetings and an invitation to take a tour of the CTC
- **Prepare an annual school Fact Sheet for the current school year and a "Year in Review – Highlights" sheet for superintendents and other stakeholders**
- **Invite superintendents to all school functions**
- **Ask about their backgrounds** – Learning about the backgrounds of superintendents, in particular the type of CTC in their previous district(s), can provide insight into their perceptions of CTE
- **Offer to serve as a resource/informal sounding board** – Superintendents may welcome the opportunity to talk and brainstorm with you about ways to approach issues they are facing in their districts
- **Share information about the CTC and the district's students** – Provide superintendents with relevant information related to the CTC's programs and performance of students from their district
- **Provide opportunities for superintendents to talk informally with each other** – Meetings at the CTC provide a natural, neutral convening place for superintendents and may be the only time that they have the opportunity to communicate with their peers. When

possible, provide time in your meeting schedule for them to talk informally with one another.

- **Solicit one or two superintendents to sit as district representatives on your Local Advisory Committee as an annual appointment.**

### **Specific Considerations for Your Relationship with the Superintendent of Record**

CTC directors note that they often see increased enrollment and improved relationships with the superintendent of record's sending district. They attribute the superintendent of record's increased familiarity and better understanding of the CTC's programs and offerings.

Suggestions for establishing a solid relationship with the superintendent of record include:

- Send a welcome letter/e-mail
- Offer a tour of the CTC
- Provide a briefing on the CTC in advance of the first PAC and JOC meetings, including a discussion about roles and responsibilities
- Ask them to serve as the keynote speaker at an event, such as the Local Advisory Committee, the Occupational Advisory Committee (if you have a large, group meeting), awards assemblies, or other school activity
- Invite the superintendent of record to serve on search committees to fill high-level positions within the CTC

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#### *Helpful Hint*

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*Consider hosting a "transition breakfast" with the departing and incoming superintendents of record. It's an opportunity for the superintendents to meet informally and for one superintendent to tell the other, "Here's what you're in for, here's where you can go, and here's where you can't go."*

## 1.2 Communicating Effectively

*“The art of communication is the language of leadership.”*

—James Humes

Directors and stakeholders agree that the foundation for a strong working relationship is an open line of communication.

### **Make Sure Everyone Has the Basic Information They Need**

Providing basic information about your CTC to JOC members and superintendents empowers them to be as familiar and well-versed with your CTC as they are with their own districts. Many directors choose to provide an orientation booklet or binder to JOC members and superintendents. This can be either a physical paper binder or an electronic folder that is posted in a secure section of the school’s website or shared using a file-sharing tool like Google Docs or Dropbox.com.

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#### *Helpful Hint*

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*Every individual has a preferred communication format (e-mail, phone, text, in-person, etc.). Determine the individual preferences of your key stakeholders and, to the extent possible, communicate with them using that method.*

Suggested binder items include:

- Brief history of the school
- Organizational chart
- List of administrators and their assigned duties
- List of instructional staff and support personnel
- List of advisory committee members
- Program of studies detailing each program
- Enrollment data
- Program budget summary
- Student performance data by sending-school district (NOCTI, PSSAs)
- Industry certifications
- School-wide initiatives
- Articles of agreement
- Union contracts
- Certification process for CTE instructors
- Program approval process
- Articulation agreements
- PDE requirements
- Operating committee procedures
- Local area labor market data
- List of high-priority occupations
- Report on recent graduates (placement, etc.)
- Names and addresses of local legislators and congressional representatives
- Most recent strategic plan
- Calendar of committee meetings, school events, and other CTE events
- Information on sunshine laws

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*Helpful Hint*

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*Stakeholders don't like to be surprised. Never present a controversial issue at a public meeting without forewarning your stakeholders. Doing so gives you the opportunity to see whether there will be any opposition and provides stakeholders time to gather input and prepare their responses.*

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*Helpful Hint*

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*When preparing materials for leadership stakeholders, frame the information in the context of the impact it will have on students from their school district.*

**Handling Sensitive or Controversial Topics**

Inevitably, some of your interactions with stakeholders will pertain to sensitive or controversial topics. How you handle these situations will depend on many factors, but the most important advice from veteran CTC directors is to be honest and to always prepare the stakeholders in advance of a public meeting.

**Monthly Director's Report**

In preparation for JOC and superintendent meetings, many directors provide a monthly director's report. This can take the form of a newsletter or memo and touches on pertinent issues taking place at the CTC. Ideally, the report will be distributed in advance of the meetings.

Suggested updates include:

- School performance
- School operations
- Community issues
- State/federal issues
- Enrollment/retention figures
- School staffing
- Building and grounds (including any building renovation or expansion projects)
- Budget proposals/variances
- Director's travel, meetings, and other activities in which he or she has been involved
- Revisions of student or staff policies
- Requests for facility use
- Upcoming school events

**Meeting Synopsis/School District Report**

After meetings, most directors prepare a synopsis of key topics discussed and actions taken. In some cases, these reports are written by a CTC staff member who attended the meeting. Typically, these are distributed within three to five days of the meeting. Some CTCs choose to post these on their websites for public access.

Keep in mind that JOC members may want to share a meeting synopsis with their boards. For this reason, some directors prepare a separate "School District Report" for JOC members to share with their school boards. Typically, this report only deals with major/important topics covered by the JOC. Some meetings may not warrant a report.

**Updates between Meetings**

Many directors use e-mail to send quick updates to JOC members and superintendents between meetings and to notify them of any critical issues that may arise.

**Visit Local School Board Meetings**

Depending on their relationship with sending-school districts, some directors choose to attend local school board meetings only upon invitation or when sensitive or controversial topics will be discussed. Others opt to attend on a regular basis or seek to be invited to attend each of the sending district board meetings and make a presentation.

Director **Mary Rodman from Cumberland-Perry AVTS** sets an annual goal to speak at one or more school board meetings of each of her 13 sending districts. At the meeting, she presents a brief update on school-wide initiatives and showcases achievements such as NOCTI results. She selects one or two students from the district to attend the meeting with her and invites them to share an overview of their program (which she has previewed) with the board members. This approach ensures that all of the district board members, not just the JOC member, receive accurate data about the CTC and that you become more than just a name to them.

## 1.3 Establishing Trust and Credibility

*“Much of leadership is about finding balance between two often-conflicting activities: asserting authority and responding to others’ needs.”*  
—Belle Linda Halpern and Kathy Lubar, *Leadership Presence*

Establishing trust and credibility is an ongoing process that begins with a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities. It also requires open communication, thoughtful planning, attention to detail, honesty, and mutual respect.

**Define Roles and Responsibilities**

Make sure that all JOC members have access to and are familiar with your school’s JOC procedures, as well as any related guidelines.

**Be Prepared**

As the key representative of the CTC, it is important to be well prepared for interactions with leadership stakeholders, particularly at public meetings. On average, directors indicate that they spend several hours per month preparing for their JOC and PAC meetings.

**Meeting Agendas**

Work with your JOC chairperson to set an agenda for each meeting. Topics for discussion may include:

- School staffing update
- Building and grounds
- School operations
- Curriculum
- Finances

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*Helpful Hint*

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*Consider including an “Open Air” or “Courtesy to the Floor” item on your meeting agendas. This is an opportunity for meeting attendees to discuss other pending issues in a public forum.*

- CTC program evaluations
- New program guidelines

In recognition of the policy-making role of the JOC, you may consider phrasing agenda items up for vote in the following manner: “Consideration of ... ”

### *Anticipate Questions*

For every agenda topic, spend some time anticipating the questions that stakeholders will ask and have answers ready. When appropriate, include other CTC administrators, instructors, and/or students at stakeholder meetings to be available to answer questions (as long as they are adequately prepared).

### **Respond to Feedback**

Veteran directors emphasize the importance of being willing to accept and respond to negative and positive feedback. In some cases, the input offered by your JOC will be required to be followed. In other cases, you will have management discretion. In either situation, stakeholders expect that their advice will be acknowledged and considered and that they will be notified of actions taken (or not taken) as a result of their recommendations. In some cases, you need to also provide reasons for not taking action on an item in the event that it was a seriously discussed recommendation.

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#### *Helpful Hint*

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*One way to manage requests for data or action is to initiate a regular “Board Action Items” segment on the agenda. If a board member has a request for data or action, they bring it to the floor at the meeting and an “agree consensus” must be received from the board as a whole before administrators direct staff to undertake an activity. A document of requests and actions taken should be maintained and reported on each month.*

The following strategies pertain to responding to feedback:

- Acknowledge all JOC and superintendent recommendations in writing. In most cases this can be done in the meeting synopsis described earlier.
- Inform all stakeholders after a decision is made that:
  - The suggestion will be implemented as originated
  - The suggestion will be implemented with modifications (provide explanation)
  - The suggestion will be declined (provide explanation)
- If the recommendations are sound and feasible, take appropriate action and provide a written or verbal update to the group as soon as possible.
- Provide an update at the next meeting and hold further discussion when needed.

### **Set and Track Goals**

For longer-term goals, it is useful to develop an action plan with specific measurable steps and outcomes. This helps hold staff and stakeholders accountable and tracks progress against the goals. The following charts are examples of action plans, which include specific direction toward the achievement of goals.

<b>ACTION PLAN EXAMPLE #1</b>			
<b>Goal</b> – The “big picture” outcome after the action plan is completed			
<b>Problem Definition</b> – Description of the current situation that is to be addressed			
<b>Co-Captains</b> – Primary points of contact for the action plan			
<b>Measurable/Observable Product</b> – Specific outcome(s) expected upon completion of the plan			
<b>Action Steps</b> Specific actions to achieve objectives	<b>Accountability</b> Individuals responsible for action step	<b>Timeframe</b> Expected duration and/or date of completion	<b>Budget</b> Available funding
<b>Objective A</b>			
1. Action Step			
2. Action Step			
<b>Objective B</b>			
1. Action Step			
2. Action Step			

Source: ECTS

<b>ACTION PLAN EXAMPLE #2</b>				
<b>Goal</b> – The “big picture” outcome after the action plan is completed				
<b>Objective and Target Audience</b>	<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>When</b>	<b>Measured Success</b>
<b>Objective 1</b>				
<b>Objective 2</b>				

Source: Cumberland-Perry AVTS

**Evaluate Meeting Effectiveness**

From time to time, you may choose to ask your JOC and superintendents for feedback on their regularly scheduled meetings. The following statements<sup>2</sup> are suggestions for a survey that can be used to gauge the effectiveness of meetings.

Ask your stakeholders to indicate their feelings about each statement on a scale of 1 to 5 (excellent to poor):

1. I clearly understood the agenda and knew what we were trying to accomplish.
2. The agenda was well planned and organized and was received in advance of the meeting.
3. This was an important and productive meeting.
4. I feel the members of this committee understand their roles and assignments.
5. Members had a chance to speak and made contributions to items under consideration.
6. The meeting was well organized.
7. I felt that the advisory committee's opinions and feelings were understood and accepted by the school.
8. I feel satisfied with the activities and accomplishments of the advisory committee.
9. I feel my time and efforts are well spent in serving as member of this advisory committee.

## 1.4 Creating a Shared Vision for CTE

*"There is no more powerful engine driving an organization toward excellence and long-range success than an attractive, worthwhile, achievable vision for the future, widely shared."*

*—Burt Nanus, Visionary Leadership*

As a director, you witness firsthand the positive impact that CTE can have on students. You believe that CTE prepares students to pursue a wide range of options after graduation. The objective of establishing a shared vision for CTE is to build stakeholder support for this vision for the future of Pennsylvania CTE: **to develop students who are college ready, career skilled, and fueled for innovation.**

**Overcoming Misperceptions/Building Awareness of CTE**

In the past, some students who were not planning to attend college were encouraged to participate in vocational education programs designed to

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from:

[http://www.state.tn.us/education/cte\\_council/doc/local\\_ad\\_panel\\_handbook.pdf](http://www.state.tn.us/education/cte_council/doc/local_ad_panel_handbook.pdf)

prepare them for entering the workforce immediately after high school. But the economy for which old vocational education was built to serve no longer exists. Unfortunately, many of the stereotypes associated with the “old” vocational education still do.

Depending on their backgrounds, stakeholders may either lack an awareness of what CTCs provide or they may have developed misperceptions about the role and value of a CTE education.

Most directors agree that the best way to combat any misperceptions and to build awareness is to bring stakeholders to the CTC to experience firsthand the combination of academically rigorous and practical, relevant learning experiences to which CTC students are exposed. They noted that on site visits, they often hear comments from new stakeholders such as, “Wow, I didn’t realize all this was happening!”

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#### *Helpful Hint*

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*Work with administrators from sending schools to foster and build relationships between staff members at all levels of the organization, from principals and teachers to administrative staff such as attendance clerks and transportation directors.*

- **Individual or small group tours** – Invite stakeholders to the CTC for a tour during the time that their students are in attendance. If time permits, provide the opportunity for them to meet administrators, instructors, and students. During the visit, you may also want to share data, information, and success stories related to their districts’ students.
- **Host sending-school board meetings at the CTC** – Invite the school boards from your sending schools to hold a meeting at the CTC.
- **Encourage community groups to hold meetings at the CTC**, such as the local Rotary Club, Kiwanis, Chambers of Commerce or other service organizations.

#### Defining the New CTE

The following key messages, taken from the booklet “Pennsylvania Career and Technical Education: College and Career Pathways for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century” published by the Pennsylvania Department of Education’s Bureau of CTE, may be useful to help guide your conversations (see link in the Appendix to access the full document). You may also choose to use them on your website and/or in your printed materials:

- CTE provides students with a wide range of options and assumes that the large majority of students will need formal education and training beyond high school, even for those students who choose to immediately enter the workforce. The new CTE is ultimately about maximizing student opportunities.
- To be competitive in today’s challenging economy, students today need to pursue college with a career purpose. CTE is the answer for many students because they can prepare simultaneously for both college and a career and are able to choose the best college option that links to a specific career goal.
- In today’s challenging job environment and with the high cost of college, good planning is more essential than ever. People in careers requiring less than a four-year degree earn just as much or more

- than those in four-year-degree careers, and the cost of attending two-year and technical colleges offers a more direct return on investment.
- Pennsylvania’s economic recovery and sustained growth depend on a skilled technical workforce with knowledge and skills that are aligned to the demands of the innovation economy. Pennsylvania CTE is a critical piece of this competitiveness puzzle.
  - CTE in Pennsylvania is designed to meet a dual mission—developing students with college readiness skills and a career path. CTE is no longer an either/or choice, but a “both/and” opportunity for student success.
  - CTE programs motivate students of all academic achievement levels to work hard and advance their learning across academic and technical subject areas. Furthermore, CTE can help all students, including those who intend to pursue postsecondary education, develop a clear game plan for their future, and understand how education can lead to a fulfilling and productive career.

### **Bringing Commitment to the Vision**

Veteran CTC directors emphasize the importance of working with stakeholders to build a holistic perspective on education, and to reinforce the message that the CTC is an extension of the sending schools and a partner in building college and career readiness.

## **1.5 Specific Considerations for New Directors**

Veteran directors offer the following advice to new directors:

- Understand the history of relationships between former directors and key leadership stakeholders.
- Determine what you can and cannot control.
- Plot the course but maintain flexibility; be willing to change and make adjustments.
- Don’t try to do too much at one time; whatever you do as the director, do it well.
- Expect to deal with budget constraints.
- Attend local school board meetings to introduce yourself and maintain visibility.
- Meet individually with each JOC member and sending school superintendent early in your tenure to establish relationships.

## 1.6 Lessons Learned

*“Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other.”*

*—John F. Kennedy*

Advice from veteran CTC directors, JOC members and superintendents:

- Open communication is very important.
- Make sure information is given in advance of a decision being made.
- Be available to meet more often than just at the monthly meeting if needed.
- Include student/teacher presentations at JOC meetings when appropriate.
- In-person interaction is important. Because sending schools may be located many miles away from the CTC, you might not “bump into” each other regularly. The physical distance between schools underscores the importance of planning for in-person meetings.
- Understand the sending-school curriculum and environment, including any unique situations facing the districts. Attend meetings and establish a presence at the schools.
- Foster multilayered relationships between the CTC and sending schools. For example, bring together the CTC and sending-school principals, counselors, etc.
- Use data to support funding requests and program plans.
- Before you take a contract or proposal to the JOC, ask your solicitor to review it. The first question JOC members or PAC members will ask: Was it reviewed? Are there concerns?
- Make the CTC available to as many community members as possible.

## SECTION 2: Guidance for Superintendents

As a superintendent, you are a leader of your district, including the CTC. You have the opportunity to provide guidance to the CTC director and JOC, as well as to promote the CTC within the community.

This section will address:

1. Leadership connections
2. Working collaboratively
3. Specific considerations for the superintendent of record
4. Specific considerations for new superintendents
5. Lessons learned

### 2.1 Leadership Connections

*“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more,  
do more and become more, you are a leader.”*

*—John Quincy Adams*

#### **Building Awareness of CTE**

One of the most valuable services you can provide to the CTC is to publicly support and promote CTE as an option for all students.

#### ***Understanding the “New” CTE***

The Pennsylvania Bureau of CTE and CTC directors across Pennsylvania are promoting a new vision for CTE. In 2011, the Bureau of CTE published a booklet titled “Pennsylvania Career and Technical Education: College and Career Pathways for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.” This publication, which can be accessed using the link in the Appendix, outlines a vision for the future of Pennsylvania CTE: **to develop students who are college ready, career skilled, and fueled for innovation.**

This booklet describes how the CTE system in Pennsylvania works, how it is continuously reinvented, and, through real examples, how students are experiencing success and how schools are making a positive impact. You may consider sharing copies of this booklet with your administrators and constituents.

#### ***Opening Doors for CTC***

CTC directors comment that strong support from superintendents contributes to an improved perception of and support for the CTC.

Opportunities to build public awareness of CTE include:

- Visit the CTC and attend public events held there
- Encourage building administrators and staff to visit and collaborate with the CTC

- Invite representatives from the CTC to district meetings, career nights, and other programs
- Support programs that educate students about CTE options, such as CTC tours and information sessions
- Promote the CTC when speaking with educators, parents, community members, and business partners
- Consider volunteering to sit as a member of a CTC committee, such as the Local Advisory Committee or the Strategic Planning Committee

### **Supporting CTC Students**

Students from your district who attend the CTC gain valuable exposure to career and postsecondary education opportunities. At the same time, they also may face different challenges than their classmates at the sending high school, such as: managing peer pressures related to attending the CTC; balancing technical and academic coursework; coordinating transitions, schedules, and activities at two schools; and additional transportation time to/from the CTC.

Your leadership and encouragement of your administrators' support for these students can make a big impact on their experiences.

- Visit the CTC and meet informally with students from your district
- Track the accomplishments and progress of your district's students
- Encourage administrators to be flexible and accommodating when scheduling CTC students
- Support an enrollment process for the CTC that provides equal opportunity for all interested students

### **Identifying JOC Appointees**

As superintendent, you may have the opportunity to work with your district's school board president to identify appointees to the JOC. Veteran superintendents recommend that, when possible, you select JOC candidates with an interest in CTE, which may include former students, a parent of a current student, an individual whose profession is related to a program area offered by the CTC, and/or someone who has expressed an interest in serving as a JOC member. JOC appointees should be confirmed by the full board.

### **Working with the PAC**

A PAC is an advisory group composed of superintendents from participating districts. Led by the superintendent of record or the CTE director, this consortium advises the JOC and the CTC's administration on the educational programs and policies of the school. The PAC may also participate in the development of the school's Strategic Plan. In addition to providing advisement to the CTC, your participation in the PAC offers an opportunity to collaborate with fellow superintendents.

## 2.2 Working Collaboratively

Sending-school superintendents play an important advisory role for the JOC and the CTC director. You bring to the CTC a broad perspective on education and the specific values of your district. Forming and nurturing strong, collaborative relationships with the CTC director, JOC members, and fellow superintendents can benefit not only your district's students but the larger CTC community as well.

### **Working with the CTC Director**

Veteran superintendents emphasize the importance of establishing and maintaining a strong working relationship with the CTC director that is based on a shared vision for the CTC. This relationship can be strengthened by visiting, interacting with, and staying current with CTC operations.

### ***Maintaining Open Lines of Communication***

Regular, ongoing, candid communication with the CTC director is a key element to an effective working relationship. Typically, the CTC director will meet monthly with the PAC to review programs, initiatives, and information that will be discussed with the JOC. Most directors are also willing to hold one-on-one meetings with superintendents to discuss district-specific concerns.

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#### *Helpful Hint*

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*The CTC director is a member of your district's education community. To build a strong relationship, invite him/her to district events and, to the extent possible, respond favorably to requests to share resources and data, and direct your administrators to do the same.*

### ***Developing a Shared Understanding of the Mission/Purpose of the CTC***

Whether your district sends one or 1,000 students to the CTC, it is important to develop an understanding of the goals and operations of the CTC. Portraying a shared sense of success with the CTC director will set the tone for a strong relationship between your district and the CTC.

In some cases, the CTC director may host a work session or retreat to discuss the current goals and objectives for the school. If this is not the case, consider requesting that the director address the following questions as part of the regular monthly agenda or in a special session.

- What do you see as the most valuable benefits of CTE?
- What are your goals and vision for the CTC?
- How is the CTC progressing toward meeting the goals?
- Are there ways that our districts and the CTC can operate more effectively and interdependently?

**Working with the JOC**

Although the superintendent of record has the only formal relationship with the JOC, your district's JOC member may look to you for guidance on how you would like them to represent the district and for your specific input on important votes.

Opportunities to build relationships with JOC members include:

- Attend/participate at JOC meetings and support the decision-making process
- Meet with your JOC member(s) annually to learn about the CTC's accomplishments and goals for the year
- Encourage an "open door" communication policy—be available to the JOC member(s) to provide guidance and input

## 2.3 Specific Considerations for the Superintendent of Record

The "position" of superintendent of record is mandated in School Code (SC 1850.1). The roles and responsibilities are defined in local policy and may differ from school to school. Typically, the superintendent of record is appointed by the JOC and rotates among the sending districts, with each superintendent serving one term.

As the superintendent of record, your role is to serve as an advisor to the CTC director and JOC, as well as to assist the JOC on specific projects. You may be asked to review and sign any documents that require the signature of a commissioned school officer, and you may be involved in the evaluation of the CTC director.

Some JOCs may delegate the authority to sign documents to the administrative director to the extent permitted by the PDE.

## 2.4 Specific Considerations for New Superintendents

Depending on your background, you may not be familiar with CTE or the operations of the local CTC. One veteran superintendent noted, "As a building principal, I didn't know what the CTC's vision and goals were. Once I became a superintendent, I gained more insight and exposure to the CTC." Developing an understanding of the CTC's programs and operations is an important component of a strong working relationship.

Suggestions for doing so include:

- **Review information** – Review materials provided by the CTC director, such as information about the CTC’s programs, finances, strategic plan, and performance data for your district’s students.
- **Tour the CTC** – If you have not already done so, make arrangements with the CTC director for a tour of the building. Try to visit at a time when students from your district are in attendance so you can observe them and speak with them about their experiences.
- **Schedule an informational meeting with the CTC director** – Set up a one-on-one meeting with the director to learn more about the CTC and his/her vision for the school. Some questions to consider include:
  - What is the history of this CTC? Have there been any significant changes in programs, administration, students, etc., over the years?
  - What are the biggest challenges facing the CTC?
  - What are some current accomplishments?
  - How do the students at the CTC perform on state-mandated tests?
  - How does the CTC’s special education population compare to the districts as a whole?
  - What are your goals and vision for the CTC?
  - How is the CTC similar and different from my district’s high school?

If you are an experienced superintendent working in a new district, you are probably familiar with CTE. However, because each CTC is unique in its operations and programs, take some time to learn about the school’s programs and mission.

In addition to the questions above, you may want to consider the following:

- How is this CTC different from others I’ve worked with in the past? How is it similar?
- How do the school’s programs align with local workforce and industry needs?
- How does my district’s participation level compare with other sending districts?

## 2.5 Lessons Learned

Veteran superintendents shared the following “lessons learned”:

- Maintain open and regular communication about the status of the CTC’s programs
- Look for ways to collaborate and share resources, programs, etc.
- Provide visible support for the CTC within your district

## SECTION 3: Guidance for JOC Members

The JOC serves as the governing body for the CTC. As a JOC member, you are a key liaison between your home school board and the local CTC. To be most effective in your role, you should become familiar with the work of the CTC in all major areas and contribute your viewpoints, knowledge, and wisdom of your community to the professional direction of the CTC.

This section will address:

1. Working collaboratively
2. Communicating effectively
3. Specific considerations for the JOC chairperson
4. Specific considerations for new JOC members
5. Lessons learned

### 3.1 Working Collaboratively

*“Coming together is a beginning, staying together is progress,  
and working together is success.”*

—Henry Ford

#### **Understanding Roles and Responsibilities**

As a JOC member, you are called upon to represent your home school board at the CTC and vice versa. In addition, you need to balance your personal perspectives about CTE and the CTC with the wishes of your home school board.

The specific responsibilities of the JOC are defined by state statute and the Pennsylvania School Code. A JOC’s procedures may provide specific direction about additional responsibilities. Familiarize yourself with your CTC’s JOC procedures, as well as any related guidelines.

Within your JOC, you may be a member of subcommittee(s) or working group(s). In addition, you may be elected as chairperson of the JOC. For more details on that role, see the section below titled “Special Considerations for the JOC Chair.”

#### **Building Relationships**

Building and maintaining strong relationships is the foundation of an effective working relationship.

**Get to know the CTC director** – Learning about the CTC director’s background, management philosophy, and priorities can strengthen the working relationship between the JOC and the CTC. If you have not met with the director recently, schedule a meeting at the CTC or invite him or her

to visit you at your worksite. If the CTC director reaches out to you, try to make it a priority to schedule a meeting or conversation.

Take time to learn about:

- **Professional background** – How long has the director held a leadership position? How many years has he/she been at this CTC? What type of positions did he/she hold before becoming an administrator?
- **Personal background** – What are his/her community activities or interests outside of the CTC?
- **Priorities** – What are his/her top priorities for the CTC? What are his/her personal priorities?

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#### Helpful Hint

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*According to veteran JOC members, one of the best ways to build relationships and to learn about CTE is to attend events hosted by the CTC. Career fairs, award ceremonies, skills competitions, and open houses all present opportunities to meet informally with CTC administrators, staff, students, and parents and to learn more about the school's programs.*

**Get to know your colleagues on the JOC** – Although you probably already have a strong working relationship with colleagues from your home school board, developing the same type of relationship with your colleagues on the JOC is a key step toward an effective organization. Ask the board chair and/or director to include time on an agenda for networking or meet together informally. Generally, because “sunshine” laws are meant to keep board meetings public, be well aware of the state and local requirements so you do not inadvertently violate them.

Take time to learn about:

- **Professional background** – What type of experience or expertise can your JOC colleagues contribute? How might this person’s professional background impact their views on CTE?
- **Personal background** – What are his/her community activities or interests outside of the CTC?
- **Priorities** – What are the top issues for this person’s school district or board? What are his/her personal priorities?

#### Conducting a JOC Self-Evaluation

To ensure that the JOC is working effectively and that all members feel that their contributions are valued, you may choose, as a board, to conduct periodic self-evaluations of the JOC’s goals, activities, and operations. This can be done in conjunction with the evaluation of the CTC director (described in another section of this handbook) or as a stand-alone exercise. To aid in the self-evaluation, a suggested checklist, adapted from the BCTE Local Advisory Guide, is included in the Appendix.

## 3.2 Communicating Effectively

As a JOC member and a school board member, you are probably inundated with information from multiple sources: your home school board, the CTC, constituents, and other groups. You are expected to represent your home school district at the JOC and to keep your board informed about the CTC. All of this requires effective, multichannel communication.

**CTC Director**

- Provide updates to the CTC about topics under consideration at the sending-school district that may affect the CTC, such as declining enrollment trends, staffing trends, budget deficits or fund balances, construction projects, and curriculum.

**Home School Board**

- **Provide regular updates** – Most JOC members indicate that they provide monthly updates at their school board meetings. These range from a brief, five-minute report to a more in-depth summary of the most recent JOC meeting. (If you have more than one JOC member from your district, designate one person to be the lead presenter for the year.)
- **Share the CTC’s vision/strategic direction** – Get feedback from the board and take it to JOC
- **Review student performance** – Share performance data
- **Share student accomplishments** – Report to your board when CTE students receive honors, awards, and recognitions
- **Encourage your colleagues to visit the CTC** – By visiting the CTC, school board members can see firsthand the quality of the CTC

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*Helpful Hint*

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*Most JOC members and superintendents noted that their districts' student achievement strategies make no reference to the role of the CTC in helping strengthen core skills like reading and mathematics, even though those skills are specifically targeted in most Pennsylvania CTE programs.*

At your board meeting, and in conversations with your board member colleagues, framing questions about CTE and the role of the CTC could include:

- What do fellow board members see as the strengths and weaknesses of CTE in addressing the demands of today’s workforce and economy?
- Do we believe that the CTC can be an educational partner in helping strengthen core skills as well as college and career readiness? How can that partnership be developed or improved?
- Are there ways that both our district and the CTC can operate more effectively and interdependently?
- Are we encouraging students of all achievement levels to enroll at the CTC, or are we targeting certain “types” of students? Is the way we are feeding students into the CTC appropriate? Do we need any modifications to our referral approaches?
- Are the specific CTE programs appropriate for “college-bound” students and are we providing adequate information about these programs to our students?

**Superintendent**

Your relationship and level of interaction with your district’s superintendent will largely depend on your school board’s protocol and practices. Even if you do not have a formally defined relationship, consider seeking out opportunities to meet with the superintendent to provide updates on the CTC.

If time permits, you might consider using some of the following discussion questions to learn more about the superintendent's perspective on the CTC:

- What do you think are the general strengths of the CTC, and what are the key challenges facing CTE?
- From what you've heard in the past, how do you think our CTC is perceived by the general community, by students and parents, and by educators in the district?
- Do you have any specific initiatives or objectives that you would like the CTC to pursue?

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*Helpful Hint*

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*Because of superintendents' busy schedules, you may only get a few minutes to meet with him/her, so plan to keep your update brief and succinct. Prepare to leave a copy of your remarks and documents with him/her for review at a later time. If you need assistance with preparing information, contact the CTC director.*

### **Other JOC Members**

The size and membership composition of JOCs varies by CTC. Some JOCs have only one representative from each sending district. Some JOCs have one representative and one alternate per sending district. Still others have multiple representatives, which may be a set number per school (for example, at Eastern Westmoreland, the JOC has nine members, three from each of the three sending districts) or determined by property values and/or enrollment (for example, at LCTI, representation on the 21-member JOC is pro-rated by the nine districts' proportionate share of the taxable real estate market values. The market values are evaluated annually and each district's number of JOC representatives is adjusted as needed).

For sending districts with multiple JOC representatives, members should coordinate and communicate to determine who will present the JOC update at the school board meetings.

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*Helpful Hint*

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*Veteran JOC members recommend getting input and guidance from your home school board and your superintendent before placing any vote at the JOC.*

### **Parents and Community Members**

JOC members emphasize the importance of building support for CTE among parents and community members. They shared the following talking points for promoting the CTC and dispelling any misconceptions that parents and community members may have:

- The CTC is a high-quality facility—encourage them to visit to see for themselves
- CTE is for all students
- The CTC is not an alternative to college; it is a pathway to college

### 3.3 Carrying Out Official Duties

There are a wide range of issues on which the JOC takes formal action, including:

- CTC operating and capital budgets
- Union contracts
- Strategic initiatives
- Evaluation of the director
- Hiring of the director

#### **Budget**

The CTC's budget is a reflection of the administration's priorities and overall direction for the school. Providing feedback during the budget process is an important way to make sure that your district's investment in the CTC pays off. The following tips provide a starting point for analyzing a CTC's budget.

Key items to look for in a CTC budget:

- **Priorities** – What are the major initiatives being funded?
- **Enrollment projections** – What are the trends?
- **District funding** - Is the per district cost generally fair/equitable amongst the districts?
- **Revenue** – What resources are available? Is projected revenue greater or less than previous years?
- **Expenditures** – What are the major expenditures? Are expenditures greater or less than previous years?
- **Bottom line** – How does total revenue compare to total expenditures? Is any increase (or decrease) in line with what participating districts are working with? Is the CTC operating within its funding?
- **Approvals** – Do the superintendents approve the proposal?

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#### *Helpful Hint*

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*Invite the CTC director (or his/her designee) to attend meetings when you are discussing complex or controversial issues related to the CTC and you anticipate detailed questions from fellow board members.*

#### **Evaluation of the Director**

One of the responsibilities of the JOC is to conduct regular periodic evaluation of the director. Typically, the JOC evaluates the performance of the director on an annual basis. Before the evaluation period, the JOC and director should agree on the criteria to be used for evaluation purposes. Sample evaluation instruments are included in the Appendix.

These criteria may include:

- Relationship with the JOC
- Community relations and visibility
- Staff and personal relationships
- Instructional administration
- Educational leadership
- Organization management (including fiscal and facilities administration)

- Professionalism and personal attributes
- Planning and assessment
- Performance on annual goals/objectives
- Director’s self-analysis

At ECTS, each JOC member completes a written evaluation form, rating the director’s performance on a range of factors, using a scale of 1 (poor) to 4 (superior). Members are also encouraged to add comments or observations to clarify their ratings. Once the evaluations are complete, the JOC president compiles the results and presents them to the JOC for its review. Results should be shared with the director before presentation to the JOC.

After the evaluation, the JOC may take the following actions:

- Identify strength areas and support further development
- Identify weaknesses and establish goals for improvement
- Establish and/or refine tangible school-wide goals
- Determine whether any action is necessary regarding the employment of the director

#### **Hiring a New Director**

The following list is a sampling of the qualities that JOC members cite as important criteria for evaluating candidates for a CTC director position:

- Solid background in CTE
- Experience in a leadership position
- Strong organizational skills
- Involvement in the community

### **3.4 Specific Considerations for the JOC Chairperson**

- The chair is responsible for managing the JOC and should ensure that other members fulfill their responsibilities.
- One JOC chair noted that he makes sure to provide the opportunity for other members to give public comment during meetings if they choose.

### **3.5 Specific Considerations for New JOC Members**

Some new JOC members are already familiar with the CTC, whereas others are learning about CTE for the first time. Even if you already feel familiar with CTE or the CTC, recognize that CTE is a constantly changing field because it is linked to the demands of emerging and evolving careers.

Your experience and perceptions from even a few years ago may need some updating. The following tips will help any new JOC member get started on the right foot:

#### Learn about CTE

- Review resources and background information about CTE. In some cases, the director may provide this information. If not, ask to meet with him/her to learn more.
- Try to learn more about the local economy and workforce trends and needs. It is vital that the CTC be relevant to the local economy, and the more you know about these issues, the more you can help drive that agenda.

#### Become Familiar with the Operations and Programs at the CTC

- Take a tour of the CTC and spend time there to understand how it differs from your home school
- Review information about the school, including the types of programs offered, enrollment, and placement data, to develop a familiarity with the operations
- Talk with teachers and learn about the certification process they follow to become teachers
- Talk with students at the CTC to learn about why they choose to attend

## 3.6 Lessons Learned

The following list<sup>3</sup> of helpful considerations is adapted from the BCTE handbook for local advisory committee members:

DO . . .

- Allow yourself enough time in your work and personal schedule for committee activities
- Attend meetings regularly and let your colleagues on the school board know about committee activities
- Remember that the JOC is the only local body with authority for the CTC
- Examine material presented to you before voting on issues, making recommendations, and taking other actions
- Familiarize yourself with the way the CTC is organized, governed, and financed so that advice is realistic
- Serve enthusiastically and take pride in your achievements and those of the committee

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<sup>3</sup> BCTE local advisory committee handbook

### DON'T . . .

- Complain, involve personalities, use pressure tactics, or criticize without offering constructive alternatives
- Set too broad a scope of objectives for the committee
- Lose interest in the CTC when your term on the committee expires
- Deal with issues outside the purview of the committee
- Disseminate privileged or confidential information
- Meet for the sake of meeting
- Sit back and let others assume all the responsibility for committee work

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**Dr. James Tracy**, Superintendent, Girard School District

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## APPENDIX

### Links to PA Statutes and Codes Governing CTCs

#### Pennsylvania Code

**PA Code, Title 22 – Regulations for Education (general)**

<http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/022toc.html>

**Ch. 4**

<http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter4/chap4toc.html>

**§ 13.3 pertaining to JOCs**

<http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/001/chapter13/s13.3.html>

**Ch. 339. Vocational Education**

<http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter339/chap339toc.html>

#### Pennsylvania Public School Code

<http://www.legis.state.pa.us/WU01/LI/LI/US/HTM/1949/0/0014..HTM>

### Links to Sample JOC Websites

Note: The websites below link to publicly available information on the CTC's website. Some CTCs opt to provide a password-protected section for JOC members.

**Greater Altoona Career & Technology Center**

<http://www.gactc.edu/joc.asp>

*Includes list of JOC members with links to school district websites, JOC meeting schedule, newsletters and meeting minutes*

**Lehigh Career & Technical Institute**

<http://www.lcti.org/page/13>

*Includes list of JOC members with links to school district websites, JOC meeting schedule, and meeting minutes*

**Northern Westmoreland Career & Technology Center**

<http://www.nwctc.k12.pa.us/domain/17>

*Includes list of JOC members, JOC meeting schedule, and JOC operating procedures*

**Somerset County Technology Center**

<http://www.sctc.net/dnn/SCTCInfo/JointOperatingCommittee.aspx>

*Includes list of JOC members with phone numbers, JOC meeting schedule, and meeting minutes*

**Link to Booklet: “Pennsylvania Career and Technical Education: College and Career Pathways for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”**

[http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/career\\_technical\\_education/7335](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/career_technical_education/7335)

**Links to Committee Resources****PDE Guidelines for Occupational and Local Advisory Committees**

[http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/teacher\\_resources/7392/advisory\\_committee\\_documents/507939](http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/teacher_resources/7392/advisory_committee_documents/507939)

*These guidelines are focused on Occupational Advisory Committees and Local Advisory Committees, however, they provide useful suggestions that can be applied to other governing bodies.*

**Understanding School District Budgets: A Guide for Local Leaders**

[http://www.edsource.org/pub\\_budgetguide1-04.html](http://www.edsource.org/pub_budgetguide1-04.html)

*This guidebook is geared toward California school districts, however, it provides a useful explanation of the mechanics of the budget process and sample analyses.*

**Sample Committee Self-Evaluation Tool****Source: BCTE “Establishing and Operating Effective Local Advisory Committees”**

[http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/teacher\\_resources/7392/advisory\\_committee\\_documents/507939](http://www.education.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/teacher_resources/7392/advisory_committee_documents/507939)

Self-Evaluation for Local Advisory Committees		
YES	NO	
		1. The local advisory committee has updated bylaws, which include terms of membership, responsibilities of members and officers, and procedures for operation.
		2. Nominations for advisory committee membership are reviewed and candidates are appointed by the institution's governing board.
		3. The committee establishes an annual program of activities.
		4. The committee has regularly scheduled meetings (two to four minimum).
		5. Leadership in the operation of the committee is provided by committee members.
		6. Agendas for committee meetings are mailed to members prior to meetings.
		7. Minutes of committee meetings are mailed to members promptly after meetings.
		8. Written recommendations are prepared and forwarded to the governing board by the committee.
		9. Recognition is given to committee members for their service and contributions.
		10. The committee has active committees to carry out its work.
		11. Information concerning requests for committee actions is provided prior to meetings.
		<p>12. The advisory committee is actively involved in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Assessing labor market needs</li> <li>B. Approving requests for federal career and technical education funds</li> <li>C. The budget process</li> <li>D. Program evaluation</li> <li>E. Integrating basic academic skills with career and technical training</li> <li>F. Enhancing cooperation among career technical education institutions in the area</li> <li>G. Student recruitment</li> <li>H. Student placement</li> <li>I. Teacher recruitment</li> <li>J. Public relations for the program and institution</li> <li>K. Coordination of the career technical education program with community-based organizations, etc.</li> <li>L. Coordinating or conducting visits to places of employment for students</li> <li>M. Providing speakers/demonstrations for career and technical education classes</li> <li>N. Lending personnel to provide instructional support to career and technical education teachers</li> <li>O. Assisting teachers in updating skills</li> <li>P. Being represented at meetings of the governing board</li> <li>Q. Informing state and federal legislators of career and technical education program accomplishments and needs</li> </ul>



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**Department of Education**  
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**Office of Elementary and Secondary Education**  
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