Establishing and Sustaining a Business Advisory Council

1. **Develop a vision for the Business Advisory Council**
   a. What is the school’s vision for connections to industry? Will this council support the entire school, an academy within the school or a certain CTE program?
   b. Who will spearhead this initiative at the school and how much time can be allocated to this work?
   c. Who from the administrative leadership team will oversee this initiative?

2. **Recruit a “Champion” to assist in establishing the Council** – This is typically a passionate business leader who is willing to act as a temporary Chair and who has the ability to generate enthusiasm among other business leaders and community members.

3. **Hold recruitment events and recruit members**
   a. Conduct research to become familiar with the businesses, professional associations, and other community organizations in the area.
   b. Set up meetings with community members—bring your Champion, students, and other council members along. Ask parents for referrals.
   c. Make presentations at community meeting and events, such as those of the Chamber of Commerce, Economic Development Commission, Kiwanis/Rotary/Lions clubs, parent meetings, etc.
   d. Hold recruitment events such as breakfasts, luncheons, or after-school receptions.
   e. Aim for a majority representation of business leaders who can link the school to their networks. Though passion is more important than position, consider recruiting several senior executives who bring corporate and community access.
   f. The Council may also include leaders of civic organizations, government officials, college partners, parents, students, an employment company representative, a school staff member, a school district representative, and other community members.
   g. Council members should be drawn from a cross-section of businesses relevant to the school’s economic theme.

4. **Plan the first Council meeting**
   a. Review or refine the school’s vision for industry partnerships
   b. Ensure the principal or senior administrator is in agreement
   c. Select a convenient time and location for the meeting
   d. Create and distribute an agenda before the meeting

5. **Hold the first Council meeting**
   a. Have the principal or a senior administrator to welcome the council and share about the school
   b. Review the school’s strengths, opportunities, and needs
   c. Encourage the attendees to share their ideas or experiences
   d. Establish a meeting schedule
   e. Ensure the atmosphere is positive and professional

6. **Cultivate and sustain an effective Council**
   a. Plan opportunities for council members to visit classrooms and engage with students
b. Elect officers, decide roles and responsibilities, establish by-laws/norms

c. Form committees and elect committee chairs

d. Regularly revisit goals and monitor/evaluate progress

e. Recruit new council members as needed

f. Recognize members for their contributions
   i. Thank you letters to members from students and Principal
   ii. Thank you letters from Principal to company supervisors
   iii. Highlight their work on school website and through local press/media
   iv. Recognition luncheons or after-school receptions