



COLLEGE & CAREER

AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND NATURAL RESOURCES

# Local Advisory Groups

## What is a local advisory group?

A local advisory (commonly called a committee or council) is a group of partners representing education, employers, local sectors of the AFNR industry, associations, and other stakeholders in the community who provide input for program improvement. A functional, supportive advisory council can be a vital asset in helping an agricultural education program achieve many goals. The purpose of an advisory council is to provide recommendations regarding the goals and objectives for the program for all integral components of an Agricultural Education program.

## How do I join a local advisory?

Contact your local agricultural education teacher(s) to ask about the local advisory structure. To find your local program, use the [Agricultural Education Program Directory \(Click Here\)](#).

## How does a local advisory support the program?

It is recommended that advisory councils meet at least two meetings during the given school year. Advisory members can provide support in many ways, and the responsibilities of a given advisory should align with the needs of the local program and the community. Some common ways advisory members support their local program are listed below:

- Recommend changes and improvements to agricultural education programming to include course content, community projects, and work-based learning opportunities.
- Assist the teacher(s) in identifying work-based learning opportunities in the community
- Recommend changes and improvements to agricultural education facilities and equipment
- Provide resources to achieve facility improvements and equipment updates
- Help advocate for the agricultural education program to parents, administrators, and the local board
- Promote the agricultural education program in the community through local organizations, clubs, etc.
- Review course content to ensure alignment with local needs in AFNR occupations
- Assist in coordination of guest speakers or presenters for various agricultural education courses

While the advisory council can support a program in many ways, it is important to note that advisory groups do not make policy or procedures for the agricultural education program or teacher. It is the role of the group to support and make recommendations for the future of the program.

## How do local advisory groups operate?

Generally, an adequate number of advisory group members is between five and nine individuals, but more or less may be appropriate in various circumstances. Group members should designate key roles such as chairperson and someone to take diligent notes. At regularly scheduled meetings, the group should consider key program components and formulate recommendations based on program needs and local opportunities. As appropriate, individual committee members may be assigned to follow up with the teacher or committee on specific tasks according to their personal interests, skills, resources, etc. Meetings should be scheduled in advance to allow for sufficient planning and preparation, and follow-on tasks should be clearly defined and assigned to promote efficiency and clarity.

## How can advisory groups evaluate their local program?

Illinois Agricultural Education programs annually receive Incentive Funding based on established “quality indicators” provided in an electronic application. These indicators are a great tool for measuring the current strength of the agricultural education program from a variety of key components. This application can be used as an evaluation tool as well as a way to identify methods of program improvement. To see the most recent set of Incentive Funding Quality Indicators, please refer to the [AFNR Grants Webpage \(Click Here\)](#).