



Accreditation

Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education Accreditation Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: April 29, 2026

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: Zoom (Virtual Meeting)

Attending: Gilda Austin, Julie Ballew, Desi Beyer, Andra Beyer, April Blackwell, Jeremy Cowley, Daniel Craig, La'Tricia D'Amico, Dustin Davidson, Eric Davis, Laci Davis, Sara Edwards, Becki Foster, Teena Friend, Andrew Gilmore, Renea Glover, Cori Gray, Dennis Griffith, Charity Helton, Gina Hubbard, Katlyn Hudgins, Kristy Johnson, Michelle Ketcherside, Jason Lankford, Jill Lazenby, Michael Lindley, Jeff Mason, Sandra McKnight, Brent Meeks, Tyce Meyers, Carrie Miller, Jennifer Palacio, Renee Reed, Ashley Rink, Jeannette Slater, Kenneth Stull, Joey Vanek.

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by **Joey Vanek, Accreditation Manager**, at approximately 2:01 PM. Joey welcomed participants and thanked them for attending.

2. Accreditation Team Introductions

The ODCTE Accreditation Team members present included:

- Joey Vanek, Accreditation Manager
- Andra Beyer, Accreditation Coordinator
- Sandra McKnight, Financial Aid Specialist
- Desi Beyer, Administrative Assistant
- Brent Meeks, Director of School Accountability

Alan Nahs was unable to attend due to an accreditation pre-visit.

3. Advisory Member Introductions

Advisory members introduced themselves, representing a wide range of roles across:

- Technology Centers
- State Agency Divisions
- Instructional Leadership
- Financial Aid
- Student Services
- Workforce Development

A student representative, **Tyce Myers (Oklahoma FCCLA State President 2026–2027)**, was also present.

A representative from the U.S. Department of Education, **Charity Helton**, joined via phone to observe as part of the federal accreditation renewal process.

4. Purpose of the Advisory Committee

Joey Vanek reviewed the role of the committee:

- Provide **input and recommendations** on accreditation standards and processes
- Support **examiner training improvements**
- Offer feedback to strengthen the overall accreditation system

The committee serves in an **advisory capacity only** and does not make final decisions.

5. Resources and Communication

- Accreditation materials, agendas, and minutes are available on the ODCTE website
 - A ctYOU site has been created for advisory resources and collaboration
 - Quarterly newsletters are distributed to provide updates
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6. Accreditation Visit Schedule

Fall 2026 Visits

- Mid-America Technology Center
- Kiamichi Technology Center (extended multi-campus format)
- Western Technology Center
- Francis Tuttle Technology Center (extended visit)

Fall 2027 Visits

- Canadian Valley Technology Center
 - Tulsa Technology Center
 - Mid-Del Technology Center
 - Autry Technology Center
 - Gordon Cooper Technology Center
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7. Federal Accreditation Renewal Update

- Renewal petition submitted to the U.S. Department of Education (February 2026)
 - Current advisory meeting serves as part of the **observation process**
 - On-site federal observation scheduled at Kiamichi Technology Center
 - Final decision expected **Spring 2028**
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8. Examiner Data and Updates

- 2025: 183 examiners (97 returning, 86 new)
 - 2026: ~200 applicants currently
 - Improvements implemented from feedback:
 - Team naming changed from numbers to **A–F**
 - Added **10-minute breaks** between interviews
 - Maintained longer collaborative breaks
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9. Distance Education Updates

- Newly approved programs:
 - Practical Nursing – Tri-County Technology Center
 - Esthetician – Canadian Valley Technology Center
 - Additional applications under review
 - Follow-up visits scheduled to verify program implementation
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10. Financial Aid Updates (Presented by Sandra McKnight)

Federal Updates

- FAFSA process improvements and fraud prevention enhancements
- Expansion of **Pell Grants for short-term workforce programs**
- Increased accountability and reporting requirements
- Transition from Dallas to Chicago federal oversight office

State Updates

- Oklahoma Promise expansion (including children of certified teachers)
 - Oklahoma Tuition Aid Grant allocation review
 - National Guard CareerTech funding remains unfunded
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11. Discussion Topic: In-Person Examiner Training

Proposal

- Carrie Miller, Leadership and Professional Development Coordinator provided an update on what her division is planning for the in-person training.
- Optional, full-day in-person training prior to visits
- Morning: foundational training and best practices
- Afternoon: mock accreditation simulation

Key Feedback

- Strong support for in-person training
 - Importance of:
 - Mock interviews and real-world scenarios
 - Veteran examiner involvement
 - Clear connection between standards, interviews, and outcomes
 - Interview skill development (questioning techniques)
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12. Discussion Topic: Examiner Statement Process

Current Model

- Individual examiners write multiple strengths and OFIs daily
- Challenges:
 - Duplication
 - Inconsistent updates
 - Time burden

Proposed Model

- Team-based statement writing beginning after on-site day one
- Focus on:
 - Collaboration
 - Verification of findings
 - Reduced duplication

Key Feedback

- Support for reducing duplication
- Concerns about:
 - Time constraints during visits
 - Need for structured collaboration time
 - Importance of strong team lead facilitation

Suggestions included:

- Structured writing time blocks
 - Hybrid model (individual notes + team synthesis)
 - Use of shared documents for collaboration
 - Additional training for team leads
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13. Discussion Topic: Standards and Guidelines Review

- Standards last updated in 2015
- Full revision planned following federal draft analysis (expected 2027)
- Implementation likely Fall 2028

Members were encouraged to:

- Review guidelines throughout the year
 - Submit suggestions for updates
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14. Additional Topics Introduced

- Proposed updates to the **exit summary process** to improve clarity and engagement
- Continued emphasis on:

- Collaboration
 - Accuracy of findings
 - Positive and constructive feedback delivery
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15. Discussion Topic: Exit Summary

Joey Vanek led a discussion on potential changes to the exit summary process, outlining both the current model and a proposed revision.

Current Model:

Examiners are assigned standards and develop 2–3 strengths and 2–3 opportunities for improvement (OFIs). The full team reviews statements, and examiners present findings directly to the Technology Center in a large-group setting.

- **Strengths:** Promotes examiner ownership and direct communication.
- **Challenges:** Large-group format can be intimidating for Technology Center staff, often limiting questions and meaningful dialogue. Feedback may also feel vague, leading to confusion.

Proposed Model:

Examiners would continue developing strengths and OFIs, but Accreditation staff would review and present findings to Technology Center leadership in a smaller setting designed to encourage clarification and discussion.

- **Strengths:** Creates a more comfortable environment for questions, improves clarity, and reduces pressure on examiners.
- **Challenges:** May reduce transparency and remove the opportunity for examiners to present their work directly.

Committee Feedback:

Discussion reflected a range of perspectives:

- **Transparency:** Members such as Jeremy Cowley and Becki Foster emphasized the importance of large-group settings to ensure full staff access to feedback and maintain transparency.
- **Engagement & Ownership:** While some examiners value presenting, others find it uncomfortable; in practice, presentation responsibilities often fall to team leads.
- **Dialogue & Clarity:** The current model rarely generates questions. Members agreed a revised approach could better support clarification and understanding.
- **Feedback Content:** Concerns were raised about overly vague or “light” exit statements and disconnects between exit summaries and final reports. Including clearer or “soft” OFIs was suggested to avoid surprises.
- **Purpose of Exit Summary:** Members identified multiple purposes—clarification, transparency, closure, and celebration of strengths—which can be difficult to balance in a single format.
- **Hybrid Approach:** Jeff Mason suggested presenting strengths in a large group while discussing OFIs in smaller settings, though logistical challenges were noted.
- **Closure & Relationships:** Participants emphasized the value of providing examiners and Technology Center staff an opportunity to connect, express appreciation, and bring closure to the visit.

Conclusion:

Feedback indicated no clear consensus on a single approach. The group highlighted the need to balance transparency, clarity, engagement, and overall experience. ODCTE will revisit the proposal and explore potential adjustments, including hybrid options, before bringing forward next steps.

16. Interview Forms

- Joey Vanek shared that a sub-committee reviewed the interview forms and suggested updates to improve clarity and ensure questions are targeted to the appropriate audience.
- The forms are available on the advisory ctYOU site for two more weeks for additional feedback.
- Joey encouraged members, especially those serving as examiners this year, to note any confusing or unclear questions so updates can continue to be made.

16. Closing Remarks

Joey Vanek thanked participants for their engagement and valuable feedback. Members were encouraged to continue sharing ideas throughout the year.

17. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned following completion of discussion items.