§ 1205. Rural education advisory committee established. 1. Subject to the availability of funds appropriated, allocated or otherwise supplied from any other public or private source for the purposes of implementing the provisions of this article, a rural education advisory committee is hereby established. Such committee shall be comprised of nine members, to be appointed as follows: one by the temporary president of the senate, one by the speaker of the assembly, one by the governor, and one by the dean of the college of agriculture and life sciences at Cornell University. The remaining five members, one of whom shall be a certified teacher who has experience teaching in a rural school district, shall be appointed by the commissioner. The commissioner, or his or her designee, shall serve as chairperson of the committee. Membership on the committee shall be:

(a) reflective of the diversity of the state's rural population and geographic areas, and;

(b) reflective of the diversity of practical knowledge and interests in the broad range of rural educational sectors, including but not limited to, primary, secondary and post-secondary educators and administrators who have experience in a rural school district, community human service providers, the business community, and the general public.

2. The chairperson may invite individuals to assist or to serve as technical advisors to the committee in the exercise of its powers and duties, as provided in this section.

3. The terms of office of the appointed members of the committee shall be for four years. Any vacancy occurring in the appointed membership of the committee shall be filled within one year by the same authority responsible for the initial appointment of such member.

4. The committee shall meet at least twice yearly, and at such additional times as may be determined by the chairperson.

5. Members of the committee shall receive no compensation, but shall be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties.

6. In the exercise of its powers and duties, the committee shall:

(a) Work with the center in developing priorities for targeted research regarding rural education in New York;

(b) Facilitate the development of policy recommendations which may enhance access to, as well as the quality and productivity of, educational programs and practices in rural areas;

(c) Participate in the review and authorization of demonstration projects and the development of alternative models for improved and potentially more cost-effective educational activities and programs;

(d) Promote community and school involvement and collaboration in the development and implementation of policies and activities undertaken pursuant to this article; and

(e) Prepare an annual report, as well as special focus reports which may result from specific research and other activities conducted in accordance with this article.