

Policy Statement 95

This We Believe About the Importance of Business Education in the Classroom

Historically, business has been one of the most popular elective areas at the secondary level and frequently the largest major field of study for college students. Business education serves two important purposes: to educate students *for* business and *about* business. In classrooms nationwide business education should play a prominent role in preparing students for the workforce and becoming responsible citizens capable of making astute decisions that will benefit their personal and professional lives.

BENEFITS OF BUSINESS EDUCATION

Business education impacts students, employers, and communities. A direct link exists between business courses and the business environment; students are equipped to enter the workplace with greater confidence and to leverage their knowledge and skills in unique ways. Business education curriculums, supported by the National Business Education Association's *National Standards for Business Education*, are based on the conviction that business education competencies are essential for all students.

Student Benefits

All students will participate in an economic system; they need to be literate in business and economics to be successful. The knowledge and skills needed in the free enterprise system and the global economy are integrated throughout a business education curriculum and enhanced by involvement in business student organizations.

Within a diverse business environment, the benefits of business education are evident in the demonstration of interpersonal, teamwork, technology, communication, and leadership skills. Students with these skills are prepared to adapt to an ever-changing workplace.

Employer Benefits

A rigorous business curriculum benefits employers by preparing highly qualified interns and employees. Business courses develop individuals who exhibit professional attitudes and behaviors, are flexible, and can effectively analyze and solve business problems.

Business students often provide critical technical and consultative assistance to local and regional businesses and organizations. In addition, employers benefit from reduced training expenses by hiring students who possess industry-specific skills and certifications.

Community Benefits

Communities benefit from well-informed citizens engaged in community service, entrepreneurship, and economic development. Business education curriculum standards embed opportunities for students to participate in service learning and other community partnerships.

Understanding the interrelationships of business decisions and the impact on the community is a key component of business education. Students apply the principles of economic, legal, and political systems that enhance citizen involvement and effectively address the varied needs of the community. This understanding inspires entrepreneurship leading to economic growth, additional employment opportunities, and an increased tax base.

WE BELIEVE THAT

. . . education *for* and *about* business offers students the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills needed to succeed in business and in life.

. . . business courses are an ideal academic complement to general education courses. A business education curriculum encompasses business topics and integrates other academic skills such as reading, writing, math, and problem solving. Course material taught in a real-world context enhances learning, application, and retention.

. . . students completing business courses should demonstrate the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed in the workplace, pursue further education, or both.

CALL TO ACTION

The critical contributions of business education depend on the ongoing commitment of various stakeholders. Sustainability of a business education curriculum is dependent upon the engagement of the following groups.

Counselors/Advisors

Students rely on the expertise and guidance of counselors/advisors when exploring course selections and career options. **Therefore**, counselors/advisors should acknowledge the importance and benefits of business education by actively recommending enrollment in appropriate business courses to all students.

Administrators and Board Members

Programs are dependent upon funding and support of administrators and board members. **Therefore**, administrators and board members should provide financial resources and program support for business education in the curriculum to ensure a well-rounded education.

State Departments of Education

State departments of education are in a position to mandate graduation requirements. **Therefore**, state departments of education should require essential business courses for graduation.

Legislators

The responsibility for creating legislation and establishing budget allocations belongs to state and federal legislators. **Therefore**, legislators should provide adequate funding and create policies that support comprehensive education, including business education.

Business Teachers

Business teachers have the primary influence on the success of business education programs. **Therefore**, business teachers should actively promote their programs within the school and community, foster business and community partnerships, develop relationships with legislators, participate in professional activities, and collaborate with educators in other academic areas.

Parents

Parents want the best educational opportunities for their children. **Therefore**, parents should become aware of the benefits of business education and encourage their children to enroll in business courses and to participate in activities that ensure career and personal success.

Career and Technical Student Organizations

Business education prepares students for leadership in college, careers, and life. **Therefore**, career and technical student organizations should provide and promote relevant opportunities that connect educational experiences to the real world.

Professional Organizations

Professional organizations provide an avenue for continued growth, development, and leadership for individuals in the business education profession. **Therefore**, professional organizations should be proactive in advocating for business education programs and in developing and disseminating appropriate, timely resources for business teachers.

Community Partners and Advisory Councils

Community partners and advisory councils provide input to influence curriculum and opportunities beyond the traditional business classroom. **Therefore**, community partners and advisory councils should be a link between classroom business education and society.

THEREFORE, WE BELIEVE that business education in the curriculum is important for communities that desire economic growth, value economic freedom, and aspire to cultivate citizens with the knowledge and skills to perpetuate these ideals. Students enrolled in business education courses are getting more than an education; they are gaining knowledge and skills essential for life.