

# This We Believe About the Role of Business Education in Financial Education

## Policy Statement 69

All citizens must acquire financial competencies to manage their own finances and to participate effectively in the workplace. Evidence of the need for *personal financial education* is demonstrated by society's increased dependence on credit, the proliferation of credit cards, a declining rate of saving, a record number of bankruptcies, and the recognition of the need for lifelong financial security. The need for *business financial education* is illustrated by the large number of new businesses that are entrepreneurial in nature, online business opportunities, global competition, and the number of business failures. Individuals are ultimately responsible for their financial decisions, whether personal or business.

People entering the workplace will face a changing world over their lifetime. Individuals will have a longer lifespan, perhaps spending as many years in retirement as in the workplace. Because of a multitude of resources, people have an opportunity to take individual ownership of their own financial security. Online resources, financial publications, financial advisors, and investment groups are all examples of resources individuals or businesses use in managing their finances.

A free enterprise economy offers opportunities for financially competent people to be successful, while those without financial skills will struggle with the "dollars-and-cents" aspect of life. In addition, local, state, and federal legislation and the global economy impact both personal and business financial decisions. Financial education issues have been given new emphasis by enhanced use of technology, an ever-changing global economy, and recognition of the need for lifelong learning.

### Financial Education Defined

**We Believe That** financial education incorporates the development of a broad range of competencies. *The National Standards for Business Education*, published by the National Business Education Association (NBEA), identifies financial competencies required for lifelong success. Personal financial education includes money management, income and spending, savings and investment, and the use of credit. Business financial education includes the understanding of business organizations, business cycles, scarcity, opportunity costs, cost-benefit analyses, and competition.

### Financial Education Over a Lifetime

**We Believe That** important life skills are best learned over an extended period of time. The NBEA standards for personal

finance from NBEA emphasize the continuity of learning. As early as the elementary school years, students should learn how to budget, save, and spend wisely. One standard at the elementary level addresses the examination of purchasing options based upon personal financial resources. A middle/junior high school standard applies the financial decision-making process. At the secondary level, some standards focus on the wise use of credit, and at the postsecondary level, some standards emphasize financial planning and management of resources. Adults continue to develop their financial skills formally in specific finance classes or informally through reading financial publications; accessing online information; becoming active in investment groups; consulting financial planners; and attending workshops on investing, retirement planning, and insurance.

### Delivery of Financial Education

**We Believe That** business educators must be competent to provide financial education. **Further, We Believe That** business educators should be given responsibility for coordinating the financial education curriculum. Business programs must provide the foundation for personal and business financial education. A personal or business finance standalone course can be offered, and/or the competencies may be integrated into other business courses or other content areas. These competencies can be delivered in multiple ways. For example:

- Standalone Courses
- Develop a personal money management plan in a personal finance course.
- Develop an investment portfolio in a business finance course.
- Complete the loan application process for a business or individual in a finance and banking program.
- Invest in a virtual business in an online or web-based class.
- Business Curriculum Integration
- Develop a business plan in a marketing or an entrepreneurship course.
- Study the time value of money in an accounting course.
- Calculate the return on investments in a business math class.
- Interdisciplinary Integration
- Study the value of money in the elementary math curriculum.
- Analyze purchasing power concepts in middle/junior high school family and consumer sciences or social studies curricula.

- Debate the pros and cons of a trade agreement in a high school communications curriculum.

### **Financial Education Partnerships**

**We Believe That** business educators must establish partnerships with members of the global community. These partners can serve as guest speakers and mentors and provide opportunities for tours, job shadows, internships, apprenticeships, and work experiences. The inclusion of community and business partners in financial education is an integral element for the business curriculum. These partners complement the learning process and are employers of the workforce.

### **Summary**

#### **We Believe That**

- Financial education is a lifelong learning process.
- Business educators must be competent to teach personal and business financial education.
- Business educators must accept the leadership role in personal and business financial education.
- Business educators can coordinate financial education through a variety of delivery systems.
- Business educators must establish partnerships to reinforce financial education.