

Policy Statement 98

This We Believe About the Role of Business Education in College and Career Readiness

Business education plays a unique and important role in students' college and career readiness. Students who are college and career ready have the academic, employability, personal, and technical knowledge and skills to be productive members of society. College and career readiness is critical to all students' success in their postsecondary education, careers, and personal lives especially with respect to their economic and social well-being. Business educators prepare students for a successful future by ensuring they have:

1. awareness of numerous current and future career options,
2. knowledge of the educational requirements to pursue those careers,
3. academic skills to complete the required education,
4. technical skills to be competitive in the workforce,
5. employment skills to obtain the job they want, and
6. soft skills needed to perform well on the job.

All students can become college and career ready by taking business education courses, which include but are not limited to: accounting, business communication, business law, business math, career development, economics, finance, entrepreneurship, information technology, international business, management, and marketing.

We believe business education improves students' college success. College-ready individuals are able to participate in college-level coursework without remediation or supplemental instruction. Through business education courses, students gain valuable academic skills within a real-world context. For example, they improve their research and analytical skills in business law, entrepreneurship, and marketing courses. Students enhance their productivity by learning how to use computer applications efficiently in information technology courses. Additionally, they develop effective teamwork and leadership skills in business communication and management courses.

We believe business education improves students' career success. Career-ready individuals are well prepared to pursue employment opportunities and advance in their careers. Students who complete business education courses develop skills that give them a competitive advantage in the global workplace. For example, problem solving and productivity skills are enhanced in information technology courses, and effective interpersonal skills are developed in business communication courses. Technical knowledge and employability skills are gained through industry certifications and work-based learning opportunities such as job shadowing, apprenticeships, mentorships, and internship experiences. Additionally, business-related student organizations are well known for their development of students' leadership, collaboration, intercultural competency, professionalism, and attitudes.

We believe business education integrates college and career readiness skills. College- and career-ready individuals understand how knowledge and skills gained from their business education courses prepare them for success. Skills such as professionalism, work ethic, attitude, and cooperation are essential in the workforce and the classroom. Business education courses provide students with academic and employability skills, such as preparing for interviews, verbal and nonverbal communication, dependability, professional attire, and presentation skills.

All careers utilize business skills and knowledge, and individuals need an understanding of business to be successful in life and in their careers. Business and industry leaders continue to stress that students need to be globally competitive, which requires learning experiences involving global labor markets and the integration of academic and technical skills. These skills are explicitly taught and practiced within the context of business courses where students learn to apply their academic knowledge to workplace settings.

We believe that...

- **Business educators** at every level must promote the role of business education in preparing students to be college and career ready. This can be accomplished by (a) ensuring course content meets expectations through building partnerships with business, industry, and postsecondary representatives; (b) seeking professional development opportunities that enhance college and career knowledge and resources; and (c) educating stakeholders about the connection between business education and college and career readiness.
- **School personnel and policy makers** at every level must understand the standards of college and career readiness and the role that business education programs play. Administrators must hire, mentor, and retain business educators who are uniquely qualified to develop and teach business courses that reinforce college and career readiness. These leaders must advocate for high-quality, research-based teacher preparation programs that produce business teachers who are both academically and professionally qualified. School counselors must understand the content of business education and the significance it has in college and career readiness. They must advise students to enroll in business courses that relate to their college plans and/or career goals.
- **Business and industry leaders** must partner with both secondary and postsecondary educational representatives to shape curricula that prepares students to be college and career ready. They must actively participate on advisory committees to ensure course content is relevant. Additionally, leaders must provide work-based learning opportunities to ensure students obtain appropriate experiences, and they must provide support and/or resources such as speakers, field trips, equipment, and supplies.
- **Parents/guardians and community members** must advocate for schools to offer a variety of business courses in order to provide college- and career-readiness content for all students. Parents/guardians and community members must explore the opportunities within business education and encourage students to enroll in business courses.

- **Professional organizations** must assist business educators in their efforts to prepare students to be college and career ready. They must inform policy makers and provide networking and professional development opportunities to increase business educators' connections with college- and career-readiness content.

Therefore, we believe that business education is essential to students' college and career readiness regardless of their educational and career goals.