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www.ibea.org

Greetings from the Illinois Business Education Association:

About IBEA—The Illinois Business Education Association is made up of business educators from all over the State of Illinois. Our primary mission is to promote business education and to support business educators. One of our premier events is the annual IBEA fall conference which consists of sessions on a variety of business and technology topics as well as the chance to interact with other business educators from across the state.



Business Classes are Needed—Whether our current students are going on to college or entering the work force directly after high school, **business and computer technology classes are needed to help students be successful**. We must fight for our students and our jobs as business educators because the teaching we do is important to student success. IBEA has a committee investigating the possible options we might pursue towards trying to get some required business and computer classes for High School



graduation in the State of Illinois. However, with the current political climate, this will be a slow and involved process. What each of us can do immediately is work on promoting business education at our local schools in every way possible. Don't sit back and wait for someone else to take action—promote your business and computer technology classes at every opportunity now and in the future.

Political Action—As we all know, education budgets are especially tight in recent years and many of our colleagues have lost their jobs due to budget cuts. Now, more than ever, we must get involved in the politics that ultimately decide our fate. **Get to know** your school board members, your representatives and senators. Volunteer to serve on school curriculum committees. Talk to parents and school counselors and principals. Get your students involved in real world school/business projects. Discuss the importance of having business and computer technology classes in the schools at all grade levels with all of these groups of individuals. Legislative advocacy materials are enclosed with this letter. I encourage you to use these materials to promote business education at the local, state, and national levels.



Get Involved—I encourage all business teachers in the state of Illinois to get involved by becoming an ACTIVE IBEA member. If you are not yet an IBEA member, then joining is the first step. Go to www.ibea.org for membership information. If you are already an IBEA member there are many big and small ways to get more involved, so step up and do your part to keep IBEA moving forward in the years to come by serving on the board of directors or helping with the annual fall conference.



Each member working together is what makes IBEA successful!

Sincerely,

Marcy Satterwhite

Marcy Satterwhite, IBEA President

Enclosures



Illinois Business Education Association Purpose/Mission Statement

IBEA Serves Business Educators in Illinois by:

1. **Promoting the profession** and providing the environment and encouragement to improve professional endeavors.
2. **Keeping them informed** through the publications of *IBEA Reports* and *Web Gazettes* e-newsletters on activities, legislation, meetings, awards, and new developments in business education in Illinois.
3. **Bringing them together** at two state conferences: The IACTE Convention and the IBEA Fall Conference.
4. **Providing special publications** or teacher resources posted on the IBEA website.
5. **Communicating regularly** with state affiliates and national organizations.
6. **Encouraging membership** and a cooperative exchange of ideas among teachers of office technology, distributive education, consumer education, general business education, computer education, and teacher education in public, private, and parochial schools; community colleges; and private and public four-year colleges and universities. The IBEA website and listserv promote this exchange of ideas and information.
7. **Inviting membership** from students, retired members of the profession, and individuals who cooperate in the development of business education in the State of Illinois.
8. **Providing scholarships** for outstanding high school graduates, post-secondary, and graduate students interested in business education.
9. **Promoting cooperation among Illinois business education youth organizations.** Future Business Leaders of America (FBLA), Business Professionals of America (BPA), Phi Beta Lambda (PBL), Pi Omega Pi (POP), DECA, SkillsUSA and unaffiliated local business education clubs.
10. **Recognizing the accomplishments** of Illinois business educators and/or contributors to business education in Illinois through the IBEA Distinguished Service Award, IBEA Middle School, Secondary, Post-Secondary, and Collegiate Teacher of the Year Awards, IBEA Supervisor/Administrator of the Year Award, IBEA Outstanding New Professional Award, IBEA Research Award, Professional Recognition Awards, Writers' Hall of Fame, Friend of IBEA Award, and Certificates of Appreciation.

On the following pages are legislative advocacy ideas that you can modify and use to take action to promote business and computer technology courses in our schools.

Ideas for Legislative Advocacy

Prepared by

North Central Business Education
Association
Legislative Committee

Fall 2010

For more information, contact
Cathy Carruthers, NCBEA Legislative Chair and
NBEA Legislative Committee Member-at-Large

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Sample welcome letter to legislators to introduce Yourself, business education, and CTE*

- After the upcoming elections and after the elected officials take office, send the following letter to the newly elected officials. It could easily be edited to send to reelected officials as well.
- The mailing and e-mail addresses should be found on your state's government website.
- You can also edit for the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives members, but it is suggested you e-mail the letter instead of using snail mail.
- Also, edit and send to newly elected School Board members for your local school district and/or existing school board members and school administrators.

January 25, 2011

The Honorable _____
Address
Springfield, IL 62703

Dear *Senator/Representative/School Board Member* _____

Congratulations on your recent election to the *Illinois House of Representatives/Illinois Senate*. Your willingness to dedicate your time and talents to your constituents is appreciated and admired. I wish you well during this session.

My name is *Cathy Carruthers*, and I am an *Office Technology instructor at Lewis and Clark Community College in Godfrey, Illinois*. I have had the pleasure of teaching outstanding business and career and technical students for over *twenty-five* years.

If I can be of assistance regarding business education and/or career and technical education issues or information, I would be happy to do so. I look forward to working with you during your term in office.

My best wishes to you.

Sincerely

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*Adapted from letter by Sharon Kosek, former NCBEA representative to NBEA's Legislative Committee.

ACTE Issues and Advocacy*

from the Association of Career and Technical Education

Use the ACTE website to quickly find contact information on your U.S. Congressperson and U.S. Senator

Go to <http://www.acteonline.org>, click on Issues and Advocacy, input your zip code to find contact information for your U.S. Congressperson and U.S. Senator.



One of ACTE's most critical roles is representing the CTE field through advocacy activities, including direct lobbying, media relations and public awareness. This work promotes the value of CTE and the policies that are needed to support CTE practitioners, advance the field, and improve student learning, but it has little value if it lacks a strong and consistent grassroots voice. We encourage you to use the information on these pages to become an active and engaged advocate for CTE!

In this section, you'll find background information on the [key issues](#) ACTE covers, the latest [legislative updates](#), tips and tools to help you [take action](#), information on Congressional supporters in the [CTE Caucus](#) and an opportunity to support ACTE's advocacy efforts through the [CTE Support Fund](#).

*The following materials are used with permission from the Association for Career and Technical Education's (ACTE) website at <http://www.acteonline.org>

Making Your Communication More Effective

It is important that letters or e-mail be as simple and clear as possible. To make your communication more effective:

- **Keep it short.**
Limit your letter to one or two pages.
- **Use appropriate address and salutation.**
Use the correct title, address and salutation and spell each correctly.

To find the contact information of your Members of Congress, please visit ACTE's [Legislative Action Center](#). If you are writing a state or local official, visit your local government page or your state ACTE Association for more information. The following forms of address and salutation are recommended for Members of Congress (It is not necessary to include the room number or street address when writing to your Members of Congress):

To Senators: The Honorable (insert full name) United States Senate Washington, DC 20510	To Representatives: The Honorable (insert full name) U. S. House of Representatives Washington, DC 20515
Dear Senator (insert last name):	Dear Representative (insert last name):

Be positive.

Policymakers, like most of us, respond best to praise, not criticism. Tell them you supported them in the past (if you did) and how you need their help. It is extremely important to acknowledge their previous support on this or other issues.

- **Ask for a reply.**
When they do reply – and they usually will – write again. Compliment positive actions taken or encourage reconsideration of negative actions or those not taken. When a public official differs from your position, his or her response may include such language as “careful study,” “due consideration,” or “keeping your comments in mind.” These are often negative indicators and do not show commitment. Write back for clarification. Doing so lets the policymaker know that you are serious about the issue and are following his or her actions carefully.
- **Establish yourself as a resource.**
You are an expert in your field and can offer to provide additional information regarding the field, the issue, and the impact of proposed legislation.

Writing E-mail

Although e-mail may not have the same visual effect as a pile of letters, its speed is unmatched. Coordinated e-mail campaigns are now an established advocacy tool. Its main advantage is the ability to get your message delivered promptly compared to perhaps finding your public official's phone lines busy, especially when an important vote is imminent. Its disadvantage is the possibility that your message won't be read in time or at all. With that possibility, it is prudent to have an effective statement in the subject line of the e-mail in case it isn't read. ACTE's [Legislative Action Center](#) can help you compose, send and find e-mail addresses for your Members of Congress. To make your e-mail more effective:

- **Summarize your views in the subject line.**
Make it short and efficient, for example: "YES ON S. 2." Whether consciously or subconsciously, staffers will always see the subject line in their e-mail windows.
- **Keep content short.**
Limit your message to a few paragraphs. E-mail is designed for quick messages, not lengthy discussion. It's best to use bulleted points, as in a fact sheet. Otherwise, the same rules hold true as with letters:
 - Use appropriate address and salutation.
 - Be positive.
 - Establish yourself as a resource.
 - Ask for a reply.

Calling Policymakers

If you want to make an immediate impact on an issue, use the phone. Staff and policymakers can't avoid getting the message from a constantly ringing phone as the time of a decision on a major issue approaches. Hours of steady rings have been known to change the response from "thank you for calling" to "the Member of Congress is definitely backing the proposal."

- For contacting your Member of Congress, find your legislator's phone number either by calling the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at: 202-224-3121 (Senate) or 202-225-3121 (House), or visiting the ACTE [Legislative Action Center](#). If you need further assistance, please call ACTE at 800-826-9972.
- Once connected to the office, ask to speak to the staff member who handles education or workforce development issues (depending on what program you are calling about). Local officials may not have a staff member to field calls and may answer directly, but high-ranking public officials rarely take calls directly until you get to know them.
- After you have identified yourself, tell the staff member the reason you are calling—remember to keep your remarks short and focused.
- Remember to say "Thank you for taking my call and considering my views" – even if they disagree with you.

**National Business Education Association
Legislative Advocacy Tools**

Available for purchase from NBEA's Online Bookstore at www.nbea.org

1. **10 Facts - Packages of 50** – These are “What Every Legislator Should Know About Business Education” or “What Ever Administrator Should Know About Business Education,” etc. (Note: NBEA will soon be putting these online for members to download and print yourself)



Looking for a new way to promote your business education programs? NBEA has a series of brochures for parents, students, administrators, counselors, businesses, and legislators. The information in each brochure presents a candid and compelling look at what can be gained by each target audience from business education courses. These brochures will help you deliver your message in a professional and methodical way. (MEMBER PRICE: \$15.00)

2. **Person to Person: Working With Policy Makers to Support Business Education**

Person to Person: Working With Policy Makers to Support Business Education is a guide to taking a personal approach to supporting business education priorities. You can use the information presented to: Decide which activities offer you the best options for working with policy makers; Understand the steps of the legislative process monitor legislation or policies and find the current status of bills; Identify policy makers who will be instrumental in passing bills school bond issues and resolutions you've identified as germane; and Create and implement follow-up strategies for developing and maintaining relationships with policy makers. (MEMBER PRICE: \$10.00)



Pretest Career Interests Before Going to College

Business courses allow students to explore career interests through these courses:

- ◆ Accounting
- ◆ Business management
- ◆ Communication
- ◆ Computer applications
- ◆ Entrepreneurship
- ◆ Information systems
- ◆ International business
- ◆ Keyboarding
- ◆ Marketing
- ◆ Personal finance

Provide Two Educational Options in One—College Prep and Career Prep

Business programs include academic subjects needed to meet the entrance requirements of colleges and universities. They also include subjects that meet entry-level job requirements of employers in fields related to the program.



Business Education prepares our students to succeed!

In today's rapidly growing and changing economy, students who have taken business and computer course in high school will have the skills to cope not only with the complexities of the business world, but the practical skills to be able to:

- ◆ Handle consumer and credit issues
- ◆ Save and invest
- ◆ Use a variety of technology and computer software tools

These skills, along with many others covered in business courses, will help students be successful in their future college and career endeavors.

Brochure Information Resource Used:
National Business Education Association
www.nbea.org



Illinois Business Education Association
www.ibea.org



Facts Every Student and Parent Should Know about the Importance of Business Education Courses

Illinois Business Education Association
www.ibea.org

What Business Courses Do For Students. . .

Develop “Life Skills” Necessary for Economic Success

Business courses help students develop knowledge in personal finance, time management, organizational skills, and goal setting. This information will be used in important decisions related to buying a house or car, choosing the appropriate insurance, filing tax returns, budgeting, and investing.

Provide Information Technology Skills

The ability to use a computer to access and create information is a vital skill in today’s business world. Business courses that teach word processing, spreadsheet, database management, and Internet skills can help students get a higher-level position with a better salary in their future careers and help students be more successful in college.



Expand Educational Opportunities

Most students learn best in courses that offer hands-on experience. Business courses add new dimensions to learning through applied activities. Business courses make academic subjects more relevant and show how reading, English, and math can be applied in “real world” situations.

Develop Marketable Skills and Habits to Apply to Any Career

Communication skills, self-confidence, self-awareness, good work habits, problem solving, critical thinking, punctuality, reliability, teamwork, and leadership are learned in business classes. Students will feel a sense of accomplishment, which will instill the self-assurance needed to set and achieve career goals.



Acquire International Business Knowledge

In today’s increasingly global economy, a familiarity with other countries and their impact on American business is essential. Business courses provide students with knowledge of the international marketplace and economic systems, which can be a stepping stone to a career in international business.

Encourage Creativity and Entrepreneurial Thinking

An explosion of job growth has occurred in small businesses. Business courses prepare students to work in a small business and/or start their own business. Students will learn to meet new challenges with a creativity that results in fresh ideas and will develop an entrepreneurial attitude that can make things happen in any career.

Broaden Lifelong Work and Study Options

After taking business courses, students will have the option to go to work, go to college, or do both! Business courses prepare students for a well-paying satisfying career in any of a wide variety of fields in the business world. Regardless of the area a student chooses to study, business and technology knowledge will be needed.

Help Pay for College

The skills acquired in business courses can help students get work to finance their education. Students can work full-time and earn more money—more quickly—to pay for college. Or students can work part-time to earn money for tuition while attending college. Students may also work for employers who will assist in paying for college education expenses.

