



# “DISCOVERING YOUR BUSINESS EDUCATION VOICE”

NBEA ADVOCACY 201 TOOLKIT

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## Table of Contents

A Possible 10-Step Advocacy Plan .....	3
Advocacy Tips.....	4
Writing Letters to Political Figures.....	6
Sample Letters .....	9
Emails.....	11
Sample Email.....	12
Calling Legislators.....	13
Planning a Visit to a Legislator .....	14
Committee Hearings .....	15
Example Letter to a Committee Hearing .....	16
Preparing Fact Sheets .....	18
Resources.....	19

## The 10 Steps Advocacy Plan

1. Identify an Advocacy Challenge or Opportunity  
For example, to convince the school board to provide adequate time for business instruction and professional development
2. Determine the Key Audiences...such as
  - Local School Board Members (primary)
  - People who support the school board members (secondary)
  - School staff (secondary)
  - Other elected leaders (secondary)
  - State Legislature, Congress
  - Media
3. Find Out What Those Audiences Currently Know or Perceive
  - Read past Board meeting minutes
  - Review past election materials for comments on Business Education
  - Read newspaper coverage of Board meetings
  - Hold individual interviews with Board members
4. Determine how the audience receives their information
  - Interviews (based on what is discovered, new audiences may be added. For example, if members of the Board indicate that they only listen to recommendations from the Superintendent, then he/she is added to your audience list)
  - Email or regular mail
5. Establish measurable objectives for each audience
  - Each Board member will be given a copy of the Business Education Curriculum standard strands and performance expectations
  - Any published articles or white papers on the value of Business Education
  - Bring in the State Board Business Education specialist as a resource to meet with the school board
6. Message points for each audience
  - Business Education is more important than ever
  - Business Education creates effective business-minded citizens
  - Business Education studies holds our business society together
7. Communication activities to deliver the message
  - Prepare a cover letter and send a copy of the Business Education Curriculum Standards and Performance Expectations
  - Make a follow-up phone call to assure it was received
  - Submit an article to the State School Boards Association
  - Deliver an invitation (written or verbal) to have local board members observe your business education classroom
  - Prepare your students to answer questions on your program
8. Decide what resources are needed for each activity
  - Time to compose and disseminate the invitations, letters, etc.
  - Postage
9. Develop a timeline and responsible party for each activity and indicate completion time for each activity
10. Evaluation
  - Did they express an interest in the Business Education Curriculum standards?
  - Did they visit the Business Education Classroom?
  - How did they vote? (Class offerings and PD time?)

Adapted from: [https://www.socialstudies.org/advocacy11946/advocacy\\_planning\\_your\\_10\\_step\\_plan](https://www.socialstudies.org/advocacy11946/advocacy_planning_your_10_step_plan)

## Advocacy Tips

There are numerous ways in which you can effect positive change during legislative sessions. Politeness is key when contacting any Legislator using any platform. The busiest time for Legislators is generally January through March. Best time to build your relationship with a Legislator is before or after a session.

1. Start at the grassroots—Locally
  - Make a point to personally get to know your local superintendent
  - Make a point to personally get to know your school board members
  - Attend school board meetings
  - Invite the superintendent/school board members to your classroom to see what you do
2. Get to know your local state representative      Who represents you in Washington?
  - Not sure who your local representatives are, go to <https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials>
3. Contacting House and Senate leaders during the build-up to an important vote can be extremely effective
4. Note: The President’s office also keeps track of communications on current issues –may not receive an answer but message will be heard
5. Legislators respond to communications from individuals who live in the district they represent
6. More information: <https://www.c-span.org>
7. All representatives have local offices . . . be sure to visit them and make yourself known so that they can put a face to a name in the future
  - Make a point of telling them about Business Education and what it can do for the workforce in your state, etc.
8. Always document/cover activities that your students are involved in on the school website, local newspapers, school paper
  - Take pictures, but be sure to get photo releases
  - Stronger impact, be sure to let students speak
9. Keep statistics on your program and students . . . dollars spent, student success stories in CTSOs (Career and Technical Student Organizations), the career paths, etc., where the students are now, the jobs they hold . . . anything to focus attention on your program
10. In addition, the more information that you can provide the better---National statistics, success stories, and articles that support your programs, and your classroom from professional publications
11. Be a Business Education Resource
  - Please feel free to call me if you have any questions or need any further information about Business Education.
12. Host an Open House and invite the local business community to your classroom . . . let the students show them what they are learning and have them tell them how valuable they think the classes are
  - Invite the media
13. Prep your students for classroom visitors. Ask the students this question--“Students, what would you say to a visitor who comes into our classroom and asks you about the role that this class has played or is playing in your life?”  
“How you will use this class in the future?”
14. Invite Representatives to come into your classroom to see what your students are learning
  - Let the students teach them what they have learned
  - Invite the media, if possible, but with the permission of the visiting Representative

15. Keep the contact with the local Board of Education members and local representatives going long after your initial meeting by sending them updates, newspaper clippings, pictures
16. Invite them to events...such as BPA, FBLA, and DECA competitions to Judge; you never know, they may just come and see what the hype is about
17. Get key community leaders to serve on your Advisory Committees . . . get them involved . . . and you get involved in your community
18. Get your community involved in your program  
Spread the word that *Business Education is Education for Life*  
Be sure that administration and the community see that their tax dollars are well spent
19. Regularly visit the Advocacy tab on the ACTE Website, <https://www.acteonline.org/advocacy/>
  - Read the Policy Watch Blog—
  - Under Take Action --Action Center includes form letters, policy positions, Legislator ratings, and local press contacts, and items of concern that you can personally take action on through the site
  - The Policy Agenda will keep you informed of where ACTE stands on various policy issues, pending legislation, and implementations
  - Advocacy Resources: Outlines steps on how to set up a personal visit with a Legislator, short video on How to Call a Member of Congress

## Writing Letters to Political Figures

Shows officials that you are interested enough to set aside time to write and mail a letter

- Legislators will try to determine the level of intelligence of the writer of any correspondence received
    - If the writer is clever, witty, and obviously smart, the shrewd politician does not want this type of constituent as a so-called enemy especially in today's world of tweets and blogs
    - An enemy who's a skillful communicator can be dangerous
1. Be sure that you are a constituent of the politician you are writing
    - Correspondence must be timely---when an issue is being discussed/voted on
    - Research before you write---
    - Be clear about your position
  2. Do extensive homework---be sure that you are writing to the correct politician/their stance, etc.
    - Be sure that you have the correct spelling of their name, title, etc.
    - Look through newspapers and magazines, and search online news archives to understand what your officials have done – or not done – regarding your issue
    - Research their voting record
    - Research to determine the issues that matter to the politician you are writing to
    - Find out what committees they sit on; they will have both greater knowledge and greater influence in those areas
    - Find out a bit about the politician's personal background, such as whether they have children, and if they grew up in a certain area, as these things can influence people's outlook
  3. Write about one specific topic per letter using your own words
  4. Handwrite the letter if possible . . . carries more impact
  5. If your department has the same concern, you can write one letter (keyed) and all sign
    - You can each handwrite letters for more personal touch and impact
    - NEVER use a boilerplate letter—embed parts into your own letters

6. Write a personal letter using a formal business letter style
7. Be sure that your communication includes your complete contact information
  - I created a letterhead containing my address, telephone numbers, and email address
8. Use appropriate addresses and salutations

9. **REPRESENTATIVES**

**The Honorable (first and last name)**  
**United States Senate**  
**Full address**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

**SENATORS**

**The Honorable (first and last name)**  
**U. S. House of Representatives**  
**Full address**  
**Washington, DC 20510**

**Dear Representative (Insert last name)**

**Dear Senator (Insert last name)**

Use The Honorable in your inside address even if you do not agree with the person's politics or actions; this is a courtesy you need to use in your greeting

10. Be sure that your letter is very clear and concise, one page or less, maximum two pages
11. Be sure the tone of your letter is respectful, and positive—human nature—respond to praise, not criticism
  - Tell them you supported them (only if you did)
  - Extremely important to acknowledge any previous support on other issues
  - NEVER abuse or threaten
12. If you are writing about a specific bill or other piece of legislation or document, make sure to identify it according to its number
  - Legislators need to specifically know what you are writing about
  - Your message needs to show that you feel strongly about the matter you are writing about
13. First paragraph—Your pitch, introduces why you are writing:
  - Let the politician know that you appreciate them and that they have a difficult job
  - Introduce yourself and why you are qualified to speak on this issue
  - Be sure that you place your pitch in the first paragraph
14. Select two to three strong reasons to support your position/request with compelling arguments and evidence
  - You can explain each reason in a single paragraph or present all three in one long one
  - Use accurate facts and statistics – but don't overuse them
  - Provide real-life examples if appropriate
  - Refrain from attacking people
15. **DON'T TYPE IN CAPITAL LETTERS IN THE HOPE OF CONVINCING YOUR READER**
  - Unprofessional
  - Difficult to read
16. Ask for a response or a specific action  
 Request specific reasons they are supporting or opposing the proposal/bill, etc.
17. Last paragraph
  - Restate your pitch
  - Optional---If you offer yourself as a resource, provide the politician a reason to use you as a resource---make it crystal clear why you can help and why only you have the solution to the issues in the above paragraph
  - Thank your politician for taking the time to read your letter
  - Leave contact information (email address, school name, etc.)
18. Be sure to sign your letter and include your contact information
  - If you have pertinent materials and/or editorials from local papers etc., include them

19. Follow up-- if you haven't heard from your official or one of their representatives in a few weeks
  - Send an email to thank them again for reading your letter
  - Tell them that you hope someone will respond to your query when possible
20. Don't be afraid to let the politician know that you are willing to help them if they vote the way you want them to
  - Politicians need "cover" if they take a courageous stand
  - They need constituents who will openly support them and come to their defense
21. Remember that your letter will likely be initially read by an assistant, discussed briefly with the politician, and a response is drafted according to that discussion
22. When you receive a response, write again to thank them for any positive action taken or encourage them to reconsider any negative action or any action that was not taken
  - Perhaps ask for clarification...let the Legislator know that you are serious about the issue
  - Let the Legislator know that you are following his or her actions carefully
23. Establish yourself as an expert in your field
  - Offer to provide additional information regarding Business Education, the issue, and the impact that the proposed legislation will have on Business Education, your program, your profession
24. Proofread carefully
25. Send the original letter to the district office and a copy to the Washington DC office
26. Continue to write the politician until the end of the matter
27. If you are sending a letter to a committee member **who is not** your Legislator, always send a copy to your own representatives

## Sample Letters

### Introducing Yourself, Business Education, and/or CTE to a Legislator

#### Notes:

- After an election, or after an elected official takes office use this sample letter...which can be easily edited to send to reelected officials.
- The mailing and email addresses can be found on your state government website
- This letter can also be edited for the U. S. Senate and House of Representatives
  - Use email instead of regular mail
- Can also be edited and sent to newly elected School Board members for your local school district and/or existing school board members and school administrators
- Please note in the interest of space we have not followed current formatting rules

#### Date

The Honorable \_\_\_\_\_

Address

City, State Zip Code

Dear Senator/Representative or name of School Board Member \_\_\_\_\_:

Congratulations on your recent election the (State/Federal/School Board). 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 \_\_\_\_\_, and I am an \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, (state). I have had the pleasure of teaching outstanding business and career and technical students for over \_\_\_\_\_ years. Our department is unique in that our students leave our programs both career ready and college ready.

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,

Your name and complete contact information

(Adapted from a letter written by Cathy Carruthers, former representative to NBEA's Legislative Committee)

The following letter was delivered to all Illinois State Senators and Representatives on behalf of IBEA Members during a past IACTE Lobby Day. This letter can be easily modified to use in your state.

Date

Dear Illinois Senators and Representatives:

As we brought to your attention with a letter last year, the Illinois Business Education Association is very concerned about the elimination of so many business teachers in our public schools by local school boards trying to find ways to cut their shrinking budgets. **Business and computer skills are needed in every career field a student could choose to enter in the future.** Trained business teachers and business and computer class offerings are the last places cuts should be made in the school systems.

Unfortunately, since there are no state or federal board of education requirements for business and computer classes in the school systems, local school boards feel that these areas are the only places they can make cuts while still meeting the math, English and science requirements at the state and federal levels. While general education courses are certainly important, we need to have a more rounded curriculum for our students. **We are seeing a huge number of students drop out of High School because they do not see the real-world applications of many of the general education classes they are forced to take.** If these students had options to also take classes they were interested in, they would be more likely to stay in school and graduate and become more productive citizens of our state.

As we know from the state of the economy, **many of our citizens are lacking in good money management and other basic “business” skills** which has contributed to credit card debt and other financial issues. We are doing a disservice to all of our young people if we are not preparing them with practical, real world business and technology skills when they leave our classrooms. Instead of eliminating business classes, **we need to REQUIRE that EVERY student take at least one basic business and computer skill class** as part of their high school graduation requirements. These classes must be taught by a certified business education teacher who has the background and training needed to train our students successfully. I ask for you to work with your colleagues in the state government and state board of education to make this requirement happen to help all our students in the State of Illinois have a successful future in the business and technology world we live in today.

Sincerely,

Your name and complete contact information

(Adapted from a letter written by Marcy Satterwhite, former Public Information Chairperson IBEA)

## Emails

With the speed and ease of delivery, it's common to use email and send your correspondence via the computer.

1. Advantages of using email for formal correspondence to politicians
  - Saves the trouble associated with a formal, regular mail letter
  - Faster than normal mail, potentially making the response faster
  - Electronic mail is less likely to get lost on the receiver's desk/BUT hit delete and it's gone
2. Be sure that you are a constituent
3. Research before you send your email
4. When sending an email to a Legislator, it should be considered a professional letter, follow the guidelines concerning letter writing
5. Be sure that your correspondence is timely—when an issue is being discussed/voted on
6. NEVER abuse or threaten in your email
7. Summarize your views in the subject line—The Bill # and perhaps how you want them to vote
8. Be particularly clear, emphatic and humanize your message from the beginning—more impact
9. Be clear about your position—support with your expert knowledge
10. Be honest with the statistics and examples that you use
11. Keep the content short (500 words or less)—couple of paragraphs—remember emails are designed to be short—but still following letter writing principals
  - Best to use bullet points to avoid long paragraphs
  - Never use attachments---they most likely will not be opened
12. Use appropriate salutations
13. Be sure the tone of the email is positive
14. Establish yourself as a resource
15. Request a response
16. Be sure to include your complete contact information, address, telephone numbers, and email address
17. Think about sending a fax
  - Faxes are quick and usually reliable
  - Most office fax machines are in a public area so perhaps your intended recipient is not necessarily the only person who will read your fax
  - The receiver's fax machine may not necessarily print a neat, readable, professional-looking copy—which could reflect negatively on the writer
18. Do not send messages every day about every issue . . . the Legislator will quickly lose sight of the urgency or expertise that you bring to the issue
19. Be sure **not** to cc everyone---other members of house and senate in the same email, write separate emails
20. Proofread carefully

## Sample Email

Dear Senator (insert name):

The legislation addressing (bill number or exact name of bill) is of paramount interest to me because I am a high school business education teacher at XYZ High School in (city).

This legislation directly affects my students and my profession...the way that we as professionals will be able to function effectively in our classrooms.

I am particularly concerned about:

- Bullet points here

Because (support your points here with examples and data).

Although I have read reports of your position on this matter in the media, I realize that perhaps this may not fully represent your viewpoint. Therefore, I look forward to your reply expressing your opinions and your current stance on the issue.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my viewpoint on this matter. I believe it is an important issue and would like to see this legislation (pass, fail, or be amended) to ensure effective educational services for the students involved. How do you plan to vote?

Sincerely,

Your name and full contact information

## Calling Legislators

Calling your elected officials is a powerful way to put pressure on your Legislators. Remember that when you call Washington, you won't be connected directly with your Legislator, you will get the switchboard.

1. Dial the Legislator's office, direct if possible
2. Senator's switchboard—202-224-3121                      Representative's switchboard—202-225-3131
3. Call only your own Legislator
4. You'll need to know which district you live in
5. Identify yourself as a constituent
6. Know the name and correct spelling of the Legislator you're trying to contact
7. Ask to speak to the aide who handles the issue you are calling about
8. Know your facts—research your Legislator's positions on your issues, and consider these in framing your arguments before your call
9. Be concise and to the point—keep your call to 2-3 minutes
10. Write out the two or three points you want to make you call
11. Be sure the call is timely
12. Make it personal
13. Note your expertise on the issue
14. Address only one issue per call
15. Be positive
16. Clearly state whether you are requesting support or opposition to a specific bill
17. Ask them to make note of your position on the issue
18. Thank the Legislator for their support
19. Call the local office of the Legislator—more staff available to talk to constituents
20. End the conversation with agreement on what is to happen next; if you are to follow-up, do so immediately
21. Attitude matters, courtesy counts, tone tells all
22. Put a smile in your telephone voice and let your personality shine
23. Be sure to say thank you
24. Always follow up with a letter restating your points and thanking them for their time

## Planning a Visit to a Legislator

This is perhaps the most effective way to communicating with a politician. In many instances, it carries more weight than an email, signing a petition, or sending a letter. Here are some suggestions to help you plan a successful visit.

1. Be sure you are a constituent(s)
2. Email, mail, or call your Legislator to request a meeting
  - Identify who you are
  - Who you represent (if you are going as part of a group)
  - Who will attend—if it is a group of individuals
  - Approximate time required
  - Subject you want to discuss
3. Pinpoint your objective and develop your plan
4. Reconfirm the day before the scheduled visit
5. Be sure to arrive at the scheduled appointment well in advance (15 minutes is the usual)
6. Be prompt, polite, and honest
7. Be flexible as schedules are crowded, running late, interrupted by phone calls etc. ...calls for you to also be patient
8. Briefly try to make connections—tie the Legislator to things happening in the state you or your program
9. Tell the Legislator
  - Who you are
  - Why you are there; if it is a bill, state the number
  - The action you desire
  - Give personal examples to support your position
  - Be sure to identify how this will affect constituents
10. Listen carefully
  - Take notes on the conversation
11. Always answer questions truthfully so you remain credible
12. Summarize your main points of your visit
  - Restate the action that you hope the Legislator will take
13. Leave your contact information on a fact sheet for the Legislator's future reference
14. Be sure to thank the Legislator for their time
15. As you leave, thank the office help
16. After the visit, debrief
  - What worked well
  - What didn't work
  - How could the experience be improved
17. Send a thank you note to the Legislator
18. Follow-up—if you do not hear from the Legislator in a couple of weeks
  - Call, email, or write them a letter discussing the visit—capsulate the points, remind the Legislator of your proposed course of action
  - Respectfully request a response

## Committee Hearings

1. Do your homework
2. Understand the bill or issue, the status of the bill, and the impact on you, your students, and your profession
3. Write out your statement in direct, easy to understand language
4. Prepare typed copies for the committee members and a few extra copies for others who may be interested
5. Dress like the professional you are, appearance is everything and may be as important to some Legislators as what you say or how you say it
6. Know the location of the building, the meeting room, and the meeting time of the committee
7. If possible, attend a committee meeting before you testify to familiarize yourself with the process, room layout, etc.
8. Be respectful, never accuse committee members of anything
9. Resist the temptation to scold, put down, or insult the decision makers or other witnesses, this will likely alienate them from your cause
10. Agendas are generally posted outside the meeting room
11. You may have to sign in as a witness and indicate if you are testifying in support or in opposition to the bill
12. Sometimes testimony will be in random order
13. Begin your testimony by greeting the chair and committee members  
“Good afternoon Chairman James and members of the \_\_\_\_\_ committee”
14. Introduce yourself, and if you are representing a group or organization, who you represent for the record
15. Begin with a clear, concise statement of your position and what you/your group want(s)
16. Speak from the heart in a clear, but direct manner
17. Plan to speak no more than 3-5 minutes—have two versions of your testimony available 1 min. and 5 min.
18. Be courteous
19. Never argue with committee members or members of the audience
20. Remember the most powerful testimony is a combination of personal stories and accurate, current statistics
21. Be sure to thank the committee  
“Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I would be happy to answer questions.”
22. When answering a question, acknowledge the chair first and respond: “Chair \_\_\_\_\_, Senator/Representative \_\_\_\_\_, the answer to your question is
23. If you do not know to the answer to a question, be honest, say so, then offer to research the answer and get back to the committee—then send the written response to the committee chair—again including your contact information
24. Perhaps a member of your group in the audience has the answer; if so, refer them to the committee for the response
25. At the conclusion of your testimony, thank the committee for their time
26. Follow-up on the bill’s progress
27. Contact the committee members personally with a follow-up letter, sending a copy to your Legislator(s)

## Example of a letter presented to a State Legislative Committee

Date

Clerk of the Education Committee

To Representative Hagan, primary sponsor of HB 108, Representative Brenner and members of the Education and Career Readiness committee, good afternoon.

My name is Stephen Lewis Sr. and I come before you as a strong proponent of House Bill 108. I am a business professional with 18 years of senior level financial management experience with notable companies such as Wells Fargo Bank and JP Morgan Chase. I have also worked in retail management for Spencer Gifts and K-Mart. I am the past-president of the Ohio Business Teachers Association and currently I am a business teacher in the Olentangy Local School District, teaching personal finance to students in grades 9 through 12.

I come before you today, as I believe the State of Ohio is at a critical point in its illustrious, yet rapidly changing history. A report authored by Civic Enterprises and the Everyone Graduates Center at Johns Hopkins University and released annually in partnership with the Alliance for Excellent Education and America's Promise Alliance, entitled *Building a Grad Nation* examined both progress and challenges toward reaching the Grad Nation campaign goal of a national on-time graduation rate of 90 percent by the Class of 2020.

At 84.1 percent, the national graduation rate is at an all-time high. All told, 2.8 million more students have graduated from high school since 2001, resulting in significant benefits for young people, the economy, and the nation. There are now roughly 1,000 large, low-graduation-rate high schools, and less than 900,000 students attending them—down from more than 2,000 such schools and 2.5 million students enrolled in them in 2002. Most notably, low-income students made up nearly half of the class of 2015.

However, the nation must double its pace of progress to reach the 90 percent goal by 2020. For many states, progress has stagnated, often due to specific student subgroups that these states continue to leave behind. Low-income students, students with disabilities, Black and Hispanic/Latino students, and English Language Learners continue to graduate at lower rates than their peers do.

One of those states that has stalled, based upon the report, is Ohio. Six years ago, Ohio ranked near the top of states with students earning high school diplomas in four years. Nevertheless, the study's lead author, Jennifer DePaoli, says that since then, graduation rates for disabled students, students learning English, and black and Hispanic students have "stagnated." According to DePaoli, "Black students in Ohio in 2015, less than 60 percent of them were graduating in four years," "That's really troublesome. It's those gaps that are preventing Ohio from raising those graduation rates further."

Fortunately, in response to this troubling news, members of our House and Senate, along with business leaders from across the state have risen to the occasion and have heralded change in the state's education system in an effort to increase the readiness of our youth for life after high school. The Ohio Department of Education and the state legislative body have adopted a new vision for preparing youth for high-demand careers through a program referred to as New Skills for Youth. As you know, NSFY is an innovative program that capitalizes on using cross-sector partnerships to assist youth in preparing for

life after high school. To fund the NSFY program, a \$2MM grant was provided by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and JPMorgan Chase & Co. Ohio is actually only one of 10 states to receive a New Skills for Youth (NSFY) grant, which directly aligns with many of Gov. Kasich's Executive Workforce Board's initiatives and many Ohio Department of Education activities geared toward creating a comprehensive strategy to make sure Ohio's students are ready for the workforce of the future.

Through programs such as the NSFY, the State of Ohio seeks to increase the percentage of students graduating with industry-recognized credentials to 15 percent; ensure cross-institutional alignment of career-focused pathways resulting in seamless transitions for students and minimize institutional barriers through expanding the opportunity for transcripted credits and statewide articulation agreements.

Another program designed to help increase the graduation rate and prepare students for remedial free higher education and careers of their choice is Success Bound. The Ohio Legislative body through the authorization of House Bill 49 established the Ohio Means Jobs-Readiness Seal. Ohio high school students now can earn recognition by showing they are prepared to contribute to the workplace and their communities. The Ohio Means Jobs-Readiness Seal is a formal designation students can earn on their high school diplomas and transcripts indicating they have the personal strengths, strong work ethic and professional experience that businesses need. To earn the Ohio Means Jobs-Readiness Seal, motivated high school students must demonstrate certain professional skills required for success in the workplace. The Ohio Means Jobs-Readiness Seal is available for the graduating classes of 2018 and beyond and printed directly on Ohio diplomas and transcripts.

In its ultimate wisdom, the legislative body of the state has recognized that once again, the state can reach academic heights that places our future workforce ready for the challenges of tomorrow. The state has identified the skills students need to master based upon what businesses say they are looking for in a dominant workforce. The opportunity to continue this effort and ensure that our students have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to manage their personal wealth is embedded in the language of House Bill 108, the Informed Student Document Act. With the same fervor to develop and prepare a strong, skillful workforce, the same effort must be made to ensure that same workforce has the skills and knowledge to manage the wealth that comes along with the skilled occupations of tomorrow.

Please consider this, business classes in general and personal finance in particular prepare students to become knowledgeable and ethical decision makers as they fulfill their roles as consumers, workers, and citizens in an increasingly global environment. Because all students will participate in the economic system, all students need to be literate in business and personal financial management. Students must understand and manage their decisions related to their personal financial affairs and to the organizations in which they are employed along with the resources they are expected to manage. If students are not prepared then the alternative is financial failure. A recent study of bankruptcies from April 1, 2015, to March 31, 2016 found that Ohio has the 10th highest rate of personal bankruptcy filings in the country. Cuyahoga County remains particularly distressed, as it has recorded more bankruptcies in 2016 than other counties in the state. In fact, out of 587 counties across America, Cuyahoga comes in at number 53 in terms of personal bankruptcy filings.

The concepts contained in Personal Finance such as, opportunity cost, earning and reporting income, budgeting, saving, investing, buying goods and services, using credit, and protecting against risk are fundamental skills all students must learn to navigate the financial decisions they will have to make in

regard to the wealth they accumulate. The lifelong financial earning potential of our students is in the millions of dollars. The math is very simple, a person averaging \$40,000 a year over a 40-year career amounts to \$1.6MM! Citizens of Ohio making this kind of wealth should not be filing for bankruptcy!

In conclusion, regardless of the reasons not to approve HB 108, the reasons to approve the bill are fundamentally priceless. If you, the representatives of the great State of Ohio want to lead the nation in preparing the best workforce for tomorrow's jobs, thereby attracting the best businesses in the country and around the globe, such as Amazon, then you must approve HB 108. It therefore is your responsibility and ultimately your legacy to ensure all students who graduate from an Ohio High School do so with the skills and knowledge to navigate the financial wealth they will surely receive while performing the jobs of tomorrow.

I thank you very much for your time, consideration, and approval of House Bill 108.

Respectfully,

Stephen M. Lewis Sr., MBA  
Past President- Ohio Business Teachers Association  
Business Educator  
Olentangy Local School District

## Designing an Effective Fact Sheet

Try a one-page content designed fact sheet as an effective "leave behind"

1. Fact Sheets must be visually attractive, clean, crisp, and concise
2. Title of the document is FACT SHEET
3. Use 10-14 font sizes
4. Begin with a summary of your purpose
5. Include information only pertinent to your issue
6.
  - Organize the information for impact by using a series of points to make your case
  - Subheadings and bullets where appropriate are best
  - Use charts, graphs and other visuals to clarify your points
7. Leave plenty of white space
8. Conclude by asking for clear call to action
9. Make the finished Fact Sheet polished and professional
10. Be sure to include contact information---can put this in a letterhead
11. Keep documentation of sources for any data you include...some readers may want more in-depth information

Adapted from "Person to Person...Working with Policy Makers to Support Business Education," NBEA Publication, Reston, VA, 2000.

## NBEA Legislative Advocacy Resources

### Booklet

"Person to Person . . . Working with Policy Makers to Support Business Education". Reston, VA: National Business Education Association, 2000.

### NBEA Website Resources

Visit the NBEA Website, [www.NBEA.org](http://www.NBEA.org), click on Member Information, and scroll down to Business Education Advocacy.

[Facts Every Legislator Should Know About Business Education](#)

[Facts Every Business Should Know About Business Education](#)

[Facts Every Parent Should Know About Business Education](#)

[Facts Every Student Should Know About Business Education](#)

[Facts Every Counselor Should Know About Business Education](#)

[Facts Every Administrator Should Know About Business Education](#)

### Other Resources:

**Website:** American Federation of Teachers, <https://www.aft.org/action>

**Website:** Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE), [ACTEonline.org/](http://ACTEonline.org/)

**Website:** Advance CTE, <https://careertech.org/>

**Website:** National Education Association, <http://edadvocacy.nea.org/>

**Website:** Your Local State Teacher Union website, for example in Michigan: <https://mea.org/legislation/>