More Rigorous Classes Key to Student Success, Says Michigan Business Leaders for Education Excellence

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The Michigan Business Leaders for Education Excellence (MBLEE) today announced it strongly supports the implementation of a required course of study for all Michigan high school students that includes mathematics, science, English language arts, social studies and a foreign language.

"MBLEE believes every student should participate in a core course of study that prepares them well for almost any situation and leads to a diploma that has value," said MBLEE Executive Director Jim Sandy.

MBLEE supports the following minimum course of study necessary for student success:

* 9th grade: English I, Algebra I, Biology I and World Geography
* 10th grade: English II, Geometry, Chemistry I and World History
* 11th grade: English III, Algebra II, Physics and U.S. History
* 12th grade: English IV and U.S. Government/Economics
* Two years of the same foreign language

"The content of each of these subjects needs to be well-defined, rigorous and relevant to our ever-expanding global economy," noted Sandy. "We cannot afford to water down these subjects if our children are going to have a fighting chance at the jobs of the future.

"The recommended course of study, if properly implemented, allows plenty of time for students to explore and participate in the arts, music, physical education, career and technical programs and other important enrichment activities that will expand their horizons," Sandy added.

In addition to academic skills, Sandy said business leaders recognize that students today also need:

* A solid work ethic
* The ability to communicate effectively, orally and in writing

* The ability to work in groups (teamwork) with people of various backgrounds and cultures

* An awareness and perspective of global issues

* To be technologically literate and able to use information and communications systems

* The ability to apply learning to new situations and environments

"Without a deliberate focus and intervention in math and science, the talent pipeline for research and innovation in the United States, especially in engineering and physical sciences, is in jeopardy," said Brian Cloyd, Director of Corporate and Community Relations for Steelcase, Inc. in Grand Rapids.

MBLEE is an affiliate of the Michigan Chamber Foundation and is the only statewide business organization that focuses solely on education and workforce policy issues.

SOURCE: Michigan Business Leaders for Education Excellence

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