

CATCHING UP WITH...

ELENA SOBAMPO

Elena is the Business and Marketing Education specialist, as well as the Communication Media Technologies, Program Specialist at the Arizona Department of Education, CTE Unit. Elena's experience ranges from CTE director to teacher of business education, IT and graphic design programs. She also served on the FBLA executive and ABEA boards.

What challenges has the pandemic had on your new position?

In my time at ADE, CTE, regardless of the pandemic, business has been conducted as usual. Meaning, we have been creative in finding ways to continue to support school districts, teachers, and students. Duties and responsibilities have remained the same and we have had great accomplishments. Although virtual engagement does not replace the in person interactions, it is proven to provide more access in terms of timing and efficiency. A noted change during these difficult times has been the personal interaction with teachers, students and programs.

I get to plan, facilitate and serve as support to the programs and I cannot wait to see all the planning into practice and see our programs and our students thrive.



Elena Sobampo Program Specialist

What is one of your top goals as a program specialist?

I believe that there has been a divide between how teachers/colleagues see ADE and what our roles are. I would like to change that perspective. My role is to guide, support and strengthen the programs I oversee from all angles. With my experience in the classroom, as a teacher, CTE director, FBLA and ABEA, I aspire to help close that divide between the teacher and the resources available to them from the Arizona Department of Education. At the end of the day, providing meaningful and relevant experiences to students in CTE is our goal. We want to ensure that students are our utmost priority. If teachers are supported, students reap all the benefits.

How often are the program standards changed or revised?

There is not a specific said number of years to revise the standards, but they are periodically updated based on industry demands and the needs of individual programs. Reviewing and updating the standards is guided by advances in technology, and new research on entry-level work. The business management program standards were last updated in 2014 and we are currently working on updating those now.

What are the main changes to be expected for the new or revised standards?

Over the years, the program has significantly added value and career driven opportunities for students with the introduction of program certifications and the pace and access to the industry's new and existing technologies.

Another important change affecting the program is the economic development and availability of resources at the state level. In recent years, the governor has been pushing for additional stimulus or incentive for students receiving certifications in the Business Management industry. This incentive allows districts to receive additional funding leaving room for programs to grow and offer more opportunities to students. Another great update is that this is being evaluated for the Economics crosswalk. Meaning business standards will be aligned with Economics standards. This will allow schools to offer the CTE or Economics credit to those students who who complete the program, once the districts approve this crosswalk. More updates will be provided as the summer approaches.

As a former ABEA president, what advice would you give to its members?

ABEA is an excellent professional association! Continue to meet and find ways to come together to discuss ways to support each other. This is a critical time for everyone and a perfect opportunity to help those who need your expertise, advice and guidance. Continue to meet, even if it is without a specific goal. At the end what truly matters is the camaraderie and the support you'll find among your colleagues. Continue the great work you are doing all the time within your communities and supporting those who are thinking about leaving the profession because they are overwhelmed with the challenges. These are your true professional learning communities at work.

-Interview by Marcia Mendoza

We love FBLA!

We had our state competition this month. Two of my students were competing in E-business and one mentioned that she didn't have a computer at home. The judge heard this and contacted me. He said that he and his CEO at Apex Microtechnology wanted to donate a laptop to this student. WOW! He even drove 5 hours to hand deliver it. They donated a high performance laptop, a second monitor, a mouse and 2 hats for each of them. This will benefit our student for years to come. College will be easier with a laptop, homework and projects can now be done at home instead of coming to school early to use ours. There are generous people everywhere, it is great to have these professional connections for our students. Thank you for your generosity! --By Andrea Pena



There are generous people everywhere

Andrea Pena

2021 NBEA Virtual Conference

National Business Education Association (NBEA) held this year's Annual Conference in New Orleans in person with a virtual component. The conference was very well organized and easy to navigate as a virtual attendee. I attended board and committee meetings, as well as conference sessions. These sessions included but were not limited to, the 3 R's of education, Forensic Accounting, Soft Skills for the Classroom, and Analytics. The sessions were good and informative. Please consider attending next year's conference in person in Chicago, IL.

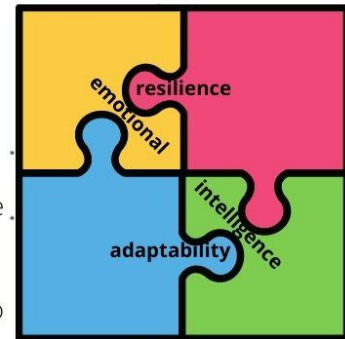
2022 NBEA Hybrid Convention, April 12-15



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Soft Skills Post COVID

Soft skills are essential in the workplace. It is no secret that this set of skills has been put to the test during the pandemic. These skills can include attitude, flexibility and motivation to mention a few. According to Julia Bradess, Marketing Manager for TRACOM, as the world continues to change, employers are realizing that social intelligence skills such as adaptability, emotional intelligence and resilience are critical as we enter the post-covid workplace. "If the coronavirus pandemic has proven anything, it's that change can happen incredibly fast" Bradess stated.



If are you looking for ways to recognize your outstanding business students in your business program, check out the National Business Honor Society.

[HTTPS://NBEA.ORG/PAGE/NBHS](https://nbea.org/page/nbhs)



Do you have a lesson plan, tips or something you would like to share with your colleagues? email
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