

NAF'S EDUCATIONAL DESIGN

Glossary of Frequently Used NAF Terms

Academy Assessment (AA) - The AA is the culminating review of the work that the academy team accomplished throughout the school year. The assessment scores highlight standards in need of development and guide the modifications of the academy action plan that supports the continuous improvement of the academy. Academy data is reported in the Data Center (DC) and NAFTrack Certification (NTC) and data from these sources auto-populate designated-strategic actions in the Academy Assessment.

Academy Design Team (ADT) - The ADT is created in the Year of Planning (YOP) to focus on designing a NAF academy based on the four elements of NAF's educational design as follows: Academy Development & Structure, Curriculum & Instruction, Advisory Board, and Work-Based Learning. The ADT is a multi-disciplinary team consisting of school and academy staff, district and school administration, parents, students, and business and postsecondary education partners. After YOP graduation, the ADT transitions to the academy team in the launch year.

Academy Development & Structure (Element 1) – Element 1 is crucial to the successful implementation of a high-quality, NAF academy with a program length of two, three, or four years. NAF's academy configuration is flexible and enables an academy to fit within any traditional high school to increase student achievement and graduation rates. NAF promotes an open, choice-based enrollment policy to ensure that all students are eligible to enroll, and the academy demographics should reflect the overall school or district if the academy is a school. An academy team leads academy development through the critical practice of the continuous improvement cycle that requires the collection and examination of data, as well as participation in regular professional learning related to career-themed curriculum and college and career readiness.

Academy in Good Standing - An academy in good standing has met NAF's annual membership requirements as follows: Pays membership fees on time, completes the Data Center and Academy Assessment with evidence collection by the designated deadline, and offers a program of study that enables every NAF academy student to achieve NAFTrack Certification.

Academy Lead (Director/Site Coordinator) - The academy lead serves as the liaison with NAF and provides leadership for the academy team that is a multi-disciplinary group with representation from the district, school administration, academy, parents, students, civic, business, and postsecondary communities. A site coordinator is an academy lead who is a school-based staff member with the primary responsibilities of implementing NAF's educational design with fidelity and fulfilling the requirements of NAF's Membership Agreement. In some situations, the academy lead is a director who works in the district office.

Academy Portfolio Manager (PM) - A NAF representative is assigned to a portfolio of NAF academies to provide ongoing technical assistance and professional learning to develop high-quality career-academies through virtual collaboration and on-site visits.

Academy Support Hub (ASH) - ASH is NAF's online membership portal to access tools and resources.

Academy Team - An academy team is a multi-disciplinary group with representation from the district, school administration, academy, parents, students, civic, business, and postsecondary communities. At least three or more members meet regularly to discuss career-themed integration along with work and project-based learning. The team leads academy development through the critical practice of the continuous improvement cycle that requires the collection and examination of school and academy data, as well as participation in regular professional learning related to career-themed curriculum and college and career readiness.

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Action Plan - The action plan tool in ASH is available year-round to track goals and strategic-action steps for academy improvement. This online tool provides recommended areas of development based on the academy's Academy Assessment results that guide the action planning process to help the academy program to achieve fidelity of implementation of NAF's educational design and to improve academy outcomes.

Advisory Board (AB) (Element 2) - Advisory boards provide an essential bridge between schools, the workplace, and the business and civic communities. Business, postsecondary education, and community leaders volunteer to serve on local and district advisory boards. They participate actively in building the future workforce by contributing to talent development in high schools, while preparing students for college and careers. Advisory board members collaborate with educators to inform curricula, help organize work-based learning activities, and support fundraising initiatives for paid internships and to sustain the academy programs. They also have the opportunity to serve as mentors for students.

Articulation Agreement - Articulation is a practice of aligning curriculum from one educational segment to another to enable a seamless transition between courses, grade levels, and educational institutions. Most commonly, high-school courses articulate to community-colleges that allow high school students to earn college credits for designated courses.

Career Awareness - The initial set of activities in NAF's Work-Based Learning continuum that:

- Expose students to a variety of careers by connecting them in-person or virtually with business and industry partners through career fairs and classroom presentations
- Allow students to begin identifying areas of career interest
- Encourage students to observe, receive information, and ask questions to acquire knowledge and awareness of possible careers
- Relate school to the world of work by connecting careers to the academy career theme and postsecondary education
- Include career-themed projects that emulate workplace projects

Career Exploration - The secondary set of activities in NAF's Work-Based Learning continuum that:

- Provide direct, two-way interactions in-person or virtually with business and industry partners
- Expose students to the range of occupations within the industry or career theme and the skills and education required for related jobs
- Offer students opportunities to see the relevance of core- and career-themed courses to the world of work
- Assist students in identifying their interests and strengths, in refining their areas of interest or identify different interests, and in completing more in-depth career explorations
- Provide students with the basic-skills training necessary for paid internships

Career Preparation - The final set of activities in NAF's Work-Based Learning continuum that:

- Provide one-on-one, two-way interactions with business and industry partners over an extended period to allow for assessment of students' performance relative to industry standards
- Allow students to learn through practical experiences in the workplace to build job-related competencies
- Empower students to produce valuable work that furthers the partner organization's goals

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Career-Themed Integration - An instructional strategy that is also called interdisciplinary (thematic) teaching. Teachers of other disciplines are intentional about using examples of real situations, information, and articles related to the academy career theme. Students use skills and knowledge from both their career-theme and core courses in the context of each course to answer questions or solve problems. The components of career-themed integration include:

- Teacher collaboration with at least one core-subject teacher
- Creation of projects that are the primary focus of the integration
- Research that goes beyond the textbook
- Relationships between career-themed concepts and core-content knowledge

Civic Community - Advisory board members engage with the civic community by attending or convening meetings, forums, and events to network and build relationships with government and public entities, and members volunteer to coordinate fundraisers that promote workforce engagement of high school students through internship and employment opportunities for all students in the community.

College and Career Readiness (CCR) - CCR includes:

- Building students' college knowledge through an awareness of the postsecondary system and culture and completing credit-bearing college courses that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials or certificates
- Engaging students in work-based learning opportunities throughout high school, including career awareness, exploration, and preparation activities that culminate in paid internships and developing students' competency in 21st-century employability skills for entry into the workforce.

College & Career Readiness Index (CCRI) - CCRI is a comprehensive set of 54 lessons designed for integration into an academy program of study to develop students' competency in 21st-century skills and to build professional profiles and ePortfolios in myNAFTrack to showcase themselves to employers participating in NAFTrack Certified Hiring. The CCRI lessons align with the eight competencies of NAF's College & Career Readiness Skills and enhance skills promoted in NAF's work-based learning continuum of career awareness, exploration, and preparation activities. CCRI integration of work-based learning (WBL), project-based learning (PBL), as well as college and career readiness activities throughout the academy experience ensures that students are college and career ready and eligible for NAFTrack Certification.

College and Career Readiness (CCR) Skills - NAF's CCR skills are categorized into eight competencies required for success in postsecondary education and careers. The competencies represent a blend of fundamental skills with the experiential and factual knowledge that students need to efficiently and effectively perform in college and careers. The eight competencies include 21st-century skills that students must master to demonstrate the achievement of each competency. During the students' internship experiences, their employers' supervisors assess the mastery of each competency by using NAF's online Internship Assessment. NAF's eight competencies include Collaboration & Teamwork, Communication, Creativity & Innovation, Critical Thinking & Problem Solving, Information & Technology, Initiative & Self Direction, Professionalism & Ethics, and Quantitative Reasoning.

Common-Planning Time - The academy team (three or more members) has regularly scheduled, common-planning time or other formal collaboration time to plan for integrated instruction, student support, and college and career activities across disciplines and grade levels.

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Continuous Improvement Cycle - The continuous improvement cycle promotes the development and maintenance of high-quality NAF academies to ensure that high school students are college, career, and future ready. NAF measures academy quality through its annual Academy Assessment that evaluates academy strengths and identifies challenges in implementing NAF's educational design. NAF's continuous improvement cycle is defined by four phases as follows: Assess, Analyze, Plan, and Act.

Curriculum & Instruction (Element 3) - NAF provides rigorous, industry-validated, career-themed curricula that incorporate current industry standards and practices. NAF's instructional practices foster career-themed integration, so that students can make connections across the curriculum. NAF's curricula are created in partnership with industry professionals and designed to incorporate real-world, project-based learning and culminating projects to assist students in acquiring valuable workplace skills and relate their experiences to future career options. NAF's Program of Study initiative allows NAF to provide multiple career pathways and curricular options for many more students in NAF's network to achieve NAFTrack Certification. NAF academies apply for NAFTrack Certification approval to add state-approved and dual enrollment/early college courses to their programs of study. NAF has approved other third-party programs, and advanced-course selections such as Project Lead the Way, STEM 101, Paxton-Patterson, Cisco, Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Cambridge, Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship (NFTE), Intelitek, and Odysseyware. To meet NAFTrack Certification requirements, NAF students must complete a performance-based assessment (PBA) such as a capstone project or NAF culminating project.

Data Center (DC) - NAF's online platform for the collection and submission of annual academy information including, but is not limited to, student demographics, students' postsecondary education options, work-based learning activities, and advisory board members.

Educational Design - NAF's educational design includes four essential elements of practice: Academy Development & Structure, Curriculum & Instruction, Advisory Board, and Work-Based Learning with associated standards of practice. The elements build on each other to ignite students' passion for learning, support schools' and districts' priorities and allow civic and business organizations to shape America's future workforce. The educational design is flexible enough to implement NAF academies in traditional high schools across the nation. Students experience rigorous, career-themed curricula; gain exposure to the workplace through site visits, job shadows, and internships; and they have access to several opportunities for networking and learning from experienced business professionals.

Electronic Evidence - Evidence templates and artifacts are uploaded in the online Academy Assessment to document achievement of designated strategic actions or assessment thresholds. Evidence serves as a historical record of academy growth and highlights the strategies used to meet NAF's standards of practice.

Enrollment Waiver - An enrollment waiver applies to single academies, located within Magnet or Career and Technical Education High Schools, that must meet at least two of three criteria as follows:

1. District policy limits the number of students in the academy
2. Academy recruits and enrolls students beyond the high school attendance boundaries
3. Available space in the school limits academy enrollment capacity

Academies with enrollment waivers must enroll at least 20 students per grade level to qualify for a Model or Model-Distinguished designation, and NAF requires verification of qualifying limitations.

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Fast Track Program - This program allows a functioning academy that implements most of NAF’s standards of practice to enter NAF’s network as an open academy with full membership. The Fast Track Assessment is a self-assessment that assists existing academies in analyzing academy strengths and challenges in implementing NAF’s educational design.

Guide for Teaching a NAF Course - The guide facilitates the teaching of a NAF course by explaining the basic structure of a NAF course, referring to resources that support NAF’s approach to instruction, and it provides course-sequence outlines and lesson plans with tips for teaching each lesson.

(Location: ASH > Curriculum Library)

Interdisciplinary Project - A project that assists students in making connections between the career-themed and core-subject courses. Teachers of other disciplines permit academy students to pursue real-life questions or problems related to their career theme in their classes, and they encourage students to look for relationships and make connections with their disciplines. Exemplars:

- The English teachers assist academy students with the planning and writing of their career-themed research papers for culminating or capstone projects.
- The mathematics teachers facilitate the aggregation, graphical display, and analysis of data for career-themed research papers.
- The computer teachers support academy students in creating graphics for their product displays or PowerPoint presentations.
- The engineering or graphics teachers help with the design and construction of the research products.

Internship - An internship represents the culmination of the academy work-based learning experiences at a business or organization for all NAF students. NAF internships typically occur between the junior and senior year of high school. NAFTrack Certification requires a paid, 120-hours or two 60+ hours internships, and academy students must pass NAF’s Internship Assessment. Interns are evaluated by their employers’ supervisors using the Internship Assessment at the end of the internships, and they receive a payment of no less than the applicable state or local minimum wage, which may be the youth minimum wage if permitted by state or local laws.

Internship Assessment (IA) – NAF’s Internship Assessment is a rubric used by internship supervisors to assess NAF interns at the end of their paid internships. The Internship Assessment rates an intern’s level of achievement of NAF’s eight college and career readiness competencies and position-specific technical skills. Interns must pass the IA to be eligible for NAFTrack Certification.

Launch Year - The first year of full operation as an open NAF academy for a Year of Planning (YOP) graduate or a Fast Track academy that joins the NAF network with full membership status.

NAFTrack - The online professional network that connects NAF academy students and alumni with NAFTrack Certified Hiring employers. Students and alumni build their professional profiles and ePortfolios to showcase their talents to employers who know the unique value and expertise that NAF graduates bring to their organizations. Users have access to a wide range of potential internship and job opportunities as well as a library of career resources, and they have access to the platform throughout their careers.

NAF Account - As a member of NAF’s network, all academy team members have access to online tools and resources to support academy development. NAF uses a single sign-on service that permits a NAF network member to enter one name and password to access multiple applications.

To create a NAF account, visit naf.okta.com and select *Need help signing in?*

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NAF Curriculum - NAF provides rigorous, industry-validated, and career-themed curricula that incorporate current industry standards and practices, literacy strategies, work-based and project-based learning strategies, and STEM integration. NAF’s instructional practices foster career-themed integration so that academy students make connections across the curriculum. NAF’s curricula include the following career themes: Engineering, Finance, Health Sciences, Hospitality & Tourism, and Information Technology.

NAF Learning Handbook - The learning handbook explains how NAF courses are structured and includes detailed explanations of how to teach each course and to apply the instructional strategies listed throughout the lessons. It is essential to review the handbook before beginning to teach a NAF course.

(Location: ASH > Curriculum Library)

NAFTrack Certification (NTC) - NTC is NAF’s employability credential that serves as NAF’s seal of college and career readiness. NAF’s premier system for measuring college and career readiness uses a multi-method approach that requires academy students to complete:

- Four (4) semester courses that include any combination of NAF courses and NTC approved career-cluster course equivalents
- A required performance-based assessment (PBA)
- A qualifying paid-internship
- Graduation from high school

NAFTrack Certified Hiring - A commitment by a growing number of top companies to give individual support and hiring considerations to NAF alumni who earn NAFTrack Certification.

NAF Next (NN) - NAF’s annual professional learning conference that brings together teachers, academy leaders, counselors, district administrators, advisory board members, and postsecondary, business, and community partners to share best practices for implementing NAF’s educational design and to address some of the most significant challenges facing education and the economy.

Open, Choice-Based Enrollment Process - NAF academies accept students based on their interest rather than academic or disciplinary records. Students who can take the academy program of study courses are eligible to enroll in the academy regardless of academic history. Academy selection may be subject to a lottery system that randomly selects academy students.

Performance-Based Assessment (PBA) - PBA measures students’ ability to apply the knowledge and skills learned from a unit or units of study, challenges students to use their higher-order thinking skills, and requires the creation of a product or completion of a process. Examples of PBA include NAF’s culminating projects & capstone projects.

Program of Study - NAF’s Program of Study maximizes students’ opportunities for achieving NAFTrack Certification by capitalizing on multiple options to pursue career pathways. The Program of Study permits academies to offer any of the US Department of Education’s 16 career clusters and their associated career pathways. NAF academies apply for NAFTrack Certification approval for dual enrollment/early college and state-approved career-cluster courses to meet the curricular requirements of NAFTrack Certification.

Professional Learning - Professional learning sessions are ongoing during academy team meetings where team members collaborate about implementing NAF’s standards of practice for academy development, providing personalized supports for academy students, and developing academy best practices such as performance-based assessments, work-based and project-based learning strategies, and career-themed integration.

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Project-Based Learning (PBL) - PBL is a learning strategy that engages students by focusing on complex questions or problems and allowing them to investigate solutions to problems over an extended period, often resulting in presentations or products. Career-themed projects are integrated into core subjects or other disciplines for at least two weeks to provide a relevant context for student learning.

Roll Forward - The process by which academies that achieve Certified, Model, and Model-Distinguished levels may bypass the Academy Assessment (AA) for two additional years of a 3-year cycle if they meet eligibility requirements. In Year 1, the academy takes the AA and achieves Certified, Model or Model-Distinguished, and Years 2 and 3 are the subsequent Roll Forward years. To qualify for Roll Forward, an academy must complete the Data Center and NAFTrack by the designated Roll Forward deadline. Additionally, Model and Model-Distinguished level academies must meet all established threshold levels by the deadline to demonstrate continued high fidelity to the implementation of NAF's educational design.

Standards of Practice - Standards of practice support the four elements and articulate critical aspects of NAF's educational design. All elements must be implemented with fidelity to ensure that students possess the necessary college and career readiness skills and to guarantee increased high school graduation rates, as well as the achievement of NAFTrack Certification. The standards of practice are embedded in NAF's Academy Assessment, and they provide a guide to determine the academy level of fidelity to the implementation of NAF's educational design.

Target Student Population - NAF academies work to provide access and opportunity to NAF's target population that includes low socioeconomic, minority, and disengaged students so that academy demographics reflect the overall school or district if the academy is a school.

Threshold - NAF's Academy Assessment establishes thresholds or minimum performance requirements for the strategic actions in the assessment. Academies must meet the designated thresholds as one of the prerequisites for achieving a Model or Model-Distinguished academy level.

Work-Based Learning (WBL) (Element 4) - WBL brings the classroom to the workplace and the workplace to the classroom. Learning in the workplace is a vital element of NAF's educational design that provides meaningful ways for business organizations and their employees to prepare students for the workforce and help build a diverse talent pipeline. NAF's approach to work-based learning centers on a continuum of experiences that support the development of professional skills, beginning with career awareness, progressing to career exploration, and culminating in career preparation activities including paid internships. Activities include guest speakers, worksite tours, career fairs, job shadows, informational and mock interviews, and internships.

Year of Planning (YOP) - The process of planning for the implementation of a NAF academy that takes an average of one year. NAF academy portfolio managers provide guided technical assistance to align academy resources and programs to ensure that all NAF's educational design elements are in place before an academy opens in the launch year. The YOP helps to establish a sustainable foundation that ensures the success of a NAF academy and its ability to fulfill its promises to academy students and the community.

Year of Planning (YOP) Assessment - The assessment is the culminating review of the work that the academy design team accomplished throughout the YOP program, and the assessment is finalized online at the graduation visit. An academy that receives a final score of 15 or above during the verification process becomes an open academy in the NAF network.

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Year of Planning (YOP) Snapshot - The Snapshot is used twice during the YOP program as follows:

- During the first two months to assess the academy design team's progress in developing the academy design plan
- Before completing the YOP Assessment for determination of readiness to graduate from the YOP program.