



*BE FUTURE
READY*

COUNSELOR'S PACKET

DIVE INTO ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT NAF TO HELP YOUR
STUDENTS #BEFUTUREREADY

@NAFCareerAcads | naf.org

A STUDENT EXPERIENCE

NAF helps students develop transferable skills, including program solving, communication, and collaboration, that will benefit them in any pathway they choose.



The School Counselor & Career Development

“As part of a school counseling program, school counselors provide resources and opportunities that help students explore their strengths and interests, as well as, career fields aligned with these attributes. These efforts help students plan for and choose postsecondary pathways and create opportunities for students to develop college- and career-readiness skills that help them successfully navigate postsecondary education and the world of work.” - [American School Counselor Association](#)

NAF Alumni

There are over 110,000 academy students annually that benefit from being a part of NAF, but the NAF experience doesn't stop in high school. NAF is a lifelong experience, full of opportunities to network, discover exciting new industries, and give back to NAF academies! Alumni bring to life the promise of NAF academies. Their examples help to engage parents, students, and potential partners.



[Check out our NAF Alumni Panel at NAF Next 2026!](#)



ABOUT NAF

NAF is where opportunity begins! With the support of NAF community-based advisory boards, schools connect with the workforce to fuel shared progress—from creating career-connected curriculum to valuable work-based learning opportunities. NAF helps students explore career options, create a plan for the future, and take part in hands-on learning unlike anything traditional public education systems can offer. NAF puts students on a path to achieving their full potential.

The NAF design, in alignment with the National Career Clusters Framework, focuses on growing industries and those that support the workforce's needs. There are 16 Career Clusters, representing 79 Career Pathways to help learners navigate their way to greater success in college and career. In the classroom, NAF transforms how we think about education—going beyond what traditional career and technical education programs offer with experiential learning experiences that complement career-aligned curricula. For many businesses, a partnership with NAF helps to fulfill workforce development and community engagement goals. NAF's design provides employers with multiple ways to expose students to specific industries and develop their future workforce pipelines with the talent that reflects the communities these companies support.

NAF Career Pathways focus on growing industries and those that bolster the workforce needs and interests of local business communities. Click on the green circles below to learn more about each pathway.



[ENGINEERING](#)



[HOSPITALITY &
TOURISM](#)



[FINANCE](#)



[INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY](#)



[HEALTH
SCIENCES](#)



OUTCOMES-DRIVEN WORK-BASED LEARNING

Work-based learning is an instructional strategy that connects what students are learning in class with the world of work. Through work-based learning activities, students gain exposure to career options and the skills it takes to get there. Work-based learning activities fall on a continuum building from career awareness, to career exploration, then finally career preparation. Activities include career fairs, worksite tours, mock interviews, job shadows, internships, and more.

Outcomes-Driven Work-Based Learning (ODWBL) is our new student-centered approach for measuring the success of hands-on learning through our Aspirations, Skills, and Connections framework. Our work-based learning activities include internships, career fairs, and hands-on workshops with industry professionals.



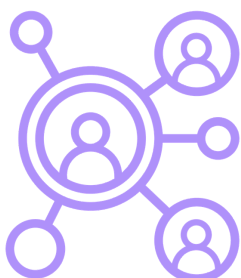
ASPIRATIONS

Each student will have defined and mapped a plan for at least one career path.



SKILLS

Each student will have worked to develop transferable skills, received continuous feedback from industry partners, Advisory Board members, and/or local community professionals, and be able to articulate their strengths.



CONNECTIONS

Each student will develop at least three professional connections.

& CURRICULUM

NAF's curricula align with competencies identified by industry partners, professional organizations, and postsecondary institutions as essential for success in college and career. We provide curricula for our career pathways (engineering, finance, health sciences, hospitality and tourism, and information technology), and approve other programs of study aligned with the National Career Clusters Framework.

What is NAFTrack Certification?

NAFTrack Certification, designed by education and business leaders, is an employability credential that serves as NAF's seal of college and career readiness. NAF assesses student performance through the completion of career-connected courses, internship assessments, and high school graduation. NAFTrack Certification helps put students in control of their progress and allows them to make connections between their high school coursework and their futures and reflect on their own learning to set goals for personal and professional development.

[Click here to learn more.](#)



STUDENT RECRUITMENT

With increased stress and mental health conditions exhibited by high school students, it is critical schools find ways to create healthier and safer learning environments so students can succeed in the classroom as they enter adulthood. By fostering small learning communities with a culture of acceptance and belonging in high schools, NAF academies are building a foundation for students to thrive in the classroom, workplace, and community.



Our Student Recruitment Guide provides resources and strategies to support student recruitment and selection processes. Read through for recommended steps to build your recruitment team, market your academy with recruitment materials, host events, and more! For more resources visit the [Marketing My Academy](#) section in the [Academy Support Hub](#).



**STUDENT
RECRUITMENT
MESSAGING**



Event Checklist for Academies

Our event checklist includes recommended tasks to help you plan your marketing and communications needs for your upcoming event.



Educator Newsletter

You don't have to navigate it alone! Get regular resources, tips, and inspiration in our education newsletter. [Sign up here!](#)

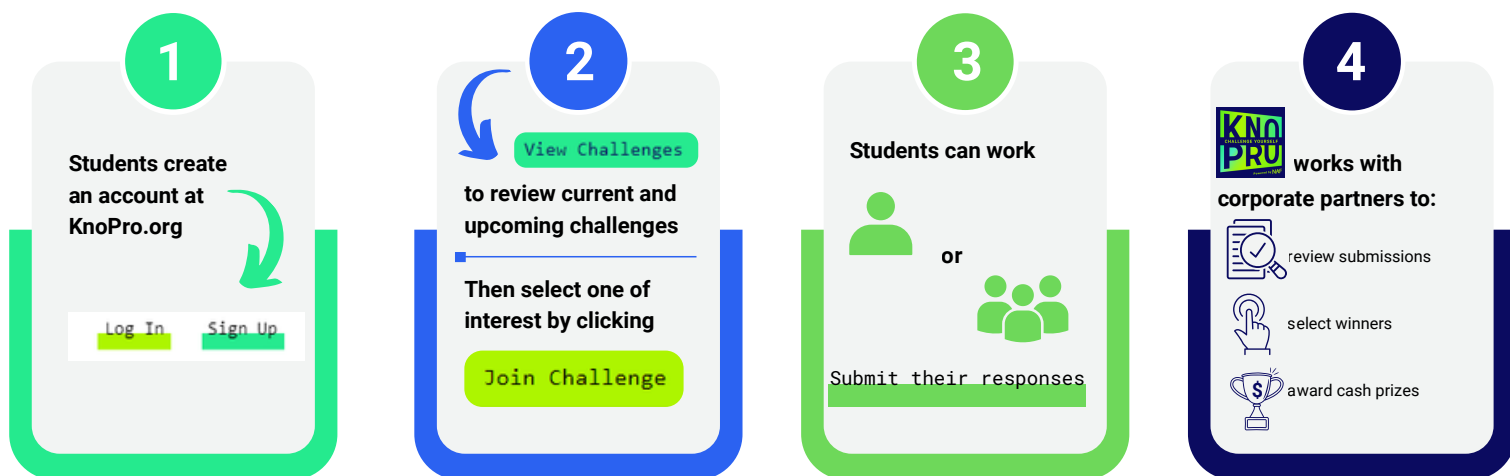
KNOPRO

POWERED BY NAF

Give Students An Advantage with KnoPro's Work-Based Challenges

KnoPro, powered by NAF is a free, educator-designed platform open to ALL high school students – regardless of academy membership – to participate in industry projects challenges for a chance to win cash and other prizes. KnoPro offers authentic industry challenge opportunities and skillbuilding exercises that help students build skills and develop their career aspirations.

HOW IT WORKS



What type of student is best suited to a KnoPro Challenge?

KnoPro Challenges are open to all high school students. KnoPro is particularly attractive for students who:

- Are looking to fill out their resume/ applications with additional non-academic experience
- Have an interest in entrepreneurship or business
- Are looking for additional funds for higher education or entrepreneurial pursuits

LEARN MORE BY CREATING YOUR OWN EDUCATOR ACCOUNT AT [KNOPRO.ORG](https://knoapro.org) OR SPEAKING WITH YOUR NAF CONTACT.

BENEFITS OF NAF

NAF supports more than 110,000 students across 34 states and territories. Last year, 99% of seniors graduated and 89% were college-bound — that's thousands of students who wouldn't otherwise have been exposed to transformative work-based learning opportunities.

Students in NAF academies are far likelier to graduate than their peers who are not involved with NAF, and the long-term impact of high school graduation cannot be understated. Earning potential increases and incarceration rates decrease, helping to break the cycle of poverty while contributing to a stronger economy.

ICF, recently released a study showing that the NAF design makes a difference for all high school students, especially those at-risk of not graduating, with its highest success in four-year, full-program participation. With full-program participation, NAF students graduated at a rate of 87% against a non-NAF student rate of 81%. For students categorized as “at-risk” who participate in the full program, NAF students graduate at more than 10% of a higher rate than non-NAF students.

We invest significantly in research and innovation that enhances the NAF design to ensure curriculum is on the cutting edge of industry standards and to best support the needs of the network.



2025 NAF STUDENT
SURVEY FIELD GUIDE



Visit naf.org/results to see more of our findings.