# NAF Academy Standards

2025-2026

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# ELEMENT 1: ACADEMY DEVELOPMENT & STRUCTURE

The academy supports open choice enrollment that produces a student body that reflects students of all backgrounds. The students collaborate in program design and decision-making, and the academy team participates in regularly scheduled, professional learning activities. School and district leaders perform the critical tasks and functions required to support, maintain, and sustain implementation of NAF's design at the highest level.

## STANDARD 1: STUDENT RECRUITMENT & ENROLLMENT

The academy supports open choice enrollment that maximizes students' access to career and college opportunities and results in academy membership that reflects students of all backgrounds.

### Strategic Actions
➢ **1.1.a.** Open choice enrollment results in academy membership that reflects students of all backgrounds.

➢ **1.1.b.** Recruitment efforts result in increasing student enrollment each year to meet the threshold criteria.

## STANDARD 2: PERSONALIZED LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The academy creates a personalized learning environment that is inclusive, promotes student agency, and encourages positive relationships to enhance student well-being and achievement.

### Strategic Action
➢ **1.2.a.** The academy fosters a personalized learning environment that promotes student success and attainment of college and career goals.

## STANDARD 3: DATA COLLECTION & REVIEW

The academy participates in ongoing review of academy data to enhance academy development and benchmark student progress.

### Strategic Actions
➢ **1.3.a.** The academy collects, analyzes, and reports academy and student-level data to inform academy practices and ensure educational access for students.

➢ **1.3.b.** The academy uses data from various sources to develop an action plan for continuous academy development.

## STANDARD 4: ACADEMY LEADERSHIP

Academy leadership is broad-based, strategic, and sufficiently staffed.

### Strategic Actions
➢ **1.4.a.** The academy has a designated academy leader with release time or an academy team with clearly defined responsibilities for managing all aspects of the academy program.

➢ **1.4.b.** The academy has a designated staff member to oversee college and career readiness activities.

➢ **1.4.c.** District, school, and academy leaders are ambassadors for the academy.

## STANDARD 5: PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

District, school, academy leaders, and advisory board members participate in regularly scheduled professional learning sessions and collaboration meetings.

### Strategic Actions

➢ **1.5.a.** The academy team (of more than three members) meets regularly for collaborative planning focused on student success and academy improvement.

➢ **1.5.b.** The academy participates in NAF-sponsored or other Career Technical Education (CTE) professional learning sessions.

# ELEMENT 2: ADVISORY BOARD

NAF advisory boards provide an essential bridge between schools, the workplace, and the community. Business, higher education, and community leaders volunteer on local advisory boards to help students prepare for college and careers. Advisory board members collaborate with educators to inform curricula, help organize work-based learning activities, and become NAF academy advocates in the community. Through advisory boards, students build relationships with mentors and learn from successful adults.

## STANDARD 1: ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERSHIP & OPERATIONS

A formally organized advisory board operates with broad-based community representation.

### Strategic Actions

➢ **2.1.a.** Advisory board membership includes at least ten (10) members representing business, industry, government, alumni, community, and postsecondary education leaders.

➢ **2.1.b.** The advisory board created a strategic plan with clear annual outcomes informed by academy data.

➢ **2.1.c.** The advisory board created by-laws to help the academy grow and sustain academy needs.

## STANDARD 2: SUPPORT FOR LEARNING

Advisory board members actively support work-based learning activities, the program of study, and academy program design.

### Strategic Action

➢ **2.2.a.** Advisory board members actively support student learning by securing and coordinating work-based learning experiences, participating in classroom activities or projects, collaborating to enhance curriculum, and providing professional learning opportunities for academy staff.

## STANDARD 3: SUPPORT FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Advisory board members seek to increase academy success and sustainability by advocating for support and sharing academy impact with community, post-secondary, and civic leaders.

### Strategic Action
➤ **2.3.a.** The advisory board works to engage community, post-secondary and civic leaders to promote and sustain academies as an integral part of the local workforce and economic development systems.

# ELEMENT 3: PROGRAM OF STUDY (CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION)

The academy offers a career-connected program of study that includes a comprehensive sequence of courses within the academy's designated career cluster and associated pathway, incorporating competency-based assessments. The career-focused content is fully integrated through authentic project-based learning experiences designed to solve real-world challenges. Additionally, teachers receive high-quality professional learning opportunities in emerging instructional practices to enhance their ability to engage all learners.

## STANDARD 1: ACADEMY COURSEWORK

The academy's career-connected program of study features a comprehensive sequence of courses that adheres to OCTAE's Programs of Study Design Framework, with a particular focus on fostering authentic project-based learning experiences and conducting competency-based assessments.

### Strategic Actions
➤ **3.1.a.** The academy offers a career-connected program of study consisting of a sequence of courses within one of NAF's Future Ready Learning career pathways or aligned with the US Department of Education's 14 career clusters and associated pathways.

➤ **3.1.b.** Students demonstrate attainment of career-readiness competencies through authentic project learning experiences.

## STANDARD 2: COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS

Academy intentionally builds students' college knowledge, provides advanced academic opportunities, and helps students achieve certifications to enhance their college and career readiness.

### Strategic Actions
➤ **3.2.a.** The academy intentionally builds students' college knowledge by helping them understand the postsecondary system and culture, research college options, visit college campuses, and navigate issues such as testing, applications, and financial aid.

➤ **3.2.b.** The academy students experience advanced academics by participating in Advanced Placement (AP), Cambridge, or International Baccalaureate (IB) courses and enroll in postsecondary education options through industry recognized credentials/certifications and dual enrollment.

➤ **3.2.c.** Academy students achieve NAFTrack Certification to enhance their college and career readiness.

# ELEMENT 4: WORK-BASED LEARNING

The academy establishes a comprehensive and high-quality work-based learning (WBL) program that provides every student with the opportunity to experience three phases of work-based learning, beginning with career awareness, progressing to career exploration, and culminating in career preparation activities.

## STANDARD 1: WORK-BASED LEARNING PROGRAM

The academy plans and implements a high-quality work-based learning program that features a full continuum of work-based learning experiences for students including career awareness, career exploration, and career preparation.

### Strategic Actions

➤ **4.1.a.** The academy intentionally plans and calendars work-based learning experiences throughout the school year to ensure a coherent sequence of career awareness, exploration, and preparation activities.

➤ **4.1.b.** The academy's work-based learning experiences include a continuum of career awareness, exploration, and preparation activities that build in sophistication, duration, and intensity.

➤ **4.1.c.** The academy's work-based learning plans intentionally focus on supporting the development of students' aspirations, skills, and connections.

➤ **4.1.d.** Student voice and input are solicited and used to guide work-based learning program planning.

## STANDARD 2: WORK-BASED LEARNING PARTICIPATION

The academy collects and analyzes work-based learning data to ensure full student participation.

### Strategic Actions

➤ **4.2.a.** The academy tracks and analyzes work-based learning data at both the academy and student levels to ensure student participation in the entire continuum of work-based learning experiences.

➤ **4.2.b.** Academy students complete at least one work-based learning activity each school year.

➤ **4.2.c.** Academy students complete a career preparation activity (internship, clinical experience, apprenticeship, or mentored industry project) that meets the requirements for NAFTrack Certification.

➤ **4.2.d.** Academy seniors complete work-based learning activities in at least two phases of the WBL continuum while in the academy.