



GUIDE TO THE PARTNERSHIP PROFILE



PARTNERSHIPS FOR AMERICA'S YOUTH

**A SELF-ASSESSMENT GUIDE IN THE
NAF ACADEMY DEVELOPMENT SERIES**

NAF Academy Development Series

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Acknowledgments

The National Academy Foundation acknowledges the work of many throughout our Network in the development, refinement and presentation of the Profile, and the larger Academy Frameworks process. A tangible product of NAF's strategic planning efforts, the Profile represents the first in a series of tools and resources to sustain a national network of career academies to support the development of America's youth.

In addition to the general NAF Network, we would like to thank a number of individuals and organizations for their support in the development of this Partnership Profile. The Advisory Board Leadership Council, comprised of representatives from boards across the country, played an early role in the development of concept for this profile tool. Pat Weddle, and the Omaha Public Schools, played a critical and constructive role in embracing and improving the substance and purpose of the Frameworks—thank you. Joe Kmoch and the Academy team and advisory board at Washington High School in Milwaukee, were early adopters of the profiling process and encouraged NAF to better explain the process for utilizing the profiles. From early in the school year to year-end meetings, we thank Joe for involving us in your efforts.

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Finally, Charlie Katz, NAF's National Director for Business Partnerships, deserves special recognition for shepherding the Profile from inception to its current form. As an Examiner in the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Awards Program, Charlie's contributions are most appreciated.

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Frameworks Overview

“How good is good enough?”

The NAF Academy Frameworks are sets of guideline statements and questions to help you self-assess where your Academy is (how good are we?), and tools you’ll need for pushing beyond (how good is good enough?). The Frameworks are intended to **set expectations** for new and developing Academies, **provide benchmarks** for all Academies to assess progress, and **encourage innovation** over time in order to achieve the highest levels of quality and sustainability.

There are three **Frameworks** organized around three **Dimensions**:



Together, the Academy Frameworks operate as an integrated self-assessment structure. The range of expectations detailed in each framework serves to establish benchmarks against which progress can be gauged.

How to use these Frameworks

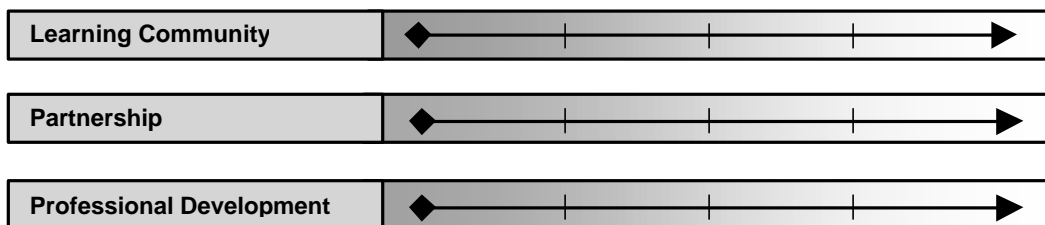
For each Framework there are two components:

Academy Profile: The Profile is used to gauge Academy progress towards the benchmarks in each of the Academy Frameworks. The Profile can be used to reveal strengths as well as opportunities for improvement. Several members of the Academy team should complete the Profile and share their responses. The online Profiles are used to prepare for NAF Academy Development Visits.

Dimensions of Quality: This component is used to explore elements of each Framework in greater depth. The Dimensions of Quality will be particularly useful in helping the Academy team explore and analyze areas of weakness, identify particular limitations and needs, and develop strategies for growth and improvement. The Dimensions of Quality inform development efforts for NAF Year of Planning sites, and will also serve in the future as the basis for NAF Quality Awards.

Academy Development Continuum

The results of the **Academy Profile** and **Dimensions** should help place Academies along a Continuum of Academy Development and demonstrate progress within each framework.



Each Academy should move along the continuum in each Framework area, which together represent the Academy's progress, growth and quality. Benchmarks along the continuum have been defined as:



Process

The self-assessment process itself is more important than any “score” that may derive from it. Using the Profile to gauge Academy progress will highlight strengths and opportunities for improvement, and it will help focus support where it is most needed. As part of NAF’s overall Academy Frameworks, the Profile is intended to serve only as a guide for local academy development and maintenance. Used correctly and honestly, the Frameworks will allow Academies flexibility to develop to meet local needs, while benefiting from the experience and expertise of the entire NAF Network.

The Partnership Profile can be used to evaluate Partner¹ interaction, support and collaboration within the **Academy**, the entire **school**, the **Advisory Board**, or at a partnering **company**. Academy Directors may wish to first use the Profile in a self-evaluation process, identifying areas of Advisory Board collaboration, which are obvious strengths, and obvious *Opportunities For Improvement* (OFIs). These OFIs may then be translated into strategic goals and action steps for the Advisory Board in the ensuing school year. Other uses of the Profile may include distribution to the entire school’s administration and staff, to determine the extent to which the business community is involved in whole-school improvement. Additionally, the Profile may be distributed to the Human Resources departments of business partners, to help companies determine how to embrace the Academy as a company-wide support endeavor.

There are three phases in completing the Partnership Profile:

- **Step One:** *Profile Administration* 30 Minutes: Organized by Academy Director online
- **Step Two:** *Profile Analysis* Priorities ranked online: 90 minutes to 2 hour discussion
- **Step Three:** *Planning* 1 to 3 hours devoted to building an Action Plan

¹ For local Academy self-evaluation purposes, the term “Partner,” refers to the individual members of the local Advisory Board, or the Advisory Board as a whole. For Advisory Board member-company internal evaluation purposes, “Partner” refers to the participating organization (company, agency, association or other participating entity) as a whole, which is represented on the local Advisory Board, and serves the local Academy.

Completing the Partnership Profile

Step One: Profile Administration

- **Role of Director:** The Academy Director is responsible for coordinating the Profile Administration. The Profile is available online (beginning August 2003) and the Director will have access to online administration and scoring tools through the NAF Directors' Page at www.NAF.org.
- **Completing the Profile:** After the Academy Director sets parameters for the online administration; each individual participant will use an ID to login at NAF.org to complete the Profile. Participants will be asked to gauge progress on aspects of partnership (see page 5) using the scale below.

NOT SURE
<i>Information not available or beyond respondent's scope of knowledge or responsibility</i>
HAS NOT BEEN CONSIDERED
<i>No systematic approach is evident</i>
CONSIDERING
<i>Beginning of a systematic approach to basic requirements is evident. Deployment is limited or virtually non-existent</i>
IN PLANNING
<i>A systematic approach, responsive to basic requirements is evident. Marginally deployed, with significant gaps</i>
MODERATELY
<i>An effective, systematic approach, responsive to overall requirements is evident. Moderately deployed, with some gaps</i>
MOSTLY
<i>An effective, systematic approach, responsive to multiple requirements and current and changing needs, is evident. Well deployed, with no significant gaps</i>
FULLY
<i>An effective, systematic approach, fully responsive to multiple requirements and current and changing needs, is evident. Fully deployed, with no significant weaknesses or gaps.</i>

Step Two: Profile Analysis

Determine Strengths & Opportunities for Improvement (OFI)

The online system will report ratings in a variety of ways, including: Individual ratings and aggregate group ratings. Use these reports to determine strengths and opportunities for improvement as you move forward. We recommend analyzing the data in two ways: *Ranked Averages* and *Ratings Distribution (gaps and consensus)*. The aggregate scores will help place the Academy, and particular dimensions of practice on the Academy Development Continuum, allowing you to chart progress over time.

Reviewing Ranked Averages

The online system will automatically create a list that ranks the categories from highest to lowest. Review this list to see if the ranked priorities match your anticipated results.

Reviewing Ratings Distribution

The online system will report to the Academy Director the distribution of the ratings. Consider whether there is common agreement or disagreement of group member opinions, represented by gaps or consensus in the ratings. For example, an average of 2.5 could occur because all participants responded “Moderately”. But the statement could also average 2.5 if half the group responded “Not Sure” (0) and half responded “Fully” (5). Wide distribution indicates disagreement concerning the statement. This kind of skewed distribution would require further conversation for there was not agreement among group members.

On the ranking list, categories with wide distributions of ratings should be highlighted. Participants should discuss these categories by asking questions such as:

- Why did you score this statement as a 1 or an 8?
- Can anyone provide additional information concerning implementation of this category in the program?
- Does anyone want to change his or her own individual score based on this new information?

Setting Priorities

- Lead a team discussion to reach a consensus about which categories with low scores indicate Opportunities for Improvement. The goal should be to identify the categories, which if improved, would have the greatest potential for positively impacting the Academy.
- Establish priorities among your categories as you focus on development of an improvement plan.

Step Three: Action Planning

- The team should then create an improvement or action plan for the implementation of the priority categories. Long-term planning may involve development of a Strategic Plan.
- NAF is committed to providing high quality technical assistance to its member Academies in several ways, one of which is the annual **Academy Development Visit**. An Academy Development Visit is not evaluative; rather, it represents joint efforts by the visiting NAF staff and the local Academy team to improve student learning and enhance Academy performance. A comprehensive, well-planned visit is an opportunity for NAF to get a close-up look at where academies are at in their development based on the results of the Profile, and to guide them further along the Continuum with technical support that best addresses their particular needs, issues and priorities.
- Finally, the Profile should be completed at least annually, to gauge Academy progress against stated goals and actions.

Gauging Academy Progress

The Partnership Profile

As stated previously, the **Academy Frameworks** are a two-part tool (the *Academy Profile*, and the *Dimensions of Quality*,) designed to help stakeholders*:

- Understand what is meant by a “high quality Academy,”
- Identify where their Academy currently stands on the *Academy Development Continuum*, and
- Identify what steps are necessary to take, in order for their Academy to attain the top Continuum status of *Sustainable*.

Every stakeholder is encouraged to use each individual *Academy Profile* as a self-assessment, to establish a baseline from which the Academy may continuously improve, and provide a measure of quality to which all future improvements may be compared.

The *Academy Frameworks* are part of an overall quality initiative begun by the National Academy Foundation (NAF) in 1999. The overarching purpose is to ensure the quality of all Academies as their numbers continue to grow.

This **Partnership Framework** is one of three separate Framework areas (Learning Community, Partnership, Professional Development,) each designed in the same format, to help teams assess the quality of their Academies in these critical function areas. The *Partnership Framework* specifically focuses on the quality attributes of NAF’s relationship with its national and local partners.

These quality attributes are broken down into three Dimensions:

- **Program Support**
- **Advocacy**
- **Organization**

The “Partners” to whom this Framework applies, include NAF’s national Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) partners, such as the Small Business Administration (SBA), the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC), the U.S. Department of the Treasury (Treasury), the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), the CFP Board of Standards (CFP-Board) and the National Endowment for Financial Education (NEFE,) as well as all of NAF’s state, regional and local partners throughout the country, who serve an Academy through participation on their local Advisory Board.

* The term “Stakeholders” includes Advisory Board members and companies, Academy Directors and site coordinators, Principals, Superintendents and other district administrators, and local workforce and community development organizations, as more fully defined in the next section.

Using the Partnership Profile¹

PURPOSE

The attached *Partnership Framework Profile* (the Profile) may be used by a number of different stakeholders to establish a starting quality benchmark, and to identify strengths and opportunities for improvement (OFI's²) from their different perspectives. Because of the richness and value in obtaining multiple perspectives, the Profile will be most useful if several members of the Academy team complete the Profile and share their responses. Stakeholder groups (Academy Team members) that might use this Profile include:

Advisory Board (AB) members and companies, under the leadership of the Advisory Board Chair and members, may choose to use the Profile as an exercise to identify current strengths, and opportunities for improvement (OFIs) in the collaborative effort between the Advisory Board (AB) and the local Academy. The **Program Support** section of the Profile suggests ways in which the AB may interact with the Academy. It is a good starting place to begin to identify how well the Advisory Board as a whole, is filling its role as a program supporter, collaborator and partner. It can also identify OFIs on which the Board may concentrate its improvement efforts during the AB's annual strategic planning meeting. Concurrently or subsequently, Advisory Board member companies/organizations may choose to use the Profile as a guide to identify their individual levels of support and cooperation with the local Academy, and the extent to which their own organization is aligned with the Academy and its goals (see **Advocacy** and **Organization** sections of the Profile.)

Academy Directors and Site Coordinators may choose to use the Profile to assess the degree of collaborative support their Academy is receiving from its partners, and to help set goals for the Advisory Board before and/or during the annual strategic planning meeting. The Profile promulgates a standards guideline, which identifies ways in which AB members engage with the Academy, and the extent to which they involve themselves, and their organizations. Directors may also choose to use this Profile as a way to encourage AB members to "step up" their involvement, and their respective organization's involvement, directly with the Academy, and as an Academy advocate in the community.

Principals/Superintendents and other district administrators may use the Partnership Profile to better understand how the business community interacts and supports the Academy, and the extent to which that interaction affects the success of the Academy. They may also use the Profile to better align the goals of the Academy with the overall school and district goals, especially in the areas of work-based learning, contextual education and whole-school reform. Knowing the level of interaction between the business community and the school may also provide additional leverage for Academy curriculum scheduling issues, and state or federal funding opportunities.

Local Community Development and Workforce Development organizations may use the Partnership Profile to better understand how the involvement of local businesses in high school programs affects the education of students, and their subsequent career choices and skills. Chambers of Commerce may encourage members to become more involved with Academies after learning the ways in which they may be involved, and the benefits of such involvement to the businesses, the students, the school and the community at large.

¹ Adapted from National Staff Development Council: *Self-Assessment of Implementation of NSDC Standards*

² This terminology (OFI, pronounced "O-Fee") is derived from the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Program, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST.)

The Partnership Profile

PROGRAM SUPPORT

Instructional Support

- The partners dedicate staff and provide resources to assist Academy teachers in developing and adapting curriculum content, and to review and validate curriculum for relevancy.
- The partners supplement the NAF curriculum with industry information and collateral material, which relate to the Academy theme, support curriculum content, and help engage the interest of teachers and students.
- The partners regularly provide human and material resources to support authentic, academically rigorous project-based learning experiences that engage students, are applied in the context of real-life issues, and incorporate student presentations, exhibitions, and other activities, which stimulate students to use their ingenuity and creativity.
- The partners are committed to NAF's 100% Internship Campaign, and work together to find, qualify, and confirm enough quality internships for every eligible Academy student. Accordingly, the partners provide or find paid summer internships for every eligible Academy student, providing them with a range of work experiences that are challenging and authentic, are related to the students' course work, and contribute to the partner's own strategic goals.
- The partners regularly interact with Academy students inside and outside the classroom (i.e., familiarization (fam) trips, job shadowing experiences, career exploration events, in-class teaching, guest speaking, company training, and industry training), and provide materials, resources, information, and advisement regarding college attendance and career opportunities within the Academy theme.
- The partners collaborate with Academy teachers to maximize the use of technology (i.e., distance learning, research, testing, internet, video conferencing), to enhance student learning.
- The partners regularly host Academy students during new employee orientation meetings, company events, industry conferences, and other development activities outside the classroom, allowing students to experience contextual learning and "real-life" learning experiences related to the Academy career theme.
- There is college/university representation on the Advisory Board, and the Academy has signed articulation agreements with such institutions, providing applicable course credit for qualifying students upon enrollment as well as a college-level course for Academy seniors.

Staff Development

- The partners have committed resources for on-site and/or off-site Academy teacher enrichment activities (inviting teachers to existing partner training classes, providing additional training functions, both technical and non-technical, etc.)
- The partners regularly provide teacher job-shadowing experiences and paid externships, which relate to the career theme, support curriculum content, and enhance industry knowledge of Academy teachers.
- The partners have provided a technical support person(s) whom the Academy teacher(s) can contact one-on-one, to address questions regarding curriculum content, industry information, integration of technology or any other question which may come up in the course of teaching the Academy curriculum.
- The partners keep Academy teachers up-to-date on industry trends and latest advancements (via newsletter to teachers, email updates, teachers placed on client mailing lists), so teachers can keep Academy students apprised of industry developments on a real-time basis.

Financial Investment

- The Advisory Board has a formal, written, comprehensive strategic plan and budget, which has been developed with the help of the Academy Director based on the needs of the Academy, and which is available for review by all Academy stakeholders.
- The Advisory Board develops and pursues an annual fundraising plan, with established targets that provide support for student enrichment activities, professional development, internship development, and conference attendance.
- The Advisory Board has a formal fundraising committee to achieve the fundraising goals of the Academy, and all Advisory Board members are actively involved in and contribute time and resources to the fundraising effort.
- Financial performance information (actual vs. budget, revenue and expense information, fund balances) is reported and discussed at all Advisory Board meetings.

Human Resource Investment

- Partners schedule and budget their time for Academy activities (AB meetings, student conferences, classroom teaching opportunities and other activities) on their business calendars and commit to participating in, and completing these activities as they would any other important calendar item.
- The Academy Director and Advisory Board Chair have developed a partner recognition program based on time spent with Academy students and teachers and efforts to enhance student learning, to motivate and encourage partner participation in the Academy.
- Partners' involvement on the local Advisory Board is part of a personal philosophy of "giving back" to the community and partners recognize how they can make a difference in young peoples' lives.
- The Academy Director regularly sends press releases to local media to provide local notoriety for companies, which support the Academy, and newsworthy events occurring in the Academy.

ADVOCACY

Individual

- All partners are familiar with the Academy and with NAF, and can explain how the partner's involvement with the Academy and with NAF benefits all local stakeholders.
- The partners take responsibility to inform all other employees (i.e., via company wide broadcast over email, voice mail or conference call) that employee involvement is strongly encouraged.
- The partners regularly promote, advocate, and encourage co-workers, professional and social contacts, and other individuals within their "circle of influence" to get involved with the program.

Organizational

- The partners have established an annual Academy "human resource" budget for employee involvement, education, and training programs, to help employees at all levels understand why and how to get involved in supporting the Academy.
- The partners regularly promote their involvement in the Academy to other businesses and associations and encourage their involvement.
- The partners indicate their commitment to the Academy and to NAF in published form (newsletters to clients, industry advertisements, annual report, and other communications with the public). Stories publicizing employee involvement with the Academy appear in the partner's newsletters and website, and are sent to NAF for inclusion in NAF publications.
- The partners' local, state, and/or federal lobbying efforts advocate positions on behalf of the Academy, and actively promote workforce and economic development and school improvement programs which help students prepare for higher education and future careers.
- The partners openly discuss their individual and organization's involvement with the Academy and with NAF in public forums (Chamber of Commerce meetings, service organization meetings, association meetings, etc.), and advocate others to do so.
- The partners have established and maintain an employee encouragement, reward, and recognition system (based on time spent with Academy students and teachers, and efforts to enhance student learning), to motivate and encourage employee participation in the Academy.

ORGANIZATION³

Communication Systems

- The partners set annual “involvement goals” for Academy participation, in the areas of curriculum support, industry-specific training, technology support, and internship development, and regularly keep employees apprised of such goals.
- Partner executives have set clear expectations for employees of the organization, at all levels, to provide resources and/or technical assistance to Academy.
- The partners have dedicated an Academy Liaison who meets no less frequently than quarterly with the school-based Academy team, and who reports current involvement data (regarding curriculum support, industry-specific training, technology support, and internship development) to the highest executive level person in the organization.
- The Academy Liaison and other partner employees are present for NAF site visits and participate in corresponding discussions on Academy strengths and opportunities for improvement.
- The partners have a clear understanding that industry resources are best allocated on a regional level, but must meet the unique needs of individual Academy schools. To this end, the partners collaborate with intermediary organizations (such as school-to-career partnerships, workforce development organizations and trade associations) and NAF partners (such as state educational offices and government agencies) to promote continuous, equitable and sustainable Academy development for their region.
- The partners maintain a system by which employees are able to share their successes, concerns and issues relating to the Academy with the highest, executive level person in the organization and the Academy Liaison as appropriate.

Leadership Systems

- The highest, executive level person in the organization takes responsibility for the organization’s successful involvement with the Academy.
- The highest executive level person in the organization takes responsibility for highlighting the accomplishments of the partner’s managers and employees relating to the Academy, and publishing them organization-wide.
- The partners’ leaders supervise the effective development and deployment of short-term and long-term strategic plans related to Academy involvement (in the areas of curriculum support, industry-specific training, technology support, and internship development), monitor goals, and revise such plans as necessary.
- The partners’ leaders demonstrate their commitment to the Academy by being personally involved, and promoting their involvement organization-wide.
- Other upper and middle level managers are knowledgeable about and/or personally involved in Academy support activities, and encourage the involvement of subordinates.
- Special events (such as Academy graduations, award ceremonies, and student conferences) are held by the partner to demonstrate the importance of Academy involvement to its employees.
- Leaders ascertain the extent to which involvement goals align with overall goals of the organization, and capitalize on mutually beneficial opportunities.

³ The “ORGANIZATION” Dimension of the Partnership Framework is geared primarily for Partners, which are larger corporations/associations/other entities (over 50 employees.) Small businesses and sole proprietors/entrepreneurs who sit on Advisory Boards should review these statements, and glean future ideas for their organization’s involvement as they grow.

Training Systems

- The partners have implemented and maintain an ongoing employee training program, using a variety of training tools and methods, including new employee orientation meetings, live workshops, web-based training, and outside training (including sending employees to NAF conferences), to help employees understand the importance of Academy involvement to their organization, and to enhance employee skills as Academy stakeholders (mentors, internship providers, etc.).
- Academy-related training is made an integral part of the partner's new employee orientation, and is available to all interested employees, to develop skills and competencies to support their involvement with the Academy.
- School-based Academy personnel are regularly invited to participate in organization-wide broadcasts of Academy information (teleconferences, emails, voice mails, videoconferencing, etc.).
- School-based Academy personnel regularly present at the partners' organization conferences and training meetings.

Data Collection and Reporting Systems

- All Academy-related information (statistical information, anecdotal information, etc.) is collected at least semi-annually (preferably quarterly) by the Academy Liaison, and communicated internally to all employees of the organization, to the local Academy, and to NAF.
- The Academy Liaison takes full responsibility for data collection and reporting, including setting deadlines for collecting and comparing current data with the partner's budget and year over year involvement goals.
- Organizational leaders use current data to assess the partnership as measured against comparable programs and/or other appropriately selected organizations (ex: United Way), and against short-and longer-term goals, as well as to plan for subsequent year involvement goals.