

Academy of Finance

Nationally Validated

Grades 9-12



Innovative and intensive finance program for grades 9-12:

- Prepares students for post-secondary education as well as entry-level careers in financial services.
- Work experience program involving businesses and students of all backgrounds.

Results



High graduation rates with over 90% of graduates going on to college and over 25% pursuing financial service careers in college and afterwards.

- Female and minority participants are more likely to attend college and major in financial services.
- Female graduates are more likely to be employed in financial services and advance further in the field than other females.

The Program

Academy of Finance is an intensive 3- to 4-year program of study that prepares students for college, careers and active civic engagement. Sponsored and supported by the National Academy Foundation (NAF), the Academy of Finance is a highly structured academic/work experience program that offers:

- options for students lacking specific career plans,
- an avenue for career preparation,
- career opportunities for women and minorities in a non-traditional field, and
- a way to involve businesses in preparing youth for entry-level jobs.

The program supplements existing curriculum with:

- a series of finance or finance-related courses including banking, securities, financial planning and international finances,
- one college-level finance course,
- a 6-week paid summer internship at a financial service firm, and
- participation in finance-related activities including conferences, lectures, and tours.

Professional Development

The school district is required to support continuous teacher training in project-based learning pedagogy and financial services (e.g., the annual staff development conference) and provide additional professional development activities designed in conjunction with the local advisory board. NAF provides a full year of technical assistance for new academies. A start-up guide, quality assurance frameworks, curriculum materials, training, and support are provided.

A technical assistance team visits new sites during the start-up phase and on an ongoing basis thereafter. New sites participate in ongoing training activities (e.g., annual staff development and regional conferences).

Costs & Funding Options

Start-up and ongoing operations are dependent upon shared financial and other support from the participating school district and local business sponsors. The first year's subject costs for non-personnel expenditures are estimated at \$4,000, which covers teacher training, materials, special events, three directors' conferences, and miscellaneous costs. There is a minimum \$12,800 year of planning fee (which covers professional development costs and conference travel) and a \$1,000 renewable membership fee.

The school/business partnership negotiates the sharing of costs for the full-time program director's and administrative support staff's salaries. The district budgets for teachers' salaries and business sponsors budget for paid internship/on-site teacher training. Tuition for the college course is contributed by the local institution of higher education. Possible funding sources for replication include ESEA Title III.

Learning Standards

Career Development/ Occupational Studies:
1) be knowledgeable about the world of work, explore career options, and relate personal skills, aptitudes and abilities to future career decisions; 3b) choose a career major and acquire career-specific technical knowledge/skills necessary to progress toward gainful employment, career advancement, and success in post-secondary programs.

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