Data Tracking Steering Committee Meeting May 11, 2010 Review of the Validation Site Visit Recommendations

General Recommendations:

- The NAF Academies must figure out how to be part of the dialogue around "career-readiness" and "job-creation" discussions happening at the state level. Perhaps participation in this type of dialogue with the Governor's office, legislators and key funders should be incorporated into the self-assessment tool.
- NAF must consider how their curriculum (standards and assessments) fits within the accountability framework of the states in which their work is heavily concentrated. Failing to meet state mandated requirements may negatively impact the usefulness and adoption of the NAF curriculum and model. In addition, many students are concerned about getting honors' credit and maintaining their GPA, NAF should work with the state education departments to ensure NAF classes have honors designations. Lastly, District and Academy staff reinforced that it is valuable to have a regional NAF representative who can navigate state-level issues.
- NAF does a good job of connecting Academy Directors so that they can learn from each other. NAF should consider also connecting Advisory Board members who would like to learn from each other.
- Parents are a critical part of the success of the Apex NAF Academy. Is there a way to capture parent involvement in the self-assessment tool?
- Full-time Academy Director is a critical element to the success of Apex NAF Academy. The Director is seen as the "glue" that holds the Advisory Board, campus/district personnel, teachers and parents together. It would be very difficult to grow the program to exemplary status without a dedicated resource.
- At the start of the assessment document, there should be a place for demographic information to be provided.
- The self-assessment document should be restructured around meeting competencies, rather than on points.
- Because Golightly draw from all over the Detroit district, the demographic question in Section 1 is not really applicable.
- It was suggested by the principal that NAF needs to clearly define the purpose of the self-assessment document. Is it to judge the NAF model or to do what is best for students in a given setting.
- When students come back to school after college, they often reach out to former internship settings and the Advisory Council members. By including a document sharing site such as Adobe or Facebook, former and current students could be connected in real time and serve as a further recruitment tool.
- Although much information is available on the website, the chairperson felt that it would be useful if there were printed material that describes NAF and its relationship to local boards. He felt that it would be helpful to have a national imprimatur and readily available information about the project.

Section 1: Academy Development

- Because this academy loses students at grades 11 and 12, it was suggested that instead of <u>numbers of students</u>, that an academy be judged based on the cohort graduation percentage (such as less than 70% graduate as a cohort, etc.)
- The <u>academy director position</u> was questioned. Directors are different at each academy and for each district. They feel this question should not be about "time" but about support and quality of support at both the school and district level.
- The <u>academy director position</u> was questioned. Directors are different at each academy and for each district. The feel this question should not be about "time" but about support and quality of support at both the school and district level. Questions suggested are:
  - *Academy leadership has adequate time during the week to conduct academy business.*
  - *Academy leadership draws support from the school, district and the advisory board.*
- The <u>Academy Enrollment question</u> is difficult to respond to. The academy does not have a 4-year program. They currently have a two-year program and are moving to three. They will never have a four-year program.
- <u>Student Participation and Recruitment</u> should be divided into two questions and should include middle school recruitment.
- The staff at Clark HS AOF expressed frustration and concern regarding their struggles to address the mandates of the district regarding <u>class size and enrollment</u>
- The <u>Academy Enrollment question</u> is difficult to respond to and in this document, none of the three academies could ever be an exemplary practice. The academies do not have a 4-year program and do not enroll 75 students in a grade level (due to CTE classroom numbers limitations). What they do have is a rigorous 2 ½ hour sequence of courses, five days per week. They suggest using hours of credit as a measurement, rather than years.
- Because this academy is in a small school, the <u>numbers of students in an academy</u> are limited; therefore, it was suggested academies be judged on percentage of students as compared to the total enrollment as more equitable than just judging an academy on numbers.
- The <u>cohort scheduling is too narrow</u>. It was suggested that beginning practice be 25%, growing be 50%, sustaining be 75% and exemplary be 100%. It was agreed that "cohort" must be defined.
- The definition (in italics) of <u>cohort schedule</u> is not clear
- <u>Cohorting</u>. I got some mixed messages about the extent to which the AOE cohorts it's students. The students insisted they were not cohorted, not matter how much I probed and asked the question in different ways. The Academy Director said that most of the 10th grade AOE students take geometry together and most of the 11th grade students take English together. The principal said that he would like to move towards more cohorting but not until he has stronger, more collaborative teachers onboard.

- A requirement for a particular <u>number of members on the Advisory Board</u> was seen as imprecise. Instead, a suggestion was made that the number of students in an academy could be used in a ratio as determining the appropriate number of participants on an Advisory Board.

- Another metric to be considered should be <u>a measure of member continuity</u>. A board with a good deal of member turnover would not be as effective as a board with consistency of membership. Related to this is the proposal for a succession plan, so that if a board member leaves, he/she is replaced by someone in the same industry.

- A metric that measured the <u>level of interaction between board members and students</u> was suggested as a potentially useful one.

- <u>Board functions and roles should be split in two</u>. More important than how often a Board meets, is really how active and involved it is. There should be a check-off list to indicate the roles the Board takes on. Different Board members contribute in different ways (such as heading up a major fundraising effort, but not being able to supply internships). They also felt there should be a question asking if any NAF national partner organizations were represented on the local Boards.

- <u>Board functions and roles should be divided into two sections</u>. The feeling was that the number of times a year the Board meets should be reversed from the way it is progressively listed. Board members felt they met very frequently the first year or two as they were getting organized and were comfortable meeting quarterly as the years have gone on and everyone knows their functions and responsibilities.

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- <u>Board membership again was about degree of involvement</u>; % of non-school staff should remain high at 85%.

- <u>Rethink the percentages for non-school staff</u> or leave out altogether. The business and college participation is more crucial. There is also no magic number for Board members as it is the quality of involvement, not the quantity.

- A question should be asked about <u>Board involvement identifying internships</u> since this is a stipulation for Board membership

Section 4: Internships

It was agreed that Internship Completion <u>only referenced those students who had internships</u>. It did not ask how many seniors there were and, of those, how many had internships.

There was also <u>discussion around the word "eligible."</u> At the School of Business, internships are earned and are a privilege, therefore, all students do not have an internship, but those who are eligible do. So, they checked "exemplary" even though all seniors did not have internships.

<u>Keep the goal of having 100% of students completing compensated internships</u>; however, realize that some of those may be unpaid.

<u>Expand the assessment component of the internship</u> to include formal and informal opportunities to evaluate the internship experience. For example, consider adding in interim milestones such as students writing blogs about their experience and/or a capstone presentation on learnings from the internships to the "internship assessments" category.

<u>Consider changing "paid internship" to "compensated internship."</u> There have been several instances of students wanting to do internships with non-profit organizations that cannot pay them a salary; however, may offer other types of compensation. Each year, the Academy Director approves 1-2 internships, which meet the criteria of rigorous work-based learning, however do not pay a salary..

A question should be asked about <u>how many students had internships</u>. Internship completion is very misleading.

Another example of <u>evidence under Internship Assessments should be Student and Employer Exit Interviews.</u>

A suggestion was made that a "paid internship" needs to be changed to a "compensated internship" to allow for a broadening of experiences.

Evidence

> - In completing the self-assessment, the participants were comfortable responding without referring to reports or data. The Academy Director indicated that there had been discussions about looking at student performance as part of an internal evaluation and they had begun planning an evaluation of the various academies.

> - It was proposed that the distinguished schools put together a document/binder that organizes the data and evidence which could be used as a model to share during the summer institute where they would provide a workshop.

> - A major suggestion was that consideration be given to weighting various elements in the self-assessment tool. It was felt that not all aspects are of equal importance or relevance to the program.

Site Visit Validation Data Check List

Item	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Model is outlined and defined in SA Tool	3	8	0	0
Designation for the academy, accurately reflect the fidelity to NAF model	3	5	3	0
The school leadership monitors fidelity to NAF model	3	7	1	0
NAF academy has high fidelity to the NAF model	3	7	1	0
Recruitment processes ensure that demographics of the district/school are comparable to the academy	6	4	1	0
Recruitment processes encourage the enrollment of struggling and at-risk students	1	5	5	0
The internships are credit bearing	7	2	0	1
Student grade-level enrollment is an important indicator for determining the score on the tool for Distinguished academies	3	2	6	0
The SA rubric was clear	2	4	4	1
The criteria and rubric were appropriate to identify academies as leader and distinguished	2	4	3	2
The NAF/PLTW curriculum is being used	6	2	2	1
Students are actively engaged in PBL	4	1	2	4
Students are aware they are in a NAF academy	7	1	1	0
Students perceive NAF course curriculum to be rigorous	2	6	1	0
Teachers understand NAF instructional practices	3	3	2	0
The elements listed in the SA tool adequately assess the capacity of the Board	0	5	3	0
Academy Director and site observer in general agree regarding alignment of observations with SA tools	0	7	2	0
Advisory Board are familiar with the tenets of the NAF model	4	5	0	0
The Advisory Board is involved in establishing and supporting internships	7	2	0	0