ORCHARD PARK

Academy of Finance

HIGH SCHOOL

program handbook

Student/Parent/Guardian



welcome

Dear Students and Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to the OPHS Academy of Finance (AOF)! A common question we receive is: What is the AOF and what are we expecting students to do?

We hope that this handbook will answer that question. We believe it is important that our students understand the opportunities provided to them and take action to maximize those opportunities. It is also important that parents/guardians commit to regularly supporting their students throughout their journey. We hope your support will also include supporting the larger mission set out by the faculty of the Business Education Department, our local Advisory Board, and NAF.

Thank you and we look forward to working with you!

Mrs. Kristen Casto

AOF Director

Ms. Giselle Gerace

AOF Advisory Board Chair

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OUR MISSION

Through NAF (formerly the National Academy Foundation), we link the business community with the student body of Orchard Park High School. Our mission is to graduate students who are knowledgeable of the free enterprise system, acquire successful careers, contribute positively to their communities, and share their experience with future generations.

The Orchard Park High School AOF is supported by an Advisory Board comprised of business partners, community leaders, college liaisons, parents, administrators and business teachers. This collective body provides knowledge, expertise and support for the “real world” experiences necessary for student success. Over 20 local & regional businesses are currently represented on our local Advisory Board.

We empower our students through the sharing of information and knowledge via classroom and field experiences that prepare them to be college and career ready.

More information on the national organization, NAF, can be found at www.naf.org.

OUR MODEL

The four components of our AOF program include:

(A) Coursework
(B) Work-Based Learning
(C) Internship
(D) Participation & Leadership Activities

Within each component there are three tiers of opportunities:

TIER 1: Required
Tier 1 is part of the core NAF program and includes all coursework and the internship.

TIER 2: Expected
Tier 2 is also part of the core NAF program and includes the program components specific to the OPHS AOF.

TIER 3: Encouraged
Tier 3 is comprised of opportunities outside the core program that create added value.

The OPHS AOF is a Certified Academy within NAF. NAF assesses us annually in our ability to provide the various opportunities, and how students take advantage of those opportunities, especially those in Tiers 1 & 2.

EVALUATION & FEEDBACK

Our students tend to be extremely motivated individuals that are involved in a wide variety of activities and endeavors. Our program is designed with the flexibility to recognize that our students lead busy lives. We strongly encourage students to pursue what they are passionate about and take full advantage of OPHS opportunities including athletics, co-curricular activities, student government, the arts, and other rigorous courses.

With this in mind we have created a “point system” that students and parents can utilize to help navigate our program and to measure how well they are taking advantage of AOF opportunities. Students are asked to earn a minimum of **100 points** (average of 25 points per grade level) by the last quarter of their senior year. Students should periodically self-assess their progress to ensure that they are on track. Benchmarks are outlined below; details on each program component and its tiers are on the following pages.

	(A) Coursework	(B) Work-Based Learning	(C) Internship	(D) Participation & Leadership	**TOTAL**
REQUIRED	8 points	4 points	10 points	4 points	26 points
EXPECTED	6 points	12+ points	10 points	6 points	34+ points
ENCOURAGED	Wide variety of points opportunities to choose from				40+ points
					100 points

PROGRAM COMPONENT A

coursework



The AOF curriculum was created by Orchard Park School District educators in partnership with our local business partners and NAF. Courses are rigorous, relevant, and include project-based learning, which is strongly encouraged by NAF.

REQUIRED (TIER 1)

YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4
iComp I Leadership Skills	Accounting I*	iComp II* Career Planning & Mgmt	Personal Finance* Banking & Credit

It is highly recommended that students complete the required courses as sequenced above, but in circumstances where that's not possible, courses may be taken out of sequence.

AOF students can choose to take additional coursework, in combination with two industry-approved technical assessments, to earn a NYS CTE Endorsement on their diplomas.

** Courses available tor college credit*

EXPECTED (TIER 2)

NYS FINANCIAL LITERACY CTE ENDORSEMENT

This endorsement formally recognizes that students in our program graduate college and career ready. Students who enroll in and successfully complete this NYSED approved CTE program, including two industry-based technical assessments, will be awarded a technical endorsement on their diploma.

To complete this endorsement, AOF students must successfully complete **one** of the following courses in addition to their required AOF coursework: Accounting II, Principles of Marketing, or Business Law. They must also achieve a passing grade on two industry-based assessments (one administered as part of the Accounting Principles I course, and the other as part of the iComp II course). More information on enrolling in this opportunity will be sent home with students at the beginning of their first year in the AOF.

ENCOURAGED (TIER 3)

SUNY ERIE ADVANCED STUDIES PROGRAM

The OPHS Business & Marketing Department partners with SUNY Erie to provide opportunities for students to earn college credit right here at OPHS. The following AOF/CTE courses are offered for college credit through the Advanced Studies program: iComp I/II, Accounting Principles I, Personal Finance, Business Law, Principles of Marketing and Internship.

All courses are offered at either a discounted tuition rate, and OPHS provides the textbook at no cost. More information on SUNY Erie's Advanced Studies program, including details about how concurrent enrollment works and actual tuition costs, will be shared in the affiliated OPHS courses.

PROGRAM COMPONENT B

work-based learning



"Work-based learning refers to a continuum of activities, both in and outside the classroom, that provide opportunities for students to connect what they are learning in the classroom to the world of work; to learn about careers...education and training requirements...identify career interests and aptitudes and to use the workplace for both learning and applying college and career readiness skills and knowledge."
~ NAF Guide to WBL

REQUIRED (TIER 1)

ANNUAL WORK-BASED LEARNING IN-SCHOOL CONFERENCE

The OPHS AOF annual Work-Based Learning Conference allows our students to complete many of our program requirements related to workplace preparation and soft skill development. The conference is a full-day agenda, and is held at OPHS. Students will attend grade-specific seminars and workshops, hear from guest speakers, complete hands-on activities, and interact with the OPHS AOF Advisory Board members and other business professionals.

EXPECTED (TIER 2)

QUAKER CORNER BOOKSTORE

The Quaker Corner bookstore is a student-run operation. Located in The Commons, it is open most days after school and is managed by the OPHS DECA chapter. AOF students may sign up and train to work at the Quaker Corner by contacting the store manager. AOF students are expected to work 1 semester at the Quaker Corner.

GRADE-LEVEL SPECIFIC WORK-BASED LEARNING

9TH GRADE

- Advisory Board Meeting Observation: Attend 1 AOF Advisory Board meeting during homeroom
- Advisory Board Mixer Assignment*
- Resume Version 1.0*

10TH GRADE

- WNY AOF Regional Conference: Attend regional conference; field trip during school day.
- Career Exploration Assignment*
- Resume Version 2.0*

11TH GRADE

- Mentor Program: Meet at least twice with assigned business mentor (after school) & submit documentation
- Resume Version 3.0*

**Assignment started during annual Work-based Learning Conference.*

ENCOURAGED (TIER 3)

PROJECT-BASED OPPORTUNITIES

The following items are options for students to extend their learning by pursuing a personal interest or passion. This list is not exhaustive...if students have an idea for something that would meet the criteria for this program component, they should bring it to the AOF Director for consideration. Our students are our best assets and add great value to the AOF program by bringing their ideas to life!

- Attend DECA Competition (Regional, State, and/or National level)
- AOF Advisory Board Entrepreneurial Project (grant for a student to start their own business venture)
- Book Study (have a book approved by AOF Director and gather a small group of students to read and discuss it)
- Educational Games (spend time in a small group learning and playing one of the financial literacy board games owned by the AOF)

PROGRAM COMPONENT C

internship



Internships are the culmination of high school career preparation activities. Internships allow students to apply work-readiness and academic skills, as well as learn specific occupational skills in a workplace setting. Students, teachers, families, and the local business community are partners in this process.

REQUIRED (TIER 1)

While there are internship completion requirements that all students must meet, the internship placement process can vary from student to student. Most students will complete 150 hours of on-site work experience at a business of their choosing (once it's approved by the OPHS Work-Based Learning Coordinator). Internships can be secured through the professional networks of Advisory Board members, teachers, coordinators, families, and/or students. The AOF Internship typically takes place during the summer between 11th & 12th grade; but students may be able to begin earlier if desired. Students must successfully complete the AOF Internship course requirements, as outlined by OPHS, NYSED and NAF, to satisfy the internship requirement and receive an AOF graduation certificate.

EXPECTED (TIER 2)

PRE- & POST-INTERNSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

In order for students to get the most out of their internships, our process includes a variety of tasks to be completed before and after the internship. These tasks will be communicated with students via their AOF/Internship Google Classrooms and/or homeroom and may include:

PRE-INTERNSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

- Attendance at Internship Information Session
- Timely submission of "Internship Option/Preference Form"
- Timely submission of "Mentoring Permission Slip" & "Mentor Ranking Form"
- Participation in Mock Interview Competition

POST-INTERNSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

- Timely submission of Internship Timesheets
- Timely submission of Final Internship Evaluation
- Internship Presentation to the AOF Advisory Board (during school day)

ENCOURAGED (TIER 3)

GOLD STANDARD INTERNSHIP

Students who complete 180 hours (or more) of internship experience are eligible to receive the Gold Standard Internship designation. The AOF program places a high value on the skills developed through the internship experience and encourages our students to get the most possible from this part of our program!

PROGRAM COMPONENT D



participation & leadership activities

The AOF strongly encourages students to take an active role within the Academy through teambuilding, fundraising, AOF spirit and school service opportunities. We also encourage students to volunteer for periodic leadership opportunities, which will be tracked using a form submitted to the AOF Director. These opportunities lead to experiences that students may add to their resumes, as well as college and scholarship applications.

REQUIRED (TIER 1)

CLASS MEETINGS

At the start of each school year, the AOF will host after school meetings (one per grade level) to review important information and share updates. These meetings will be held after school in September (details to be communicated via AOF Google Classrooms). Students are required to attend their grade-level meeting each year.

EXPECTED (TIER 2)

NEW STUDENT/PARENT NIGHT

This event is held annually as a way to inform our new AOF students and families about the AOF program. It is expected that students and families will attend this event once, during the school year the AOF student begins the program. This event is typically held during an evening in October.

ENCOURAGED (TIER 3)

The following items are options for students to develop leadership skills and/or serve our local school and community. This list is not exhaustive...if students have an idea for something that would meet the criteria for this program component, they should bring it to the AOF Director for consideration.

PARTICIPATION OPPORTUNITIES

- Teambuilding (Ex: field trips, AOF family outings)
- AOF Spirit (Ex: Finance Fridays, AOF Homecoming Carnival booth)
- Fundraising (Ex: annual fundraiser for individual student accounts)
- Financial Literacy promotion (Ex: open a Quaker Vault account)
- School Service (Ex: participate in Blood Drive)

LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

- Volunteer for Academy events (Ex: New Student/Parent Night, Student Conference)
- Assist with presenting AOF program to potential 8th grade applicants
- Lead or co-lead an AOF event
- Serve as a DECA Officer, Quaker Vault Manager, OP Enterprises Officer

Other participation and leadership opportunities come up throughout the school year and will be communicated to students via their AOF Google Classroom and/or homeroom. Students can also bring ideas for opportunities to the AOF Director for approval.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

In order to maintain the high standards and reputation of the OPHS AOF program, students are expected to abide by the following:

CORE PROGRAM

AOF students are responsible for enrolling in all required AOF courses & successfully completing the internship. Students are expected to achieve a minimum of an 85% average across all required AOF courses.

CODE OF CONDUCT

AOF students are required to meet the following expectations:

1. Use school-appropriate language and behavior at all times while maintaining professional and courteous behavior.
2. Be polite and respectful to everyone, including students, teachers, administrators, support staff, and visitors.
3. Exemplary daily school attendance is expected.
4. Business dress is required at all events and meetings involving Advisory Board members. AOF Attire is encouraged at all AOF student activities.

In addition to the AOF expectations, AOF Members are expected to follow all high school rules as outlined in the OPHS Handbook. AOF Members may be progressively disciplined throughout their years in the AOF program for not complying with school rules and/or AOF expectations.

The AOF program is a distinct privilege extended to the students by the District and expects members to represent the program and school well during their time in the program.

Failure to meet above expectations may affect eligibility for AOF Membership and/or Graduation Certificate.

OUR TEAM



GISELLE GERACE
Advisory Board Chair
OPHS AOF Class of 2014



KRISTEN CASTO
AOF Director
Business Dept. Instructional Leader
Work-Based Learning Coordinator
DECA Co-Adviser



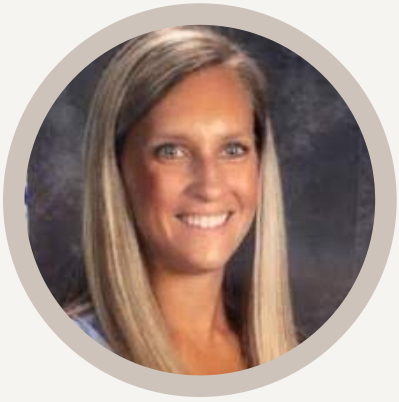
SHAUNA BIRTCH
AOF Treasurer
Classroom Teacher



BARBARA DOWNS
DECA Co-Adviser
Classroom Teacher



PATRICK LOFTUS
Classroom Teacher



DENISE PATTERSON
Classroom Teacher