

Westhill High School

Academy of Finance



Information Packet
Intra- District Application

Westhill High School Academy of Finance*

Parent/Student Information Packet

In the past decade, technology has revolutionized virtually every aspect of every position in the financial services industry, and hundreds of thousands of low-skilled jobs have been consolidated into fewer, more demanding positions. Today, despite volatile financial markets and well-publicized layoffs in the industry, the demand of talented applicants who have mastered the “soft skill”—the ability to communicate effectively, work as team members, and solve problems—is unabated and likely to grow. The Academy of Finance is a vital source of skilled personnel that the financial industry can tap into in order to meet the challenge of a rapidly changing business world.

In addition to their regular class work, students will visit corporations, attend awards presentations, participate in seminars presented by local professionals, compete in the Stock Market Game, and visit a financial center on an exchange field trip. In addition, the students participate in an Academy graduation ceremony and receive an official Certificate of Completion for Financial Studies.

The Academy of Finance provides a four-year specialized program of study in finance at the high school level and includes the fulfillment of both required and elective credits. In freshmen year students take one year of computers. The formal three-year program begins Accounting 1 in the sophomore year, introductory coursework in junior year, includes a paid/unpaid, summer on-the-job internship at a financial services firm, and culminates with more advanced courses in the senior year of high school.

The Academy of Finance program extends far beyond a course of study. It establishes an ongoing relationship involving corporate executives, school personnel, parents, and students, resulting in greatly improved employment opportunities.

Upon completion of the program, a student may apply for a position in the finance industry or further their studies in finance at the college level.

*** Part of the National Academy Foundation**

Fact Sheet

The Academy of Finance (AOF) is a partnership between the National Academy Foundation, the local financial services industry, and the Stamford Public School System.

Mission Statement

Westhill High School's Academy of Finance will introduce students to a world of educational and business opportunities they may not otherwise encounter or experience. It will provide our students with career and educational options as well as enable them to develop new perspectives on the working professional world. This program design will be inclusive of any students desirous of broadening their horizons through meaningful and structured educational experiences. Their efforts will be supported and monitored by professionals who participate in related staff development and utilize a balance of emerging technology and traditional learning resources.

Academy Curriculum

- ♦ *Developed by leading industry and education representatives*
- ♦ *Covers industry-specific knowledge and general workplace competencies*
- ♦ *Supplements and enhances college preparatory and diploma programs*
- ♦ *Reviewed and updated regularly for industry relevance*

National Statistics

- ♦ *NAF is the largest career academy program in the nation*
- ♦ *243 Academies of Finance nationwide*
- ♦ *90% of students report that the Academies helped them to develop career plans.*
- ♦ *52% of NAF graduates earn bachelor's degrees in four years—compared with 32% nationally.*
- ♦ *Over four out of five NAF graduates go on to two- and four-year colleges each year*

Westhill Statistics

- ♦ *Started in 1999*
- ♦ *100% of our graduates go on to college*

Student Internships

- ♦ *Earned through fulfillment of coursework and a personal interview*
- ♦ *Provide hands-on experience and exposure to a range of career options*
- ♦ *Supervised by employer and school coordinator*
- ♦ *Evaluated by intern and supervisor*

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

Required Academy Courses

Freshmen Year

Information Technology & Information Technology & Design (Semester Classes)

Sophomore Year

Honors Accounting 1

Junior Year

Honors Principles of Finance (Semester 1) & Honors Financial Planning (Semester 2)

Senior Year

*Honors Business Economics (Semester 1) &
Honors Business in Global Economy (Semester 2)*

Required Internship

Financial Internship, paid/unpaid*

ACADEMY OF FINANCE COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

HONORS ACCOUNTING 1- FULL YEAR

This course introduces financial accounting theory and practices for the sole proprietor, partnership, and corporate forms of business organization. Students learn the basics of the accounting cycle and learn how to use accounting information as a basis for decision-making. Business transactions are analyzed, recorded and summarized for the preparation of financial statements

HONORS BUSINESS ECONOMICS – ½ YEAR

This is a one-semester course in macro- and micro-economics that provides an understanding of how our market economy functions in a global setting. It provides the students with a survey of economic concepts including all of the twenty-two basic principles recommended by the National Council on Economic Education. In addition, a unit on capital markets acquaints the students with the role that various markets and securities play on our overall economic framework.

HONORS BUSINESS IN GLOBAL ECONOMY – ½ YEAR

This is a one-semester course exploring major components of the international financial system. It includes the study of foreign trade, the international monetary system, foreign exchange rates, foreign exchange markets, international financial markets, international banking, and the multinational corporation.

FINANCIAL INTERNSHIP

The financial internship provides the students the opportunity to demonstrate human relations, communications, and employability skills necessary for entry level employment in the financial services industry. Additionally, it will enhance the instruction and competencies developed through classroom instruction. This financial internship is scheduled to run during the summer months and the student/intern must work a minimum of six weeks.

HONORS FINANCIAL PLANNING – ½ YEAR

This is a one-semester course that introduces students to the financial planning process and the components of a comprehensive financial plan. The students learn how to prepare a financial plan that includes saving, investing, borrowing, risk management (insurance) and retirement and estate planning.

PRINCIPLES OF FINANCE – ½ YEAR

This is a one-semester course presenting a survey of the principles and practices of banking and credit in the United States. The students learn about the major functions of banks and other depository institutions, in-house operations and procedures, central banking through the Federal Reserve System and modern trends in the banking industry. The credit components provide an overview of credit functions and operations including credit risk evaluation, loan creation and debt collection.