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Honorable Eric Adams
Mayor, New York City
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

June 30, 2023

Dear Mayor Adams:

On behalf of NAF, we want to thank you for the opportunity to have played a role in developing the recent report "Pathways to An Inclusive Economy: The Future of Workers Task Force Blueprint" and applaud your administration for this monumental work. NAF is a national nonprofit organization that connects the classroom to the workplace by integrating career-focused curricula and work-based learning into the traditional high school experience through small, focused learning communities around growing industries. The recent report's recommendations align perfectly with the work NAF academies are doing across the country, and specifically at the 18 NAF academies throughout New York City serving over 5,000 students. Chancellor Banks recently visited a NAF academy in New York City and has continued conversations about how NAF can collaborate with his FutureReadyNYC initiative. We look forward to working with your administration on the implementation of the recommendations outlined in this report as well as with NYCDOE.

As a national organization, we know first-hand the importance and benefit of a strong local Workforce Development Board (WDB) through our work with such boards across the country. The coordination and knowledge such an entity can bring to their locality is unmatched and we support the City's efforts to reimagine the NYC WDB. Core to NAF's academy design is a progressive continuum of work-based learning activities that allows students gain the skills and knowledge needed to make informed choices and be successful in their future careers. Therefore, we uniquely understand the importance of paid apprenticeship programs, including pre-apprenticeship programs and youth apprenticeships, and support the report's recommendations to expand and diversify apprenticeship programs across New York City.

Building from NAF's 40-year experience in providing work-based learning opportunities and industry-focused curriculum to over 600 academies nationwide, we believe we can contribute to the implementation of the report's recommendations in the following ways:

- NAF is on the forefront of collecting data on work-based learning opportunities and has recently launched the Work-Based Learning Participation Tracker in our academies. Such data gathering has informed our understanding of student and employer partner involvement in these opportunities. Utilizing our experience, the WDB could employ similar tech-enabled trackers to understand and plan for future work-based learning opportunities.
- As our academies are spread across the country with varying state and local laws and requirements, NAF has seen effective systems to collect data from diverse sources and would be happy to lend our knowledgebase to NYC's shared metrics efforts.

- As the WDB reconstitutes and forms committees, NAF would be able to contribute a unique perspective specifically on the development and scaling of employer engaged, high-quality work-based learning.
- NAF advocates at a state level for policies that support increasing access to high-quality work-based learning opportunities, funding for such opportunities, and advocates federally on issues such as revisions to the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act to include more support for in-school youth and more connection between WIBs and secondary education systems. We stand ready to assist NYC's efforts in advocating for needed state or federal policy changes to support the implementation of the recommendations outlined in this report.

We would be honored to help further these recommendations in any way possible as New York City was home to our first ever academy – an Academy of Finance in 1980. We are eager to serve as a resource to you and your administration on the implementation of the Pathways to an Inclusive Economy report. Please feel free to reach out to Jennifer Pautz, AVP of Policy and Advocacy, jpautz@naf.org, to engage with us further.

Sincerely,



Lisa Dughi

CEO | NAF