

# FIELD GUIDE

## Student Reflections on Efficacy

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The annual NAF Student Survey is an essential tool to hear our students' voice. It helps us gauge where the NAF Network is thriving, what could be done better, and what barriers our students face. During the Spring of 2020, the NAF Student Survey was available, for the first time, to **all NAF students, not just seniors**. We heard from over 11,000 students on what is happening in their academies, the impact of their work-based learning experiences, and what could be done better. We're pleased to share what we learned with you.

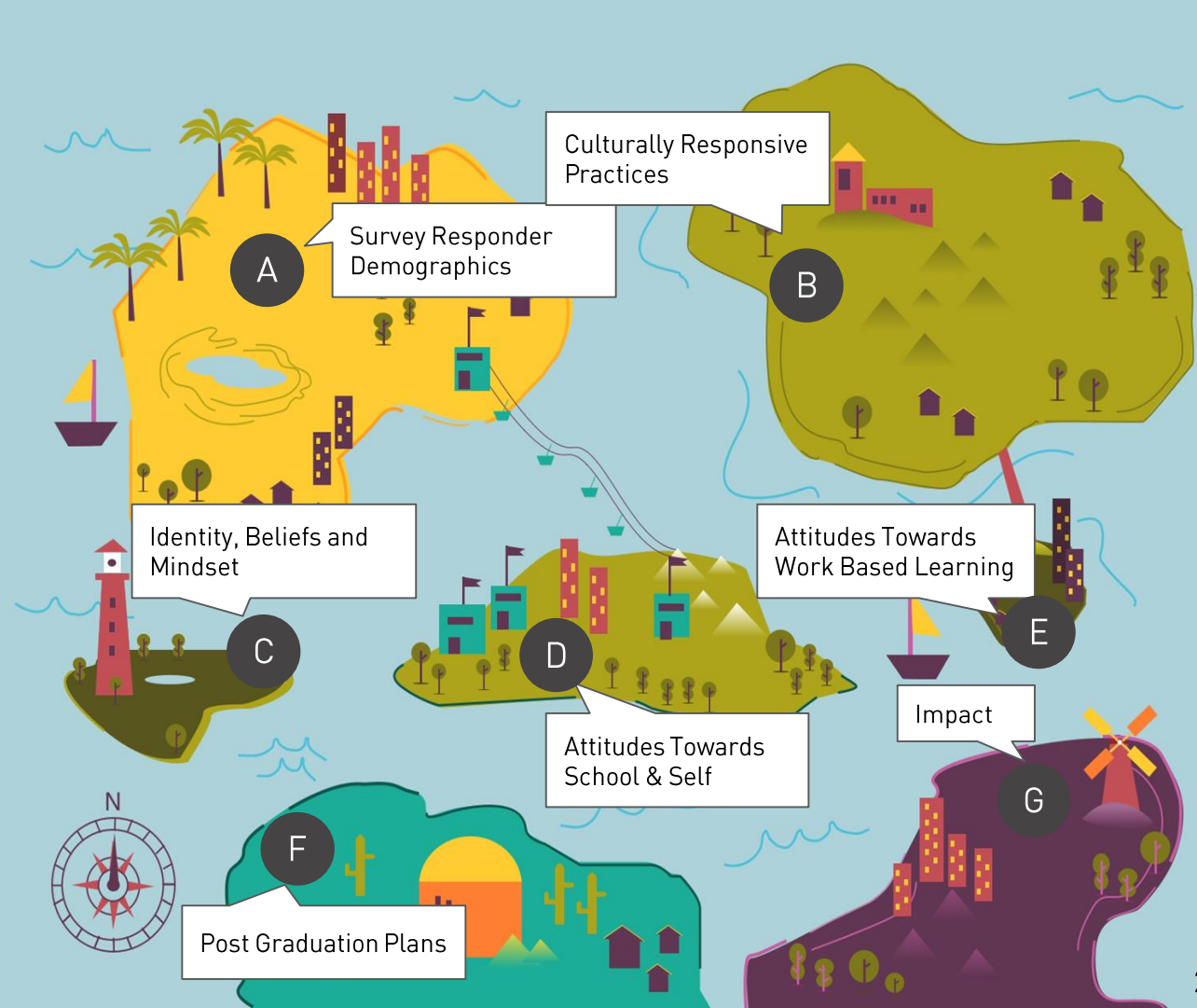


NAF : Research +  
Technology  
2020

# FIELD GUIDE

Points of Interest:

- a. Survey Responder Demographics
- b. Culturally Responsive Practices
- c. Identity, Beliefs and Mindset
- d. Attitudes Towards School and Self
- e. Attitudes Towards Work Based Learning
- f. Post Graduation Plans
- g. Impact

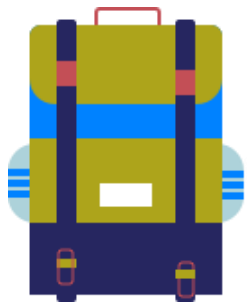


# FIELD GUIDE

Theory of Change

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WE BELIEVE THAT:



high school **students** in  
communities **most impacted** by  
21st century **opportunity gaps**

WILL:

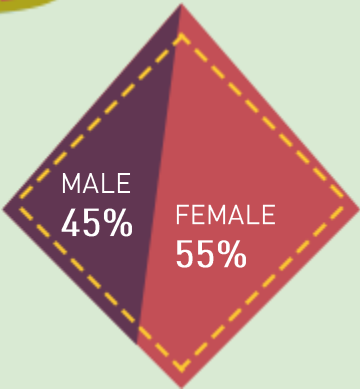
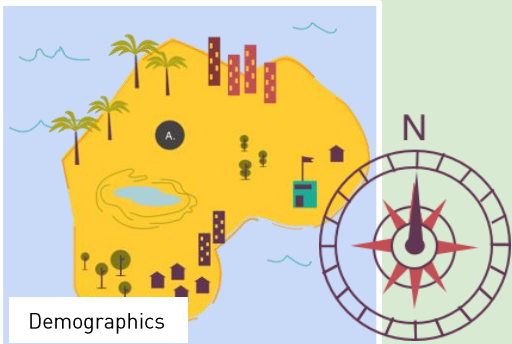
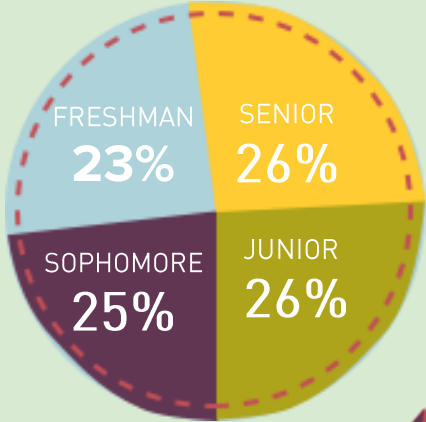
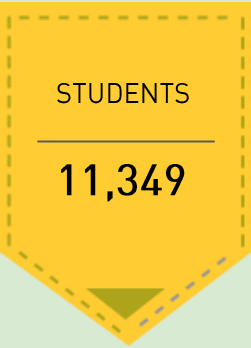


**engage with a high quality  
learning environment** that  
reflects NAF's core values of  
safety, culture, community  
involvement and a focus on work-  
based learning

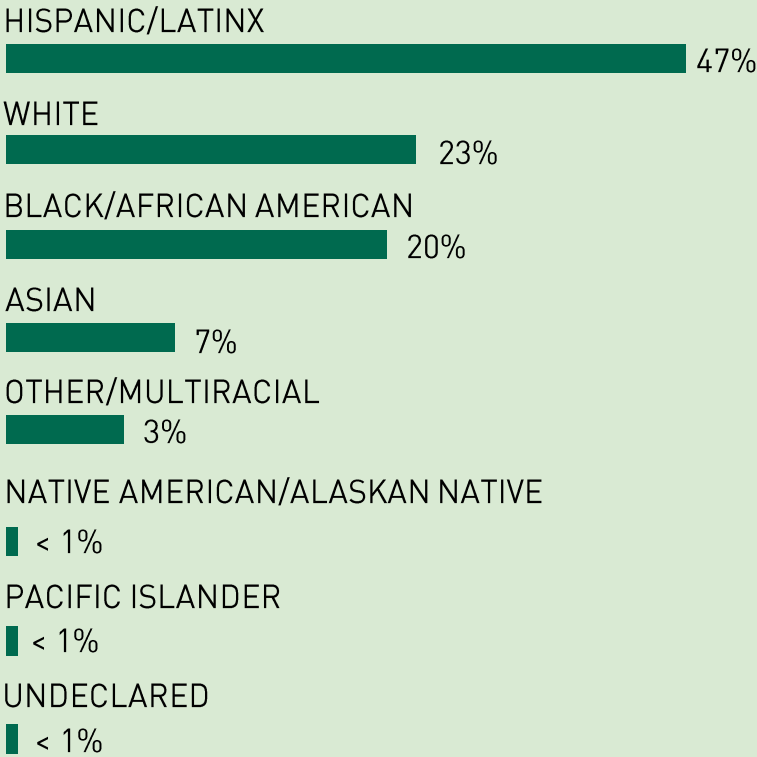
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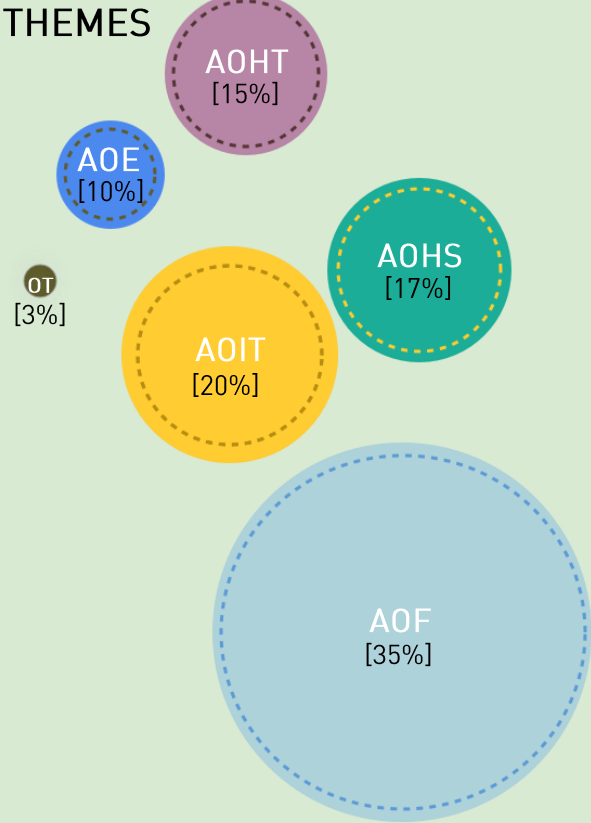
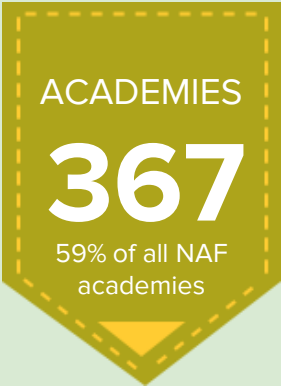


they have learning experiences  
that are connected to their future  
and **equal opportunity for  
success beyond high school.**

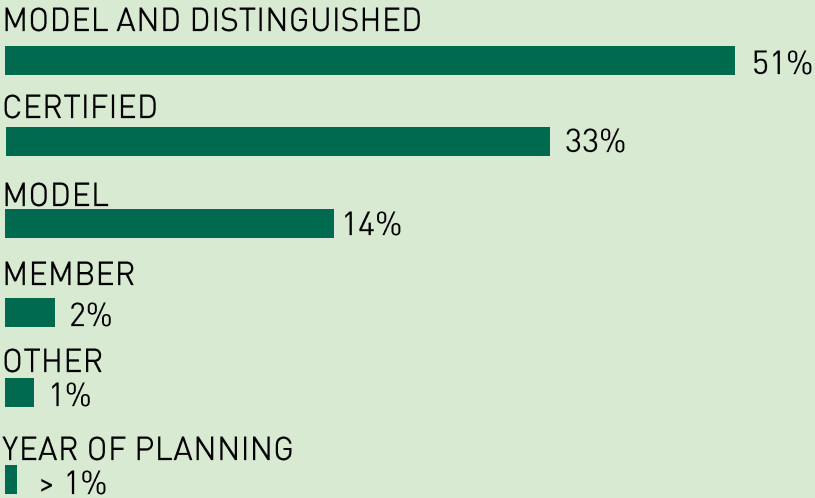


### STUDENT ETHNICITY





ACADEMY QUALITY



# FIELD GUIDE

## Culturally responsive practices GOALS + RESULTS

NAF strives to foster environments where the lived experiences and perspectives of students drive learning and are key to effective adult relationships.

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WHAT STUDENTS SAY  
(after hiking the trail)

- **83%** of students say NAF teachers **make an effort to get to know their students as a person.**
- **63%** of students say NAF teachers acknowledge their **cultural influences and biases** in the classroom.
  - 64% of students who identified as ethnic minorities (Black, Hispanic/Latinx, Asian, etc.) indicated this compared to 60% of students who identified as White.
- **65%** of students say NAF teachers teach in a way that relates to their **cultures and experiences.**
  - 67% of students from Model+Distinguished academies indicated this compared to 63% from Member/Certified academies.

Keep it up

Could be  
Better

Requires  
Attention

# FIELD GUIDE

Culturally responsive practices STUDENT VOICE

## ★★★★ REVIEWS



*"The biggest impact on me was the diversity and culture at my school. It helps us feel free to express ourselves."*



*"...through the academy I was able to learn about communication skills that have helped me make new friends, talk to my teachers, and to not be afraid of speaking with strangers. This was a huge impact for me personally because in our academy we are connected. If one of us has a problem, is going through something, or needs help, we talk to each other. This is huge and important to me because I have been able to meet people from different cultures, people with different beliefs, people who live different lives from me."*

# FIELD GUIDE

## Culturally responsive practices **RECOMMENDATIONS**

While NAF students generally acknowledge that their teachers recognize their own cultural influences and biases, this is an area that can improve.

It is recommended that teachers **be intentional and frank with their students about acknowledging cultural biases and influences** as part of any classroom conversation. This will enhance learning for all.

**Action Question:** *How is it ensured that students feel a sense of belonging within their academy regardless of ethnicity, culture, or background? In other words, how do we know students are free to be their true, authentic selves?*



## HOW TO IMPROVE

Generally, NAF teachers are teaching in a way that relates to students' cultures and experiences, but we strive for more.

It's recommended educators **self-reflect** and examine if there is anything in their teaching approach that would improve their success with students in this area. Start by examining your own journey and understanding your blind spots.

**Action Question:** *How might we put forward a toolkit of resources and build a community of practice to support needed change for how teachers deliver a Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education (CR-SE) frame?*

# FIELD GUIDE

## IDENTITY, BELIEFS, AND MINDSET GOALS + RESULTS

NAF believes that when supported by small learning communities, a sense of safety, and healthy adult relationships, students' mindsets can grow and support important contributions to future work and life.

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Identity  
Beliefs &  
Mindset




WHAT STUDENTS SAY  
(after hiking the trail)

- **22%** of students believed they are close or very close to their ideal future self.
- **87%** of students primarily **reported a growth mindset**, believing their intellectual abilities can be improved through hard work.
- **88%** of students reported that NAF teachers also attribute them with a **growth mindset**.
- **92%** of students indicated that if a goal is difficult to obtain it doesn't not mean it is out of reach.
- **45%** of NAF students would pick a hard assignment over an easy assignment even if it resulted in a lower grade. This attitude only increased with students' grade level.

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 Requires Attention

# FIELD GUIDE

## IDENTITY, BELIEFS, AND MINDSET STUDENT VOICE

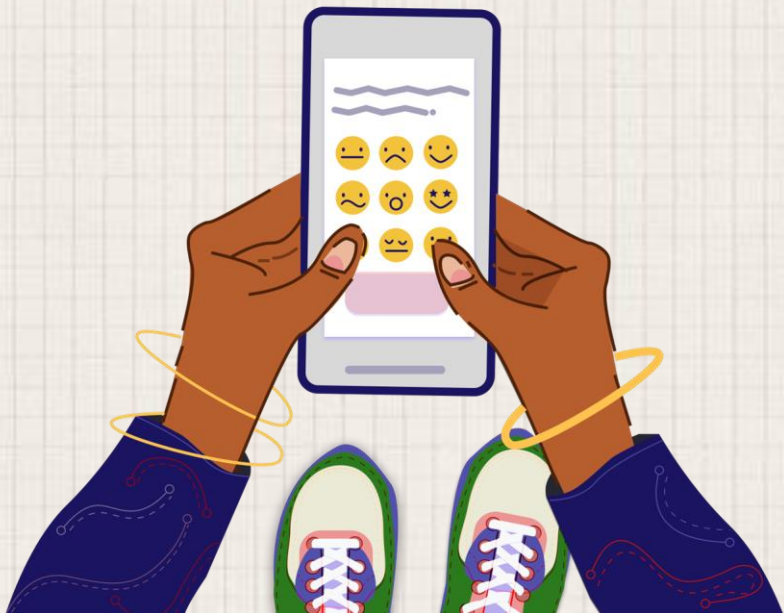
### ★★★★ REVIEWS



*"Every project we did no matter how hard, we were always encouraged. Guest speakers talking about how they were like us. They learned through trial and error and that has given me a sense of security. The relationships we built in class made learning extremely enjoyable. I loved all of it, constant information about future jobs and possible career paths helped me get into the mindset of choosing a career area."*



*"The part of my academy experience with the biggest impact on me personally was learning proper etiquette and developing a more broad and open ethical and business mindset."*



# FIELD GUIDE

## IDENTITY, BELIEFS, AND MINDSET RECOMMENDATIONS

NAF students still have a lot of room to grow when it comes to visualizing their ideal, future self. **But the ability to do so got better and better as NAF students stayed in their academy setting longer.**

We recommend teachers **strive to contextualize learning with regard to students' future selves.** This can be done by articulating how a skill they are learning in the classroom will be a lifelong skill that may help them in their college and/career.

**Action Question:** *How many new ways might NAF help students envision themselves as part of a prosperous future? "You can't be what you can't see" in the words of Marian Wright Edelman*



## HOW TO IMPROVE

The vast majority of NAF students indicated they have a growth mindset and believe they can overcome challenges as a springboard for growth. However, less than half of respondents stated that they would opt-in to harder work if it meant lowering their grades.

We recommend that educators **model a viewpoint that failure is not evidence of a lack of ability,** but an opportunity to expand one's skills and knowledge.

**Action Question:** *How might NAF Academies be the first place in a learner's life where success requires failed attempts?*

# FIELD GUIDE

## ATTITUDES TOWARD SCHOOL & SELF GOALS + RESULTS

Sense of success and motivation in school work is a driver of positive “career launch,” especially for students with high aspirations but overwhelming socio-economic barriers.

TRAIL  
ADVICE

Attitudes  
Toward School  
& Self



WHAT STUDENTS SAY (after hiking the trail)

- **74%** of NAF students feel like they are good students. Female students indicated that they felt like they were good students at a higher rate (84%) than male students (72%).
- **78%** of students **feel ready and capable to succeed in college** should they choose to go. These feelings only *increased* with grade level.
- **67%** of seniors have taken or are taking at least 1 AP course before graduation.
- **40%** of seniors have taken or are taking at least 1 Dual Enrollment course prior to graduation.
- **56%** of NAF students indicated that they know how to **schedule their time** to accomplish tasks.

**Keep it up** **Could be Better** **Requires Attention**

# FIELD GUIDE

## ATTITUDES TOWARD SCHOOL & SELF GOALS + RESULTS

- **51%** of NAF students think it is true or very true that they know how to **study to perform well** on tests.
  - This attitude saw growth with grade level.
- **49%** of students think they are good at **research and writing** papers.

## WHAT STUDENTS SAY (continued)

- **48%** of students find academic work **interesting** or absorbing.
  - Interest in academic work increased the longer students were in a NAF academy.
  - Seniors who identified as an ethnic minority indicated that they found academic work more absorbing (58%) compared to seniors who identified as White (52%).



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# FIELD GUIDE

## ATTITUDES TOWARD SCHOOL & SELF STUDENT VOICE

★★★★ REVIEWS



*"The harder classes, specifically AP classes, (had the biggest impact on me) because in general they are on a different level compared to other classes. They are difficult but possible which helps assure me that it is possible to do anything if i just try."*



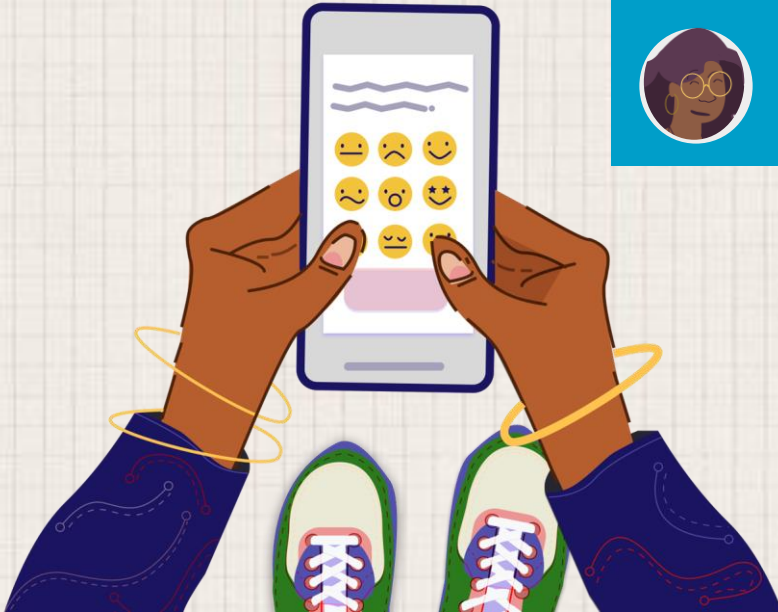
*"I think the possibility of taking community college classes was very helpful and had the biggest impact on me."*



*"My academic experience has impacted my personality by being able to work better with groups and solve problems."*



*"(the biggest impact on me personally was) having the personal connections with my teacher and other students in my class. Having the ability to grow my skills for the future."*



# FIELD GUIDE

## ATTITUDES TOWARD SCHOOL & SELF RECOMMENDATIONS



### HOW TO IMPROVE

The vast majority of students felt they were ready and capable to succeed in college.

We recommend **keeping up the good work**, which means continuing to push the envelope on what it means to be college ready. Data tells us that while students challenged by 21<sup>st</sup> century opportunity gaps might see themselves as prepared, **too many do not persist** to complete a college degree.

Approximately 67% of students indicated they took at least 1 AP course before graduating, with about 40% of students taking at least one dual enrollment course.

We recommend focusing efforts to ensure that all students are **helped and feel belonging** in AP and/or Dual Enrollment courses while in high school, which help students prepare for college by exposing them to college-level coursework in high school.

Less than half of the students surveyed indicated that they find academic work engaging or absorbing. This is **troubling** given that student engagement in school is a strong predictor of high school completion.

We recommend helping students **explore their interests in a way that feels relevant to the world after high school**. This could include developing new co-curricular and extracurricular activities of interest to engage students at a higher level.

**Action Question:** *How might we support experiences (either in-person or virtual) in every academy to ensure students graduate with a “plan for persistence”, in light of what challenges will likely arise in their lives along the way?*

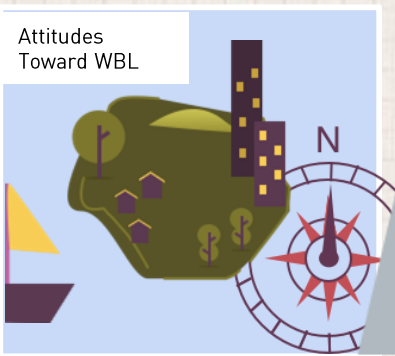
# FIELD GUIDE

## Attitudes Toward Work-Based Learning **GOALS + RESULTS**

A pillar of the NAF Academy design is that work based learning can drive a sense of relevance for skills and motivation toward positive future pathways.

TRAIL  
ADVICE

Attitudes  
Toward WBL



WHAT STUDENTS SAY  
(after hiking the trail)

- **84%** of students participated in some form of work-based learning experience during the 2019-2020 school year. Students who identified as an ethnic minority reported **more** participation in internships (32%) compared to White students (25%).\*
- **79%** of students who did participate in a WBL event agreed that the experience helped them explore possible future careers.
- **74%** of students indicated that a WBL event helped them develop positive work habits and attitudes and **73%** said it helped them identify their strengths and abilities.

\* Since work-based learning activities were self-reported in this survey, results may not match WBL events that are documented in the NAFTrack platform.

**Keep it up** **Could be Better** **Requires Attention**

# FIELD GUIDE

## Attitudes Toward Work-Based Learning **GOALS + RESULTS**

- **70%** of students who participated in a WBL event agree that the experience helped them broaden their professional network.
  - 72% of students enrolled in Model+Distinguished academies agreed vs. 67% for Member/Certified students
- **71%** of students agreed that participating in WBL events helped motivate them to work towards a career.
  - These feelings were **higher** for minority students (73%) compared to White students (68%).
  - Students from NAF's WBL target areas (Broward, FL; Dallas, TX; Detroit, MI; Miami, FL; Milwaukee, WI; Orange County, FL; Washington D.C.) reported proportionally **fewer** Guest Speaker (46%) and Career Fair (32%) events than students in other areas (55% & 37%, respectively).

## WHAT STUDENTS SAY (Continued)



- **73%** of students felt more confident to approach future challenges after their WBL experiences.
  - Feelings of increased confidence were **higher** for minority students (75%) compared to White students (68%).
- **63%** of students learned about internship opportunities through a NAF teacher or academy lead.
  - Minority students were **more likely** to find an internship through a teacher/academy lead (68%) compared to White students (54%).
  - White students were **more likely** to find internships on their own (37%) compared to minority students (18%).



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# FIELD GUIDE

## Attitudes Toward Work-Based Learning **GOALS + RESULTS**

- **69%** of students who participated in an internship agreed that their NAF academy fully prepared them for the internship experience.
  - This was especially true for minority students (73%) compared to White students (64%).
  - Students who identified as Female also **felt more prepared** for an internship (74%) compared to Male students (64%).
  - Students from Model and/or Distinguished academies also **felt more prepared** (73%) compared to students from Member/Certified academies (64%).

## WHAT STUDENTS SAY (Continued)



- **33%** of students said the reason they did not participate in any WBL activities was they were **unaware of such opportunities**.
  - Students who identified as Male were less likely to be **interested in pursuing an internship** (24%) compared to Females (15%).
  - Female students indicated that they were **unaware of internship opportunities** to a higher degree (53%) than male students (46%).
  - White students indicated that they did not have time for an internship more frequently (31%) than minority students (26%).
  - Students from NAF's WBL target areas reported they were not aware of WBL opportunities to a higher degree (17%) than other students (14%).



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# FIELD GUIDE

## Attitudes Toward Work-Based Learning **STUDENT VOICE**

### ★★★★ REVIEWS



*"(The biggest impact on me was) Having the opportunity and ability to complete an internship in my field of interest. I plan to study Special Education and my internship allowed me to be in an actual classroom"*



*"The work-based learning, guest speakers, and my NAF teacher really taught me how to present myself professionally and articulately."*



*"My internship had the biggest impact on me personally due to the fact that it better prepared me for the real world and taught me the importance of being a professional."*



*"(The biggest impact on me was) It has given me the ability to learn new tech-savvy skill sets I wouldn't have learned without the academy."*



*"Learning about the different jobs related to engineering has opened my mind to different job paths and doing projects with my classmates have improved my ability to work with others while expanding my knowledge."*

# FIELD GUIDE

## Attitudes Toward Work-Based Learning **RECOMMENDATIONS**



NAF students valued WBL experiences because they indicated it helped them explore possible careers and develop good work habits.

We recommend **continued emphasis on WBL experiences** that explicitly set out to help students develop college and career skills, especially workforce-ready skills relevant to any job environment.

For many of the positive attitudes and outcomes around work-based learning opportunities, minority students **indicated higher levels of satisfaction and/or agreement** than White students.

We recommend **continuing to offer** equitable WBL opportunities with the goal of facilitating upward mobility and fruitful career paths to underserved students in our communities.

## HOW TO IMPROVE

The biggest reason for not participating in an internship was **lack of awareness of the opportunities**, followed by a lack of interest.

Continue to **work with national and local employer partners** to make internship opportunities readily available and relevant to students' futures.

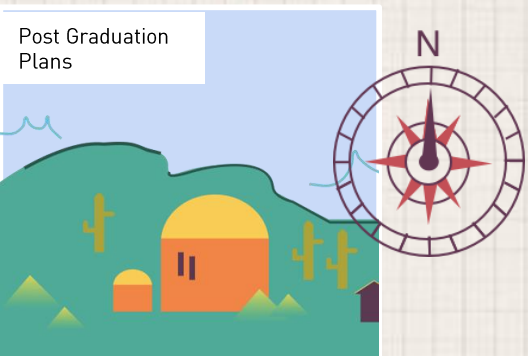
**Action Question:** *How might we leverage the “virtual moment” during and post-covid to ensure that every NAF student can access a spectrum of work based learning experiences without needing more than a stable internet connection?*

# FIELD GUIDE

## Post Graduation Plans GOALS + RESULTS

While the future of “college” is changing, data continues to tell us that post-secondary achievement supports the most direct pathway to successful career-launch, specifically for first generation and Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) students.

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WHAT STUDENTS SAY  
(after hiking the trail)

- **93%** of seniors indicated that they would continue to college during the fall after graduation.
  - 73% of these students indicated that they would attend a **4-year college**.
  - Female students who indicated plans to attend college were more likely to attend a 4-year institution (62%) compared to Male students (53%).
  - Students who identified as White were more likely to attend 4-year colleges (86%) compared to minority students (70%).
  - Minority students were more likely to attend a 2-year college (23%) compared to White students (10%).
  - Students from NAF's WBL target areas did not indicate the desire to attend a 4-year college (68%) at the same rate as other students in the network (80%).
- **Health Sciences** was the largest indicated field of college study for NAF seniors (29%), followed by Science, Technology, Math, and Engineering (STEM) (28%).
  - Female students were much more likely to go into Health Sciences (40%) than Males (14%).
  - Males were much more likely to go into STEM fields (41%) than Females (19%).
  - There were no differences in students' intended field of study as a function of geography.



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Better



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Attention

# FIELD GUIDE

## Post Graduation Plans

### GOALS + RESULTS

### WHAT STUDENTS SAY (Continued)

Roughly 49% of seniors indicated that they would continue on a career path they began in their NAF academy.

- When asked how their academy helped them decide to attend college:
  - 65% of seniors said their academy offered good career advice.
  - 64% of seniors indicated their academy prepared them to be successful in college.
  - 54% of seniors said they were encouraged to apply to college.
    - Minority students reported being encouraged to apply to college at a higher rate (57%) than White students (42%).

Out of all seniors surveyed, 59% indicated that a NAF teacher made the biggest difference to them personally.

- This was the case for students in Model and/or Distinguished academies (61%) at a higher rate than Member/Certified academies (54%).
- 78% of seniors indicated that they completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
  - There were no differences as a function of student ethnicity.
  - When asked why students did not submit a FAFSA form, the most common response was **they didn't know about it** (30%).



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# FIELD GUIDE

## Post Graduation Plans **STUDENT VOICE**

### ★★★★ REVIEWS



*"My academy experience has allowed me to visualize my future and broaden my possible career options."*



*"My academy experience opened my mindset on the possible careers I could pursue in the future."*



*"My academy has given me more information on my future career and has made me feel more confident that the medical field is for me."*

# FIELD GUIDE

## Post Graduation Plans **RECOMMENDATIONS**

While only approximately 50% of students indicated they would continue on their academy career path, **we do not view this as a negative** because it indicates students are testing and making decisions about their academy career field in a lower-stakes environment before entering college; this should ultimately aid them in their career path.

We recommend that **teachers embrace students' uncertainty** about their future career path, and help them make a plan to be “exploratory” before graduation, while the stakes are still relatively low in terms of money and time.

Involved and engaged NAF teachers make a huge difference in their students' lives and are reported as the **single biggest factor in keeping them on track.**

We recommend teachers **continue to engage their students on a personal level.** You never know what may change a student's life.



## HOW TO IMPROVE

We found differences in the rate that minority students plan to attend 4-year colleges compared to white students.

We recommend ensuring that all students are as academically competitive as possible by the time they graduate high school, and that **barriers like deadline awareness and lack of scholarship coaching are not path-ending roadblocks.**

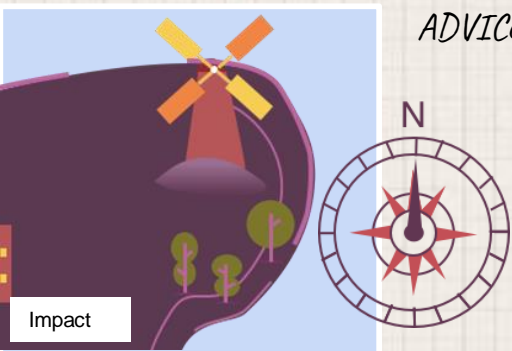
**Action Question:** *How might we help students to capture their pathway planning and share it widely, enhancing opportunities for connection, coaching, and revision along the way within their academy setting?*

# FIELD GUIDE

## Impact GOALS + RESULTS

NAF's **mission** is to solve the biggest challenges facing education and the economy by bringing education, business, and community leaders together to transform the high school experience. Our **vision** is that we can help create a world in which all young people have equal opportunity for successful futures.

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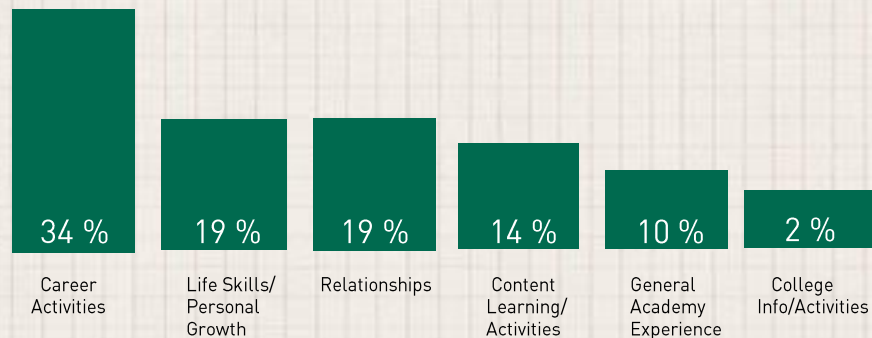


**Q: What Part of Your Academy Experience Had the Biggest Impact on You Personally?**

**A:** Students indicated that career info/activities had the biggest impact on them personally, with 54% of responses in this category referencing a specific internship experience.

- The second most frequent response related to the **life skills and personal growth** students experienced while at a NAF academy.

Roughly 2,700 seniors responded with input that fell into 6 categories, see below:



# FIELD GUIDE

Impact STUDENT VOICE

★★★★ REVIEWS



*"My academy has taught me to be responsible for myself and face the world in this age as I should, preparing me to face it when I grow up since my future depends on it."*



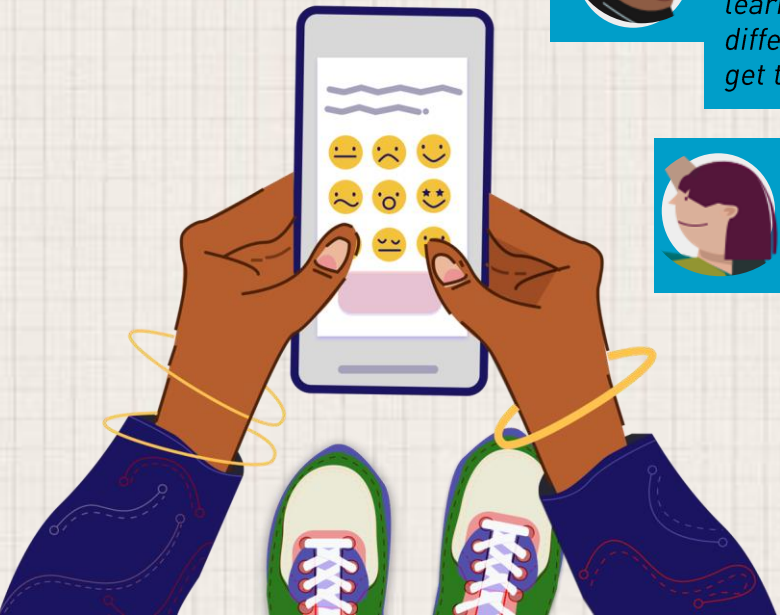
*"My internship had the biggest impact just because it helped me to learn the value of long hard work in different areas that I normally do not get the chance to work in."*



*"My internship had the biggest impact on me. It gave me experience in the workplace and it also allowed me to keep in touch with some great people that I know I can count on if I need anything."*



*"My experience with my academy has exposed me to a lot of experiences that I know I wouldn't have had the opportunity to explore otherwise..."*



# HOW MIGHT WE

## Help Others on the Trail? **ACTIVITY**



Jot down your ideas on how to provide deeper impact in your role using the action questions from each section of the Field Guide.

Throughout this report, we have heard directly from NAF students about where the NAF network is thriving and where we still need work. Many students are challenged and excited by their involvement in a NAF career academy, but there are **still many students missing out on beneficial activities**, such as work-based learning experiences.

Only by listening to our students' voice and tackling these challenges head on will we accomplish an equitable future where all NAF students are college and career ready.



*How might NAF Academies be the first place in a learner's life where success requires failed attempts?*

*How is it ensured that students feel a sense of belonging within their academy regardless of ethnicity, culture, or background? Are students free to be their true, authentic selves?*

*How might we help students to capture their pathway planning and share it widely, enhancing opportunities for connection, coaching, and revision along the way within their academy setting?*

*How might we put forward a toolkit of resources and community of practice to support needed change in how teachers deliver with a Culturally Responsive-Sustaining Education (CR-SE) frame?*

*How many new ways might NAF help students "be what they can't see" in the words of Marian Wright Edelman?*

*How might we support experiences in every academy to ensure students graduate with a "plan for persistence"?*

*How might we leverage the "virtual moment" during and post-covid to ensure that every NAF student can access a spectrum of work based learning experiences without needing more than a stable internet connection?*