

FIELD GUIDE

A NAF RESEARCH & TECHNOLOGY REPORT



20
21



About this Guide



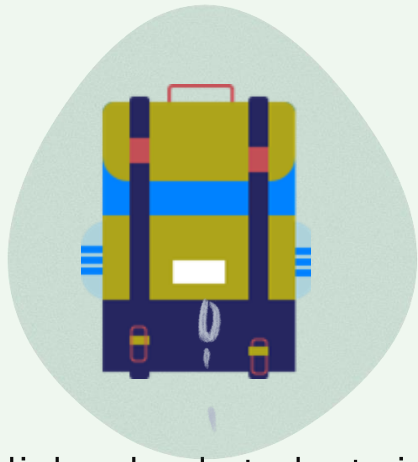
This Field Guide was developed by the NAF Research + Tech Team to help NAF stakeholders reflect on what young people take away from their academy experience. Our goal is to elevate student voice and include it in our collective decision making. Nearly 20,000 youth responded to the NAF Student Survey during the unprecedented school year of 2020-2021. This Field Guide is a summary of results made available for NAF Academies, as a tool for continued growth and improvement.

The unique challenges of the last year forced schools and students to quickly adapt many aspects of their learning environment to equitably serve as many students as possible.

There are too many unique local challenges that schools have faced to list here, but we advise all of our stakeholder educators, policy makers, and staff to please take these programmatic disruptions into account when viewing the data and recommendations in the following pages. Please consider how the information can facilitate growth in your institutions and for the students you serve.

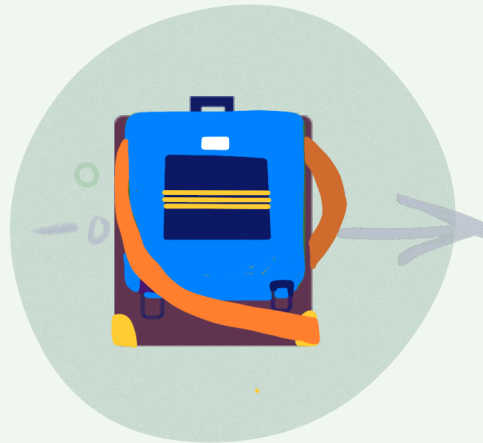
Theory of Change

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

SO THAT:



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

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. Social Capital
- H. Impact



SURVEY RESPONDER DEMOGRAPHICS

ENGINEERING

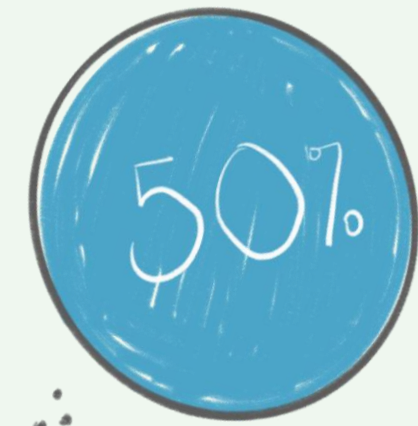
I.T.

HEALTH
SCIENCES

HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

FINANCE

Survey Responder Demographics: Students



1%

6

3%

19

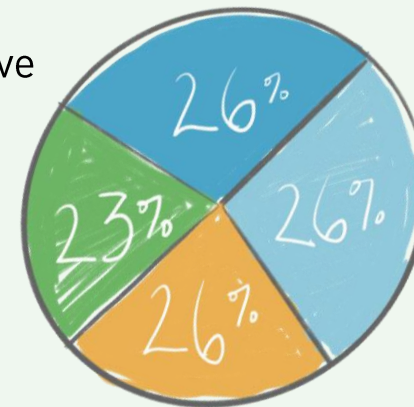
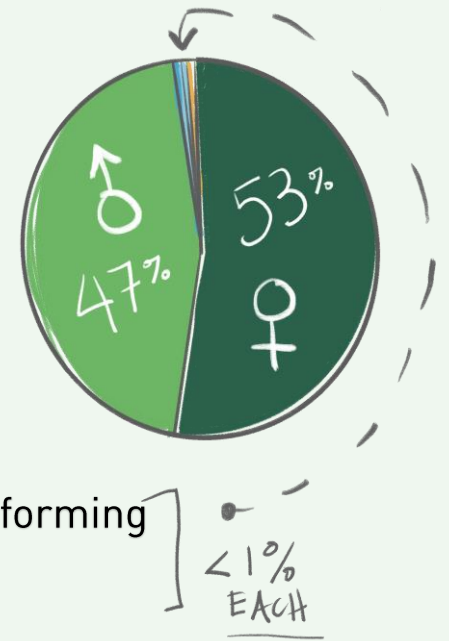
22%

ETHNICITY

- Hispanic/Latino
- White
- Black/African American
- Asian
- Other/Multiracial
- Native American/Alaskan Native
- Pacific Islander
- Undeclared

GENDER

- Female
- Male
- Gender nonconforming
- Undeclared
- Unknown



SURVEY RESPONDERS

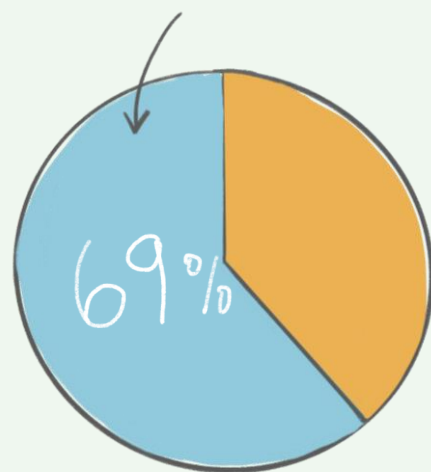
Total number: 19,384

- Freshman
- Sophomore
- Junior
- Senior

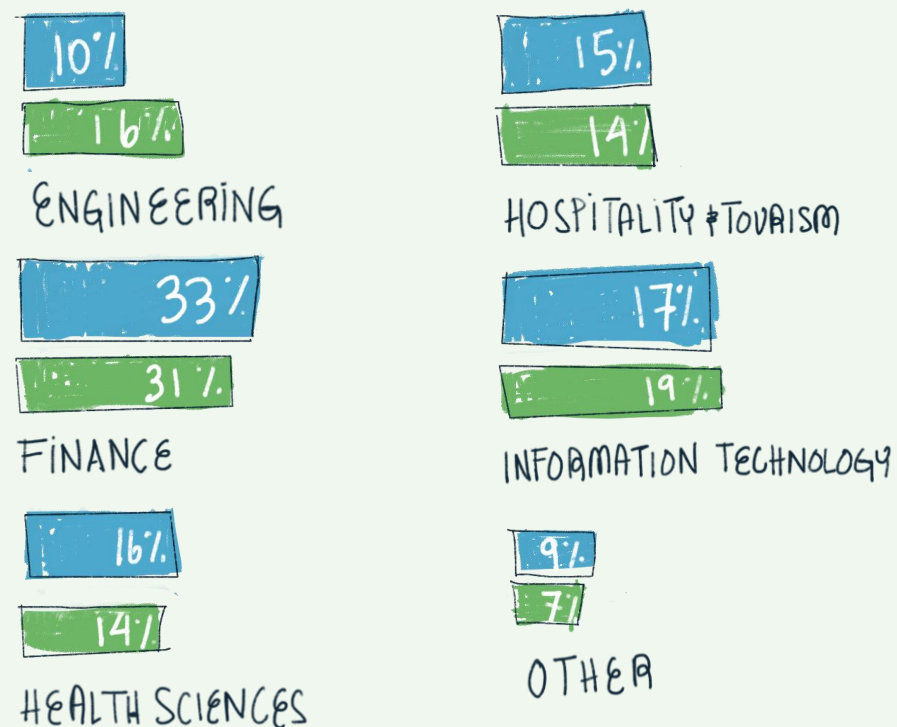
Survey Responder Demographics: Academies

■ SURVEY ■ NAF NETWORK

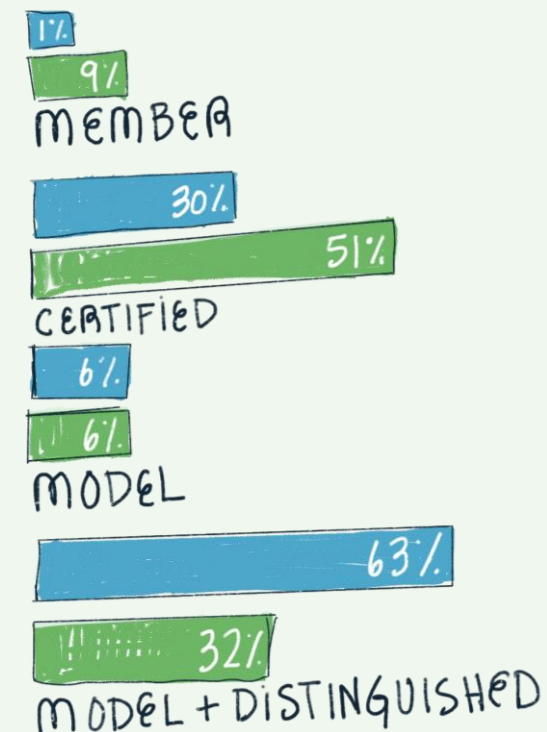
426 ACADEMIES
REPRESENTED



THEMES



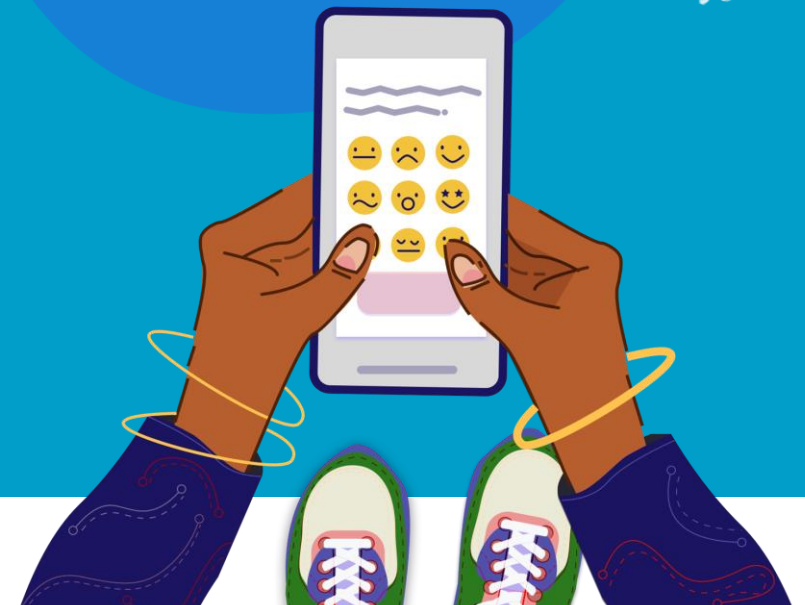
QUALITY LEVEL



CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PRACTICES

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

FAIR TREATMENT
GLOBAL AWARENESS
BIAS AWARENESS
MULTI CULTURAL AWARENESS



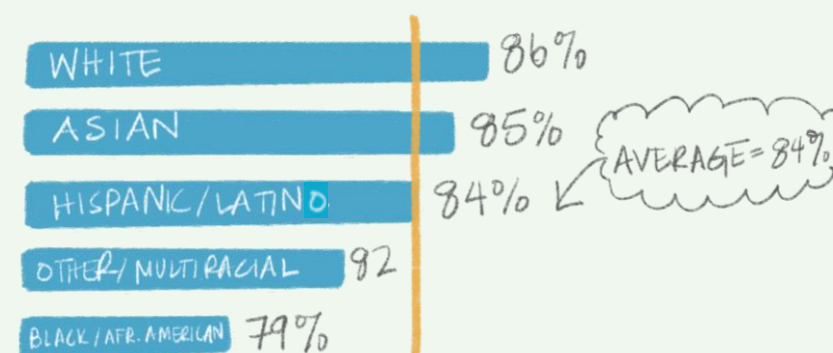
Culturally Responsive Practices

76% of students say NAF teachers make an effort to get to know them as a person.

58% of students say NAF teachers acknowledge their own cultural influences and biases in the classroom.

59% of students say NAF teachers teach in a way that relates to their cultures and experiences.

FAIR + EQUITABLE SCHOOL TREATMENT



84% of students say that all students in their academy are treated fairly, regardless of race or ethnicity.

This was reported equally for students identifying as Asian, Hispanic/Latino, and White, but was slightly lower for students identifying as Black/African American (79%)

Culturally Responsive Practices



"I appreciate that my NAF teacher was caring towards us even though we were virtual. By providing us with a grade on a scholarship application or anything related to college".

YASMIN, ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



"[The biggest impact on me was] the great teachers and the likeminded and driven students I was surrounded by".

SERENA, ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



"I really liked how NAF puts its students out on the work field and shows them what life after school is like".

LESLIE, ACADEMY OF FINANCE

Culturally Responsive Practices

NAF students across the board (84%) acknowledged that students are treated fairly within their academy walls, regardless of race or ethnicity, and that teachers make an effort to get to know them as a person (76%). While this is exactly the kind of environment schools should strive to achieve, students indicated that there is still some work to be done in terms of teachers' acknowledgement of their own cultural biases while teaching class material.



CONTINUE THESE EFFORTS

- It is encouraged that teachers continue to engage their students in conversation about cultural biases and the viewpoints of others in class.
- Continue to connect diverse students with similar career interests, as it helps students create a diverse support network.



AREAS FOR GROWTH

- Some students (31%) indicated that teachers could teach in a manner that is more culturally responsive to their lived experiences. Try exploring this to improve learning for all.
- Just over one third (36%) of students say that their academy does not really challenge them to consider the biases of others when teaching course material.

IDENTITY, BELIEFS, AND MINDSET

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

SELF PERCEPTION
FUTURE SELF
PERSONAL
DEVELOPMENT



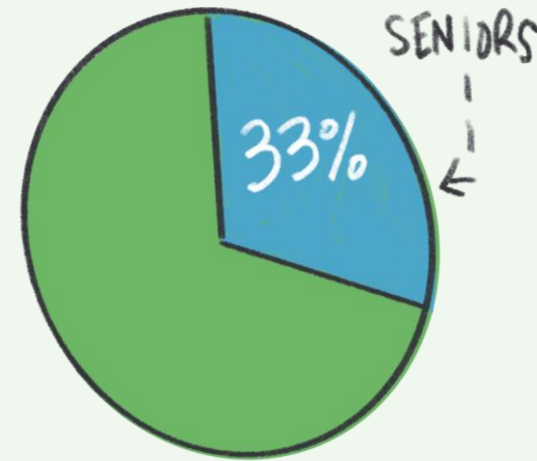
Identity, Beliefs, and Mindset

50% of students reported having a growth mindset, believing their intellectual abilities can be improved through hard work.

53% of students reported that they feel NAF teachers attribute a growth mindset to their students.

61% of students indicated that when a goal is difficult to obtain that does not mean it is out of reach.

DESIRED FUTURE SELF



33% of NAF Seniors believe they are close or very close to their ideal future self

- This number increased by 6% for 2021 seniors compared to 2020 seniors (27%)

Identity, Beliefs, and Mindset



"All the presentations we had to do helped me overcome my fear of public speaking".

EMIL, ACADEMY OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM



"I loved that my academy taught me so much about what it takes to be an adult and how to be successful through mock interviews and course lessons like saving and investing".

JENNIFER, ACADEMY OF FINANCE



"I thought NAF was very helpful to get me to my career goals. It made me realize that your mind has to be set on one thing when going into college and achieving/completing tasks".

ERES, ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



Identity, Beliefs, and Mindset

Achieving a growth mindset can spur students to reach above and beyond what others tells them is possible. It is clear that NAF students, even seniors, still have a great deal to discover about themselves as only 33% of seniors indicated they were close or very close to their ideal future self. Furthermore, half of NAF students indicated they do not possess a growth mindset (50%), indicating that they believe intelligence is a fixed characteristic. These two data points can be improved in the classroom by continuing to have students explore their career passions and discover their strengths.



CONTINUE THESE EFFORTS

- A greater percentage of seniors indicated being closer to their personal career goals as compared last year's seniors (33% vs. 27%).
- Students generally believe that because a goal is difficult, it doesn't mean it is out of reach (61%). This mindset of resilience has been shown to improve education and career outcomes and should be fostered in the classroom.¹

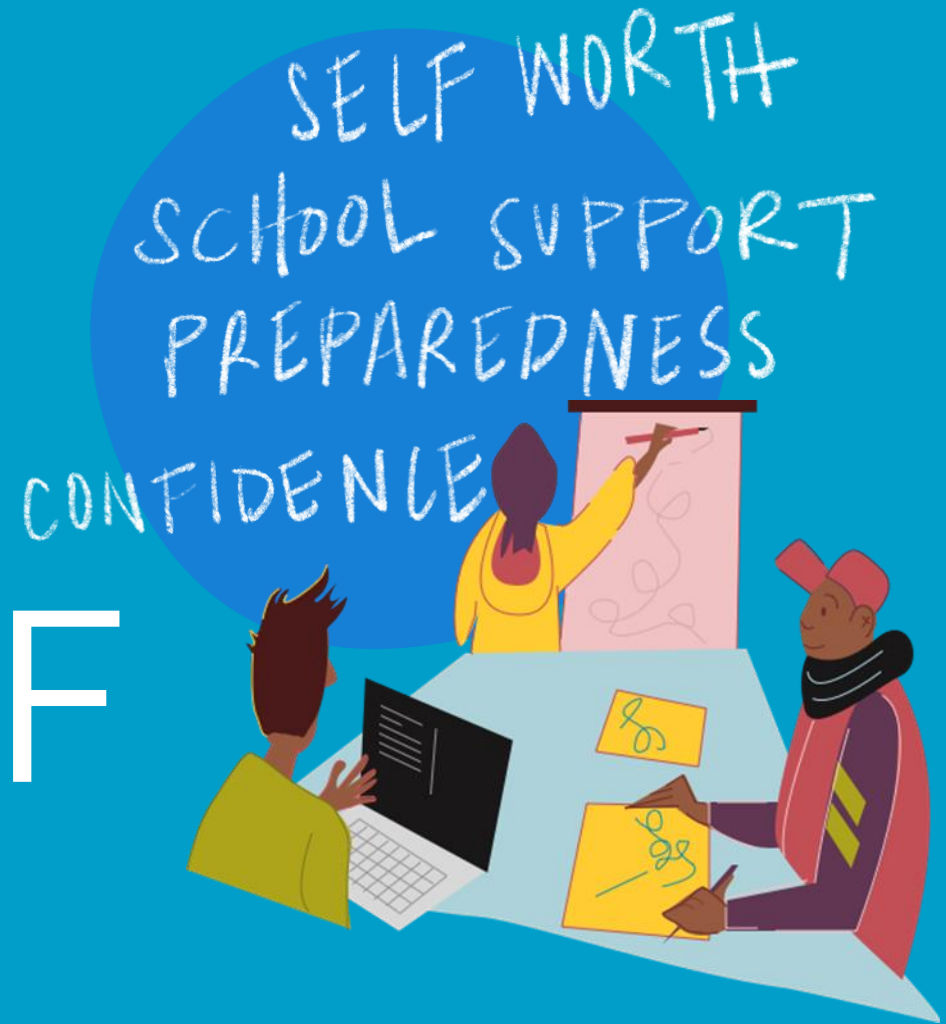


AREAS FOR GROWTH

- Many students indicated that they do not believe their teachers attribute a growth mindset to them. Teacher's attitude towards their students' growth is important, as research has indicated that when teachers believe their students' intellectual capabilities are fixed, this can be perceived negatively by students and reduce student motivation in the classroom.²

ATTITUDES TOWARDS SCHOOL AND SELF

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



Attitudes Towards School and Self

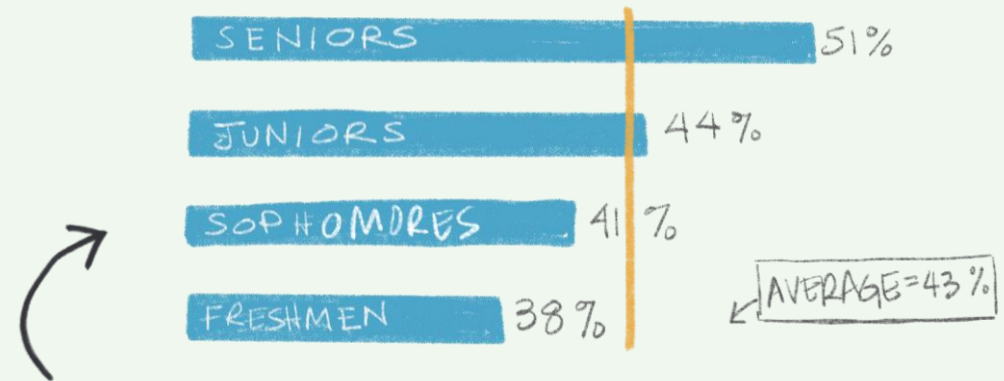
68% of students feel like they are very good students in their academy.

63% of students are taking some kind of advanced coursework before graduation (AP, Dual Enrollment, or IB).

23% of students indicated that **no individual** in their immediate family has attended college or a university.

66% of students indicated that they do "very well" in school and academic tasks.

DIGESTIBLE SCHOOL CONTENT



Only 43% of NAF students indicated that they find their academic work interesting and absorbing.

- Interest in academic work changed across high school grade level, increasing from freshman year (38%) to senior year (51%).

Attitudes Towards Self



"I really liked how the academy was very hands-on and revolved around the many careers in healthcare, and I was exposed to all kinds of anatomical systems and volunteer opportunities, careers, etc."

ANTHONY, ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



"My academy has taught me to not give up on myself and to always believe that I can achieve anything. It has helped me grow in confidence and helped me to know that I am capable of achieving anything"

ANDREA, ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



"The career-based classes really impacted me. I loved learning about things that would prepare me for a future career"

MINNA, ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Attitudes Towards School and Self

Students' engagement in school and school activities is significantly related to academic achievement and buffers against negative factors contributing to student dropout.³ This makes students' attitudes towards school and their abilities within school important for educators to monitor and develop, as a positive view of school and one's abilities may facilitate educational and life aspirations.



CONTINUE THESE EFFORTS

- It is positive to note that approximately two-thirds of students (68%) believe they are very good students.
- Nearly two-thirds of students (63%) indicated they are taking an advance course (AP, Dual Enrollment, or IB) before graduation. These experiences are valuable because they give students a taste of what college and college-level courses are like while still in high school.



AREAS FOR GROWTH

- Less than half of students (43%) find academic work interesting and absorbing. While this number is high, work-based learning (WBL) activities can help with this because these activities inherently connect the practicality of classroom knowledge to the world of work.
- Negative feelings in school are, unfortunately, the norm across the U.S. Research suggests that about 75% of the emotions students feel at school are negative (boredom, tiredness, stressed).⁴

ATTITUDES TOWARDS WORK-BASED LEARNING

A pillar of the NAF Educational Design is that work-based learning can drive a sense of relevance for skills and motivation toward positive future pathways. This has been especially important during this last year as COVID-19 has eliminated many face-to-face work-based learning and internship opportunities.

CAREER EXPLORATION
MOCK INTERVIEWS
JOB FAIR
INTERNSHIPS



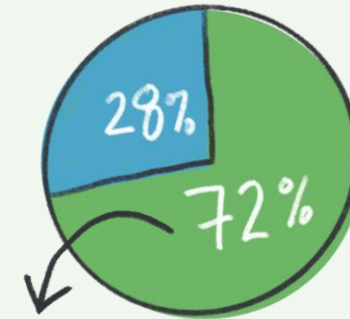
Attitudes Towards Work-Based Learning

50% of students participated in some form of work-based learning (WBL) during the 2020-2021 school year.

73% of students who did participate in a WBL event agreed that the experience helped them explore possible future careers.

51% of students who did not participate in any WBL activities said the main reason for not participating was they were not aware of any opportunities available to them.

VIRTUAL vs IN-PERSON
LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES



72% of students indicated they participated in primarily virtual Work Based Learning opportunities this past year.

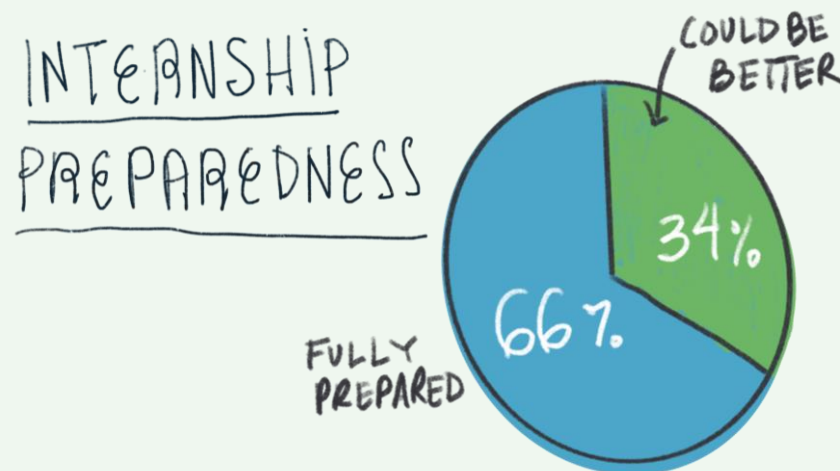
- 49% of students who had an internship indicated it was fully virtual.
- A national 2021 survey of CTE teachers indicated that 41% of teachers said providing WBL opportunities for students was the biggest challenge of the 2020-2021 school year.⁵

Attitudes Towards Work-Based Learning

Continued.....

66% of students who participated in an internship agreed that their NAF academy fully prepared them for their internship.

- Given the unique challenges of this past year, the support students received did not significantly decrease compared to last year (69%).



69% of students indicated that participating in a WBL event helped them develop positive work habits and attitudes.

54% of students learned about internship opportunities through their NAF teacher or academy lead.

67% of students felt more confident to approach future challenges after participating in a WBL experience.

Attitudes Towards Work-Based Learning



"...I also really enjoyed my internship last summer, despite the fact that it was on Zoom. It was a lot of fun, and I made new friends while learning new things".

YASMIN,
ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



"The academy allowed me to work on my public speaking skills along with preparing me for my job interviews through mock trials and creating a portfolio".

CASSANDRA, ACADEMY OF HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM



"From my academy experience, creating resumes and practicing interviews had the biggest impact on me personally because it helped me actually apply for part time jobs and volunteer experiences. In total, I was able to successfully apply and work for 3 different jobs and several volunteer programs because of my interview preparation and resume handiness".

ANGELINA, ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCES

Attitudes Towards Work-Based Learning

Students indicated that work-based learning experiences helped them find connections between their skills/motivation and positive future pathways. The majority of NAF students (73%) who participated in a WBL experience shared that it helped them explore possible future careers. Many students that did not participate in any WBL experiences stated that they were not aware the opportunities even existed.



CONTINUE THESE EFFORTS

- It is encouraged that teachers continue helping NAF students find WBL opportunities so that they can further develop positive work habits and attitudes.
- NAF academies should continue to support students in preparing them for their internship, as such preparation allows students to feel confident in their work and have an overall positive view of how school and work connect to each other.



AREAS FOR GROWTH

- Half of students not participating in WBL did not know the opportunities existed. This could be addressed by examining when and how information on WBL opportunities is shared with students and establishing standardized "share-outs" common across the academy.
- Over half (54%) of students learned of an internship opportunity through their NAF teacher, while a quarter of students found internship opportunities on their own. Creating standardized processes that connect students to internships could help ensure equitable access to these opportunities so that all students feel supported.

POST GRADUATION PLANS

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

ASPIRATIONS
CAREER READY
FINANCIAL EDUCATION
FIELD OF STUDY



Post-Graduation Plans

89% of seniors indicated that they would go on to college the fall after graduation.

67% of seniors indicated that they would attend a **4-year college**.

Health Sciences was the largest indicated field of college study for NAF seniors (**29%**), followed by Business Management & Administration (**27%**).

LIKELIHOOD OF ATTENDING 4-YEAR INSTITUTION



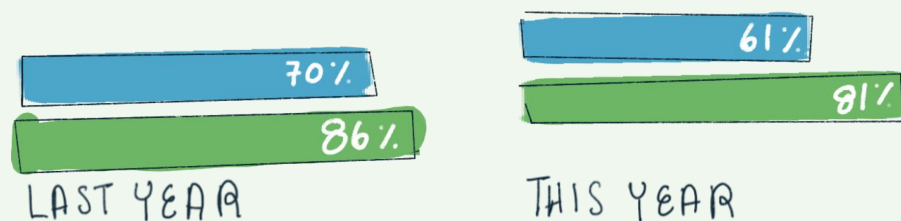
Female students who indicated plans to attend college were **more likely to attend a 4-year institution** (69%) compared to Male students (63%).

Post-Graduation Plans

Continued.....

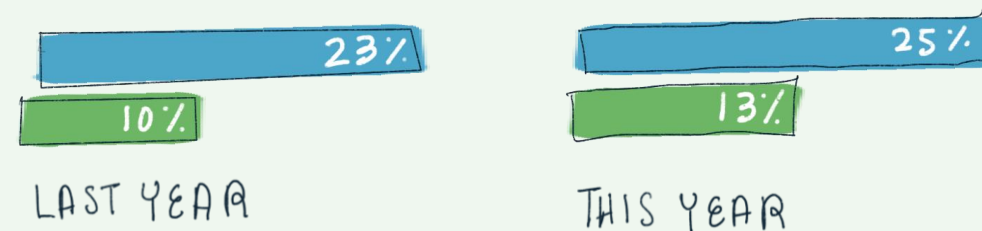
Students who identified as White were more likely to attend 4-year colleges (81%) compared to minority students (61%).

ATTENDANCE OF 4-YEAR COLLEGE



Minority students were more likely to attend a 2-year college (25%) compared to White students (13%).

ATTENDANCE OF 2-YEAR COLLEGE

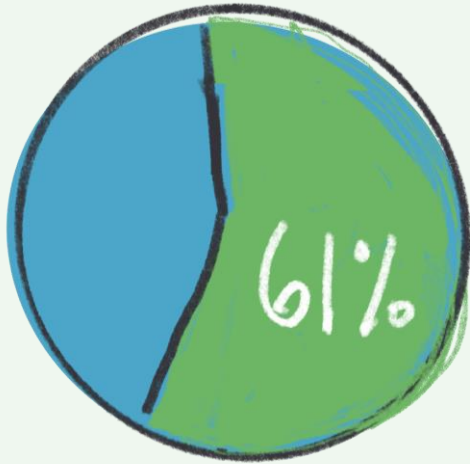


■ MINORITY ■ WHITE

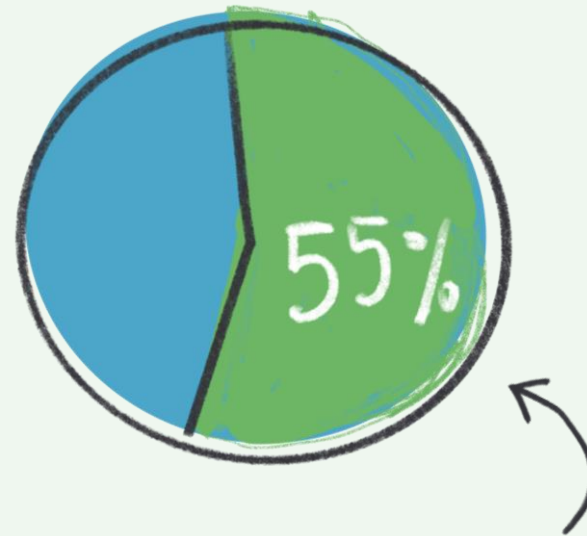
Post-Graduation Plans

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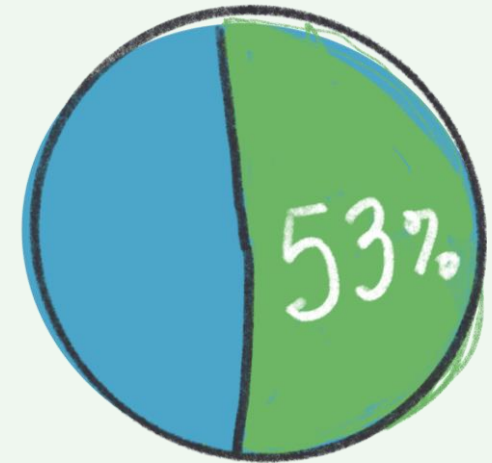
WHEN ASKED HOW THEIR ACADEMY HELPED THEM DECIDE TO ATTEND COLLEGE:



61% of seniors said it prepared them to be successful in college.



55% of seniors indicated that a NAF teacher made the biggest difference to them personally in keeping them on track to graduate.



53% of seniors said their academy encouraged them to apply for college.

Post-Graduation Plans



"Going on different field trips and having hands-on experience has been the part that I value most of my academy experience. This has allowed me to better decide on my career path as well with having practice on creating my work documents to help me in the future".

JADEALYN-SKYE, ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



"The business academy has helped me explore the world of business and given me insight on how to make sure I have a good financial education in the future".

CAROLINE, ACADEMY OF FINANCE

Post-Graduation Plans

Data continues to suggest that a post-secondary education is the most direct pathway to high-wage, high skilled careers. Most NAF seniors (89%) indicated they would continue on to college after graduation, however, college plans differed by student ethnicity. Students who identified as White were more likely to attend 4-year colleges (81%) compared to minority students (61%); the opposite was true for 2-year colleges (25% for minority students vs. 13% for White students).



CONTINUE THESE EFFORTS

- NAF teachers should continue to encourage and support students, as they were identified as the largest source of support keeping students on track to graduate.
- Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, NAF academies found ways to keep students (89% of seniors) motivated to continue their education in college after graduation.
- NAF student data are encouraging given a 2020 report indicating that overall college enrollment has decreased by ~3% nationwide (10% for community colleges) since the start of the pandemic.⁶



AREAS FOR GROWTH

- Data from NAF students reinforces research indicating that differences exist in the type of institution students attend by race/ethnicity. Specifically, Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students continue to be less likely to enroll in 4-year colleges and earn 4-year degrees.⁶
- NAF educators should continue to find ways to provide equitable pathways, opportunities, and resources to their students so that these enrollment and degree-earning discrepancies can be overcome.

SOCIAL CAPITAL

Professional connections and positive adult relationships are a key component that enable students to establish themselves with other professionals in their ideal career cluster. NAF strives to empower students to make these professional connections during high school so that entry into a career field is facilitated by other established professionals.

SCHOOL SUPPORT
RELATIONSHIP BUILDING
NEAR-PEER SUPPORT
EXPERTS IN THE FIELD
NETWORKING



Social Capital

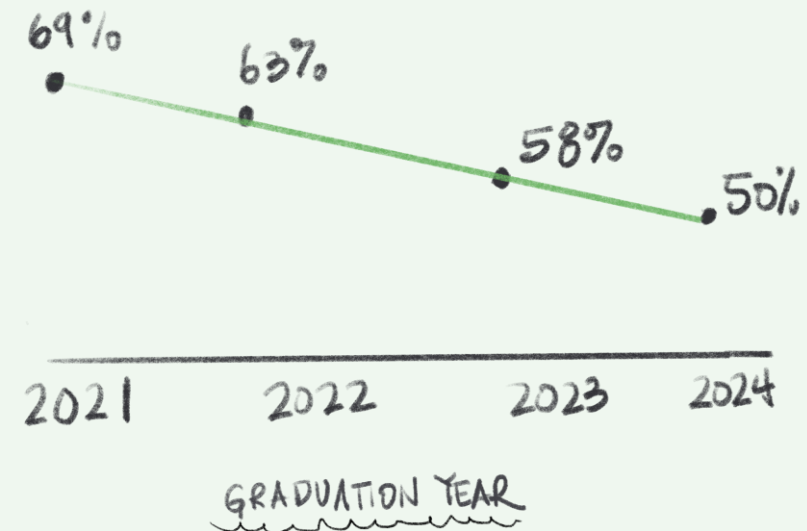
46% of seniors indicated that they met at least one adult or older peer who does the type of work they are interested in as a career.

55% of seniors indicated that they have the contact information of at least two adults they can turn to for college or career advice.

53% of students indicated that if they have a personal problem, they have at least one adult they have met through their NAF experience they can turn to for help.

- Research indicates when students have a "close connector," they benefit because it gives them a model for positive career behaviors. Having at least one person that NAF students can turn to for help gets them closer to finding their "close connector".⁷

GROWTH OF FEELING SUPPORTED (OVER A SPAN OF 4 YEARS)



* STUDENTS FEEL MORE SUPPORT FROM NAF TEACHERS THE CLOSER THEY GET TO GRADUATION.

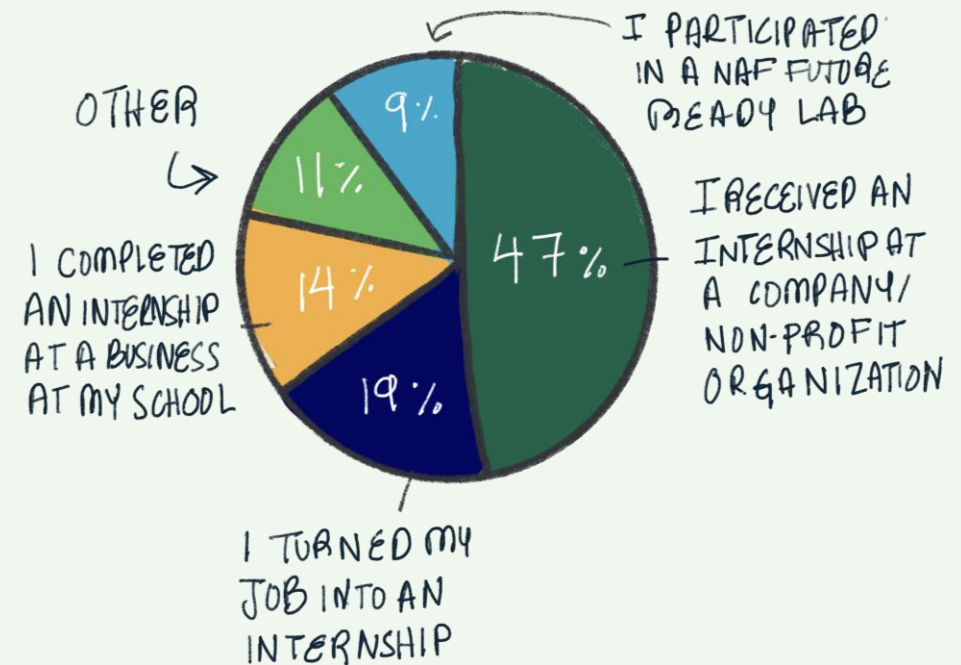
Social Capital

Continued...

On average, **39%** of students indicate that their experience with NAF has **expanded their professional network**.

- This number appears to change over time, as there is a **significant difference** between first year students (28%) who said NAF has expanded their professional network compared to seniors (51%).
- **64%** of students who participated in WBL agreed that the experience helped them broaden their professional network.
- **62%** of all seniors surveyed completed an internship during the COVID-19 pandemic.

INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCE



Social Capital



"For the most part, being a part of the pharmacy program gave me a sense of belonging to a community. Even though we all had different classes, interests, and social groups, we were all linked together by the pharmacy class and it became like a small family, in some ways".

JONATHAN, ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



"I would say that the collaborating and meeting with people that had the same goals and aspirations as me had the biggest impact on me".

MELANIE, ACADEMY OF HEALTH SCIENCES



"I liked the encouragement that came with the program along with the different opportunities being presented. For future students, I would definitely recommend this program and try to get other students to sign up for it when given the chance".

ANDRIJ, ACADEMY OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Social Capital

Social capital describes students' access to and ability to mobilize relationships that help them further their potential and career goals.⁸ NAF aims to help students build a network of professional connections and positive adult relationships, which is important in today's job economy considering ~50% of jobs are filled through personal connections. Sixty-four percent (64%) of students agreed that WBL strengthened their professional network and ~70% of NAF seniors indicated that they felt supported by NAF teachers and others in their NAF academy.



CONTINUE THESE EFFORTS

- Efforts put towards helping students obtain WBL opportunities has truly been impactful this last year, as 64% of students said WBL experiences helped them broaden their professional network.
- Students' professional networks expand the longer they attend a NAF academy, as only 28% of Freshman indicated that NAF has expanded their professional network compared to 51% of seniors.

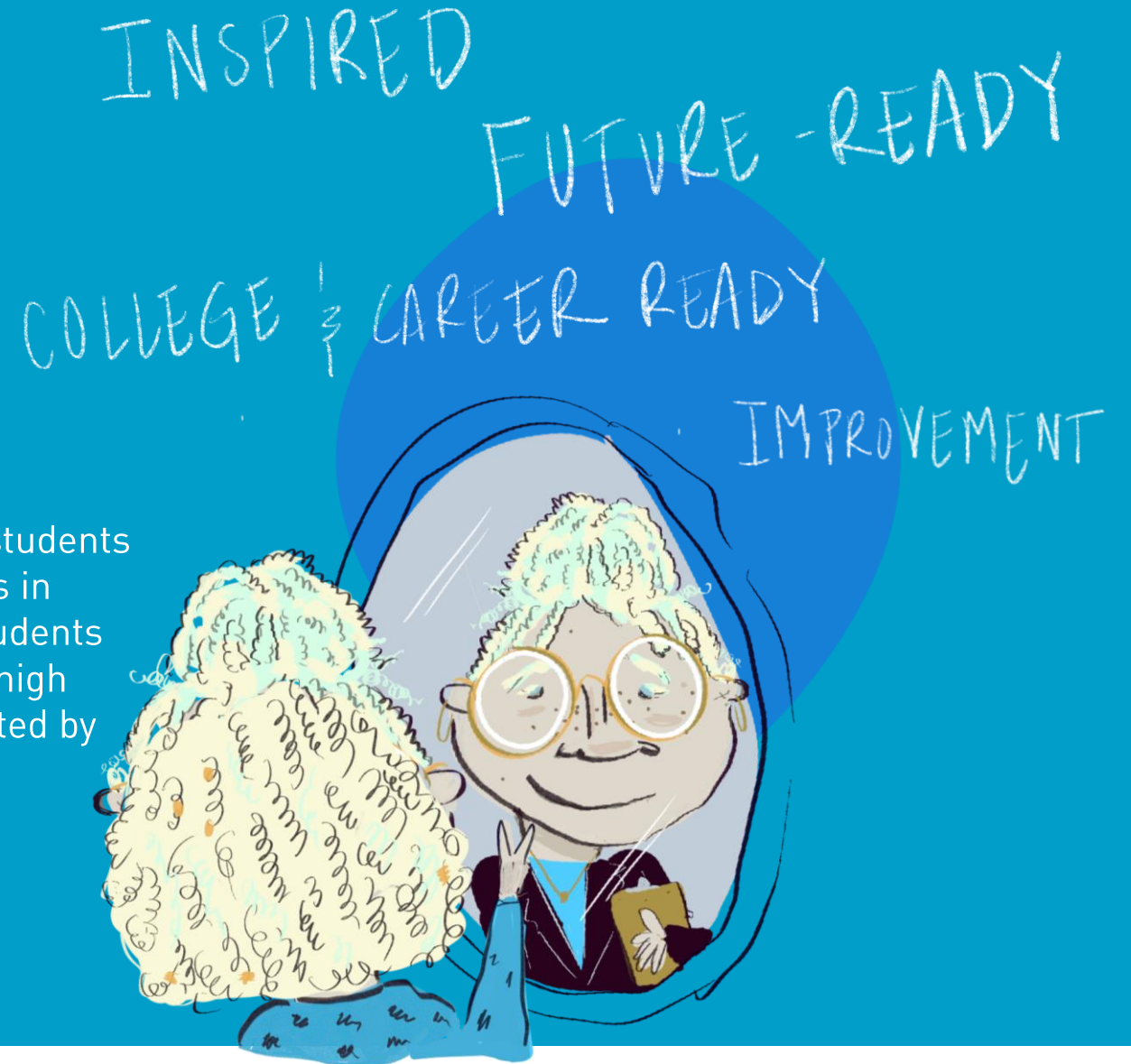


AREAS FOR GROWTH

- Less than half (46%) of NAF seniors indicated that they met one adult or near-aged peer doing the type of work they would like to pursue as a career. This is important given research indicating those close to students' age (near-peers) have the most positive impact on students' social capital.
- Look for ways to be intentional about connecting current students with recent alumni doing work in their planned career field, as those connections are most likely to facilitate students' growth and social capital.

IMPACT

Professional connections and positive adult relationships are a key component that enable students to establish themselves with other professionals in their career cluster. NAF strives to empower students to make these professional connections during high school so that entry into a career field is facilitated by other established professionals.



Impact

61% of seniors indicated satisfaction with their NAF academy given its ability to ready its students for college and/or careers. A 2016 national survey of high school students found that only ~45% of students felt positive about their college and career readiness by the time of graduation.⁹

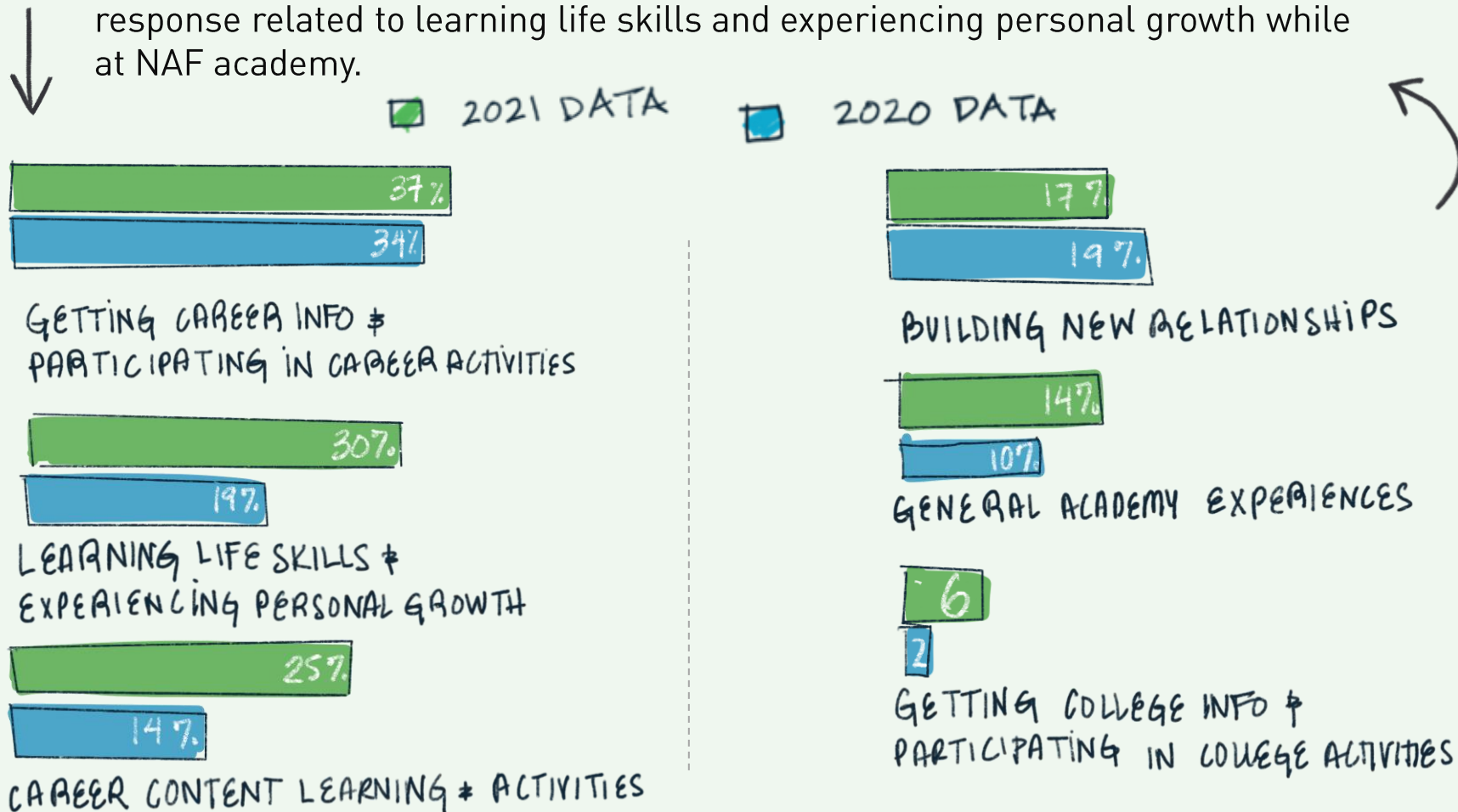
Q: WHAT PART OF YOUR ACADEMY
EXPERIENCE HAD THE BIGGEST
IMPACT ON YOU PERSONALLY?

→ SEE NEXT PAGE

Impact

Continued...

A: Students indicated that getting career info and participating in career activities had the biggest impact on them personally. The second most frequent response related to learning life skills and experiencing personal growth while at NAF academy.



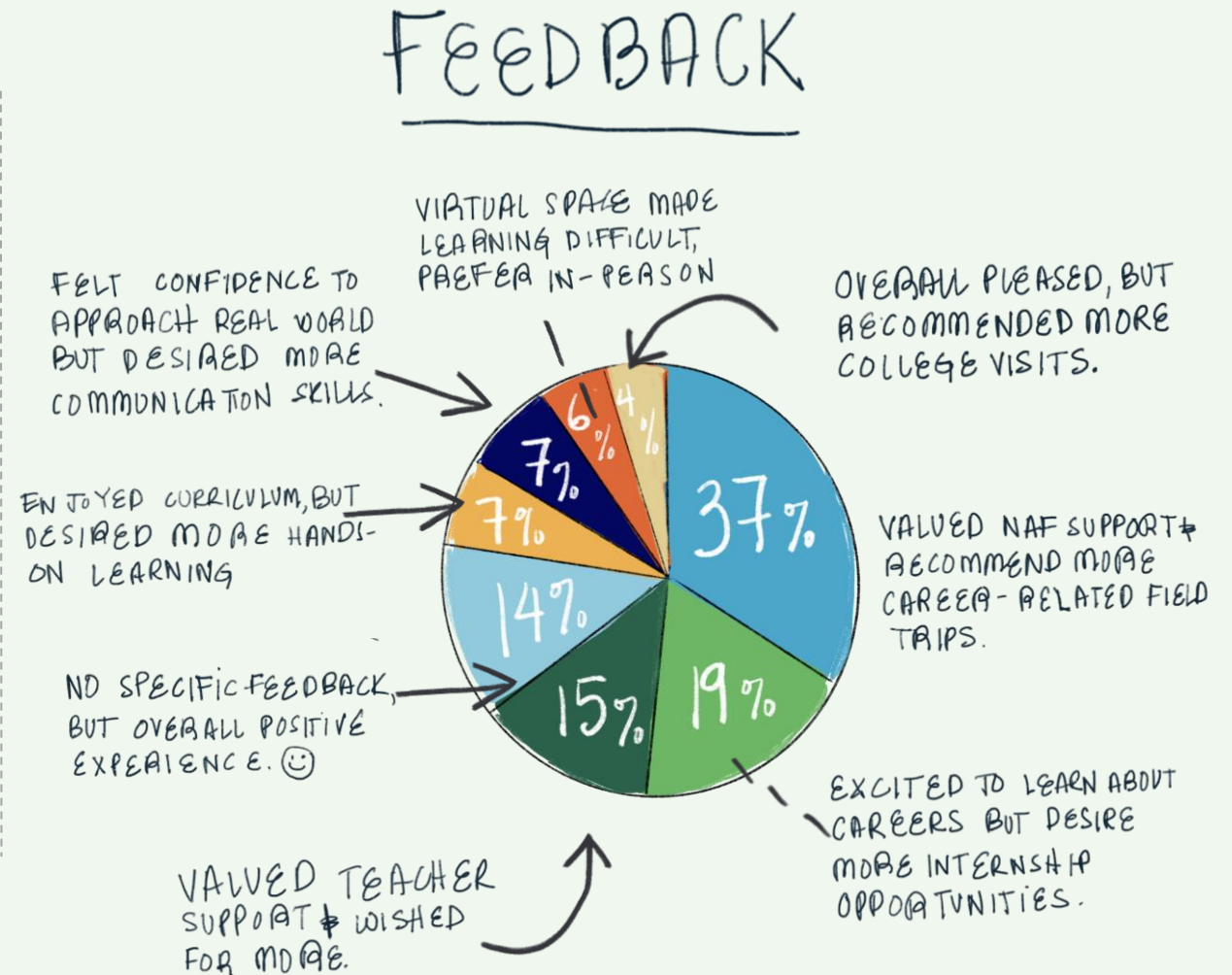
Impact

Continued...

Q: What are your thoughts on what would improve the NAF experience for future students?

A: Students suggested more hands-on learning, as **37%** of students specifically alluded to the encouragement the NAF community provided this past year and recommended adding additional learning opportunities (ex: field trips, hands-on learning, etc.) to help boost engagement.

- The second most frequent response shared an appreciation for the support that **NAF teachers** provide students. This came with the recommendation that teachers engage students on a deeper level earlier in their high school career.



Impact



"No complaints really. I'm subscribed to NAF's newsletter and am informed about opportunities and events to attend. I acknowledge and appreciate all the work that goes behind the scenes and treasure the memories and learnings I've made with NAF. I hope to continue this relationship as I inch towards college".

BHAGYAM, ACADEMY OF FINANCE



"I like how my teacher inspired me to go to college".

JOVANNY, ACADEMY OF FINANCE



"The people that I worked with and the relationships I formed whilst attending the Academy is what had the biggest impact for me personally".

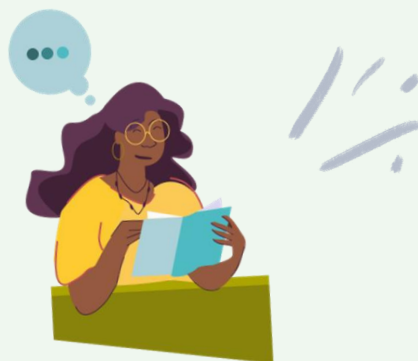
CHARLOTTE, ACADEMY OF FINANCE

Recap

We've seen the data and heard from students about their NAF experience during the unprecedented 2020-2021 school year. While there is much to celebrate, there is still work that needs to be done in order to empower students to get to where they want to go. Some major themes and questions to think about as we continue to work with students include:



How can learning in the classroom be more grounded in students' actual lived experiences and reflect culturally responsive practices?



How can more students get connected to WBL in their local community? How can we better inform students about WBL opportunities?



How can NAF and educators help students attend college should they choose to go? What resources would be most impactful for students thinking about attending college?

Your Academy's Data and Improvements

If your NAF academy had 10 or more students complete the 2021 NAF Student Survey, you can check out an itemized report of your academy's results here! Check out this QR Code or copy/paste the link. **Note:** following this link will require a login to NAF's Academy Support Hub (ASH).



<https://ash.naf.org/public/student-survey>

We would love to hear your thoughts on the 2021 Field Guide and how to make it better and more useful as you serve the students you work with! Please share any suggestions or feedback using this QR Code or copy/paste the link.



<https://www.questionpro.com/t/A06MaZoTb6>

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