

## North Fork School

### 2019 Stakeholder Feedback Diagnostic Narrative

*AdvancED Certified Content surveys were used by the institution to receive stakeholder feedback. The minimum response rate for each population (except staff, which included staff no longer working at NFS) was met*

*(parent questionnaire(s): equal to or greater than 20% >>> 64%*

*student questionnaire(s): equal to or greater than 40% >>> 64%*

*staff questionnaire: equal to or greater than 60%) >>> 50%*

*Questionnaires were administered with complete fidelity to the appropriate administrative procedures. In every instance, the stakeholders to whom these questionnaires were administered fully represented the populations served by the institution. Appropriate accommodations were provided as necessary for all participants.*

#### **EVIDENCE/SUPPORTING STATEMENTS:**

AdvancED certified content surveys were sent to all stakeholders in the following categories:

**Current staff (5/10 respondents) = 50%** response rate. All staff were invited to respond/all have access to internet and did not require paper surveys.

**Current parents (23/29 respondents) = 79%** response rate. All parents were invited to respond/all have access to internet.

**Alumni parents (20/38 respondents) = 53%** response rate. Desiring a fair and unbiased sampling of all parents, alumni parents were included in the surveys as having a broader perspective of the results of a NFS education. Included were all parents with current email addresses – even (as indicated by the comments in the open-ended question section of the surveys) parents who did not continue to send their children to NFS. In the name of open sampling, even parents known to be critical of NFS were invited to respond.

**Alumni students (24/47 respondents) = 51%** response rate. Again, while students who have graduated are often the best judges of their time at NFS, and see the results in their college academics, included in this sampling were alumni who did not complete many years at NFS, and who openly disliked the school, as well as those who loved their time at NFS and graduated after many challenging years in NFS programs.

While most alumni students are now either in college or have graduated from college, some were also still enrolled in their senior years in other high schools across the country. Striving to be unbiased, surveys were emailed to all alumni with a current email address.

**Current Middle & HS students (9/9 respondents) = 100%** response rate. These students were asked to complete surveys at home within a tight time range.

**Writing Workshop (Elementary) students (7/7 respondents) = 100%** response rate. These students took their surveys either at home or in class on the computer in a private location. All students were invited to respond, and scores on the 3-point scale were then converted to the 5-point scale.

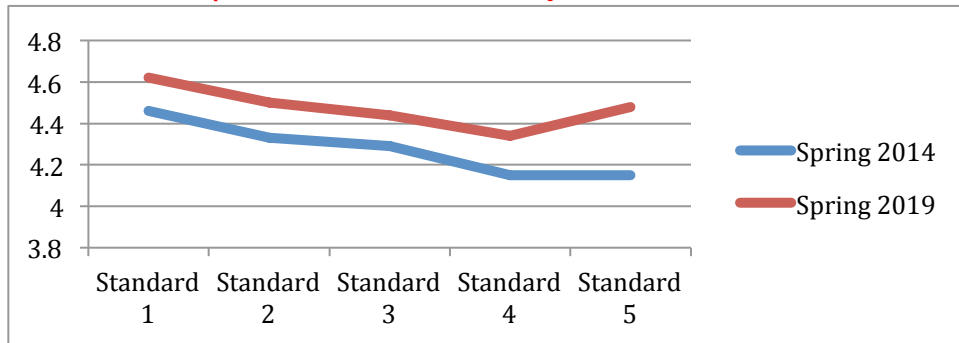
All 2019 stakeholder questionnaires had average item values of 4.30 or higher (on a 5.0 scale).

>>> **Staff = 4.3**

>>> **Combined Student = 4.56**

>>> **Combined Parent = 4.55**

**Comparison of Stakeholder Survey Results in 2014 & 2019**



### Spring 2014 Survey

Standard 1: PURPOSE/DIRECTION = **4.46 (89%)**

Standard 2: GOVERNANCE/LEADERSHIP = **4.33 (87%)**

Standard 3: TEACHING/ASSESSING = **4.29 (86%)**

Standard 4: RESOURCES/SUPPORT = **4.15 (83%)**

Standard 5: RESULTS FOR IMPROVEMENT = **4.15 (83%)**

### Spring 2019 Survey

Standard 1: PURPOSE/DIRECTION = **4.62 (92%)**

Standard 2: GOVERNANCE/LEADERSHIP = **4.5 (90%)**

Standard 3: TEACHING/ASSESSING = **4.44 (89%)**

Standard 4: RESOURCES/SUPPORT = **4.34 (87%)**

Standard 5: RESULTS FOR IMPROVEMENT = **4.48 (90%)**

### Standard 1: Purpose and Direction

<i>Alum. Students</i>	<i>MS/HS Students</i>	<i>WW Students</i>
<u>4.84</u>	<u>4.62</u>	<u>4.9</u>

<i>Alum. Parents</i>	<i>2019 Parents</i>
<u>4.93</u>	<u>4.0</u>

**Combined Students**  
**4.79**

**Combined Parents**  
**4.47**

**Staff**  
**4.6**

**TOTAL**  
**4.62**

## Standard 2: Governance and Leadership

<i>Alum. Students</i>	<i>MS/HS Students</i>	<i>WW Students</i>	<i>Alum. Parents</i>	<i>2019 Parents</i>
<u>4.85</u>	<u>4.37</u>	<u>4.45</u>	<u>4.81</u>	<u>4.19</u>

<b>Combined Students</b>	<b>Combined Parents</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>4.56</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.43</b>	<b>4.50</b>

## Standard 3: Teaching and Assessing for Learning

<i>Alum. Students</i>	<i>MS/HS Students</i>	<i>WW Students</i>	<i>Alum. Parents</i>	<i>2019 Parents</i>
<u>4.81</u>	<u>4.37</u>	<u>4.5</u>	<u>4.82</u>	<u>4.35</u>

<b>Combined Students</b>	<b>Combined Parents</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>4.56</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>4.44</b>

## Standard 4: Resources and Support Systems

<i>Alum. Students</i>	<i>MS/HS Students</i>	<i>WW Students</i>	<i>Alum. Parents</i>	<i>2019 Parents</i>
<u>4.58</u>	<u>4.48</u>	<u>3.85</u>	<u>4.73</u>	<u>4.31</u>

<b>Combined Students</b>	<b>Combined Parents</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.52</b>	<b>4.20</b>	<b>4.34</b>

## Standard 5: Using Results for Continuous Improvement

<i>Alum. Students</i>	<i>MS/HS Students</i>	<i>WW Students</i>	<i>Alum. Parents</i>	<i>2019 Parents</i>
<u>4.73</u>	<u>4.5</u>	<u>4.6</u>	<u>4.83</u>	<u>4.44</u>

<b>Combined Students</b>	<b>Combined Parents</b>	<b>Staff</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
<b>4.61</b>	<b>4.64</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.48</b>

## PARENTS

Combined Parent Survey – Overall average score = 4.55

Alumni Parent Survey – Overall average score = 4.82      Current Parent Survey – Overall average score = 4.26

Standard 1: PURPOSE/DIRECTION = 4.47	[Alumni Parents = 4.93    Current Parents= 4]
Standard 2: GOVERNANCE/LEADERSHIP = 4.5	[Alumni Parents = 4.81    Current Parents= 4.19]
Standard 3: TEACHING/ASSESSING = 4.6	[Alumni Parents = 4.82    Current Parents= 4.35]
Standard 4: RESOURCES/SUPPORT = 4.52	[Alumni Parents = 4.73    Current Parents= 4.31]
Standard 1: USING RESULTS FOR IMPROVEMENT = 4.64	[Alumni Parents = 4.83    Current Parents= 4.44]

The **lowest scoring standard from current parents** – Standard 1: PURPOSE/DIRECTION at 4 is also **the highest-scoring standard for alumni parents** at 4.93.

This indicates a broader view and more understanding of the total NFS process from the parents whose children have completed NFS programs and have gone on to succeed at college – alumni parents simply know more about long-term results.

Additionally, current parents of our youngest students (in Writing Workshop, which now spans grades 3-5) understand less about the school's academic purpose. As academic CORE programs are building again this year (after four years of no integrated core program enrollments) 2019-2020 parents will be extremely involved in assessing the purpose of the education they are now choosing for their children.

Even the lowest scores are quite strong, indicating support of the high expectations and challenging academics at the North Fork School. Areas to improve include continuing to invite stakeholders to participate in planning and NFS self-improvement discussions and meetings.

### **Alumni Parent Survey (20/38 = 53%) open-ended comments:**

#### ***What do you like best about our school?***

Small class sizes encourage healthy discussion and facilitate learning. All teachers truly cared about my child's success and encouraged her to strongly pursue personal goals. Success was demanded by completing drafts of each assignment until they were A+ assignments, this later gave my child the skills to know what a great paper was in college. The North Fork School created a tight knit community for my student, where she felt she truly belonged.

Challenge and individualized instruction.

My daughter was encouraged, supported and "pushed" to work far beyond what she thought she was capable of. She was ready for college and confident of her abilities.

High expectations lead to high achievement

The diversity of the curriculum. incorporating math, art, reading and writing together as one subject was studied. My child understood what was expected of her. It was told and explained to her why she did well and where there was room for improvement. There were no surprises. The school prepared her for honors collegiate classes. Her usage and understanding of the English language is stellar. North Fork put value to the child and the importance of their education. North Fork gave my child an understanding of who she is and what she can accomplish. It helped to build her confidence.

I loved that the emphasis was on improving your own set of skills and that the end goal was not a letter grade but that the piece of writing was "finished" /reworked until it met high standards. Not, like in most schools, complete just because it was turned in.

That learning goals are individualized and set to high standards no matter where each student's starting point is. and that the whole expectation is that everyone can always improve

I very much appreciated the individualized instruction and the fact that expectations for the students were high and communicated well.

Students are challenged!

### ***What do you like least about our school?***

The North Fork School was expensive but well worth the high quality education my child received.

Tension between NF and district but my experience was over 15 years ago and that is resolved.

Nothing comes to mind

expense

With other activities and responsibilities, the expectations at North Fork became stressful to my child. She grew and learned from this, however, it would have been nice to have a 'free from homework' card every now and then.

That we could only access it online because of geographical distance!

That we could only do online because of distance

I wish that it was more appreciated by the community.

### ***What is one suggestion you would like to offer to improve our school?***

Consistency in the classes provided at the school. Many teachers left the school and class sizes changed each year.

Nothing comes to mind- it's not glitzy but the work is challenging and worthwhile.

It has been a while since my child attended. I don't feel I have a current understanding of what would need improving.

Wish you could market and expand online offerings

Increase enrollment by somehow communicating to parents that tuition is more important than snowmobiles or ski passes.

**Alumni Parents: please assess the value of your child(ren)'s North Fork School experience?**

*As most of you have students who are in or have graduated from college, you are in a unique position to assess the results of their/your choice to take classes at North Fork during middle and high school. We value your opinions!*

**How did North Fork School classes affect your child's college experience?**

All of my children are attending college and are excelling, the community knows my family and that my children went to The North Fork School. I speak highly of the school.

The programs prepare students for future success. The books students are required to read have great life lessons and expand children's knowledge of history and social interactions. This school expanded my child's vocabulary immensely. It also encouraged her to question herself, to not think that one way is "right" but listen to other individuals knowledge. The education my child received at The North Fork School has helped her excel in college.

Writing came easily. It was not a barrier to expression.

She was well-prepared; a professor used her writing as an example of the work he expected from all students.

For our oldest child -- he was grateful for the writing experience. Our younger son only participated through the eighth grade and not sure his experience in college was affected.

My child has stated several times that North Fork School writing classes made college a breeze. She was frequently asked to assist other undergrads, and even assist graduate students who did not have a good background in writing and research skills.

Gave her confidence. Gave her knowledge to be able to perform to the best of her ability.

He was very confident with his writing abilities and also time management skills that were essential in his classes.

He entered college knowing that he could write well and present well -- both for literature and technical and engineering classes. He was also comfortable with seeking out and speaking with professors and administrators to take charge of his own course of study

My daughter's writing skills after attending North Fork were much improved and she was ready to handle the rigorous writing, as well as reading, assignments that she received in college.

He is a WRITER along with being the top chemistry student in his class.

**Was the value you received worth the costs in time, effort, and money?**

YES; Yes; yes; Yes!

Immeasurable. She's hard-working and successful.

There were times where it was difficult to justify the cost. Overall, I would do it again.

Yes, it was challenging but worth every penny and the time and effort needed to complete the assignments still helps him today in his business.

Absolutely -- it's a hard argument especially for homeschoolers but the financial cost was definitely worth it for the skills and knowledge and confidence he gained

Most definitely!

***Any other comments or insights you would like to share?***

Thank you. McCall students are fortunate to have the opportunity.

North Fork was a life changing experience. One I and my daughter will always be grateful for. I wish others could see the value I do in it.

It was so wonderful to have the option that the North Fork School provided for my son in our small town. The instructors worked diligently to help him learn how to learn and he continues to use the tools they taught him with his business and family. They gave him so much confidence in a challenging yet achievable environment. They are all amazing teachers. They gave him so much confidence in a challenging yet achievable environment. They are all amazing teachers.

Marie and the rest of the staff at North Fork worked long hours to make sure that students succeeded.

**Current Parent Survey (23/29 = 79%) open-ended comments:**

***What do you like best about our school?***

I feel that your school is giving my child a step above all the rest. A platform that will help her to exceed in the future. Something that would not be achieved elsewhere.

That my son is inspired to learn

Small size, fantastic teachers

Individualized attention, Focus on writing as a process rather than on the end grade. Engaging for the students.

The schoolwork is very rigorous and it challenges my student. I believe my child will be much more prepared for college and life using skills she has learned at this school than she would be if she had not come. She will have knowledge of skills and concepts, and will know how to apply them to anything she writes. The hard work and persistence needed to be successful here will serve her well in life. I love the individualized attention, and the fact that school is held in a small house. It is very welcoming and cozy.

The limited size allowing for a more intimate and intense engagement with the students.

I like that my son is challenged in a way that inspires and interests him. I like that his teacher knows and appreciates his contributions and also recognizes where he needs to develop his skills and she doesn't just let him slide by.

The different way that my kid is taught, Using a fun way of learning makes the kid want to know and learn more and more.

Excellence of personalized instruction, excellent curriculum and high standards.

***What do you like least about our school?***

I can't honestly say there is anything that I truly dislike.

That there are not more guest speakers.

No ethnic or economic diversity

Cost relative to instructional time is high. Outside work requirement is high.

The price. Sorry.

The cost for one class hurts I will admit, though I do not say this in any way as a sleight against the school or teacher(s).

It is more than I ever thought I would pay for school, but I do understand the value and am willing to make it happen for our son. It is a little hard for me to remove my son from his public school teachers who are doing their best and working hard, but the result of seeing our son so engaged in his school work is definitely worth it.

Love all of it!

***What is one suggestion you would like to offer to improve our school?***

I believe you are doing an excellent job with our children and have nothing to offer here.

More guest speakers

Revise scholarship options such that diverse students would find it easy to pay



If cost was lower, would you be able to attract more students and balance out your bottom line?

Recruit more aggressively (how?) to attract older students

I would be happy for just a wee bit more feedback regarding my student's progress and or challenges.

I wonder sometimes about the drafts and edits that the students do and how much of the editing that is done by the teacher. Each draft is so much better, but I lose track of what is my son's work and what is the teacher's. This is the way I was taught to write, but I see how they are learning math these days and I don't hardly recognize it for the methods used now. I wonder about how advanced writing courses are taught now and if there are new ways. All that said, our son has advanced hugely from where he was last September, so I am not suggesting that anything is wrong!

Also, this is not so much a fault of the school or teacher, but I think some other interesting assignments were planned (like building a podcast) and I am guessing the students just didn't get work done on time and the project was dropped. I know that often students didn't get their reading done and came to class unprepared for the discussions thereby holding everyone back.

More community outreach to grow the school.

***How do your friends and associates view North Fork School programs and your choice to participate in classes here?***

The ones that really know what it is your offering are happy to see us with you. All the rest, hope it is everything we tell them it is.

Not important what my friends think, but they do support it. It is most important what diesel thinks

North Fork is perceived as elite school

Many are unaware of the school and its benefits. They seem to view it as a program for kids who "like writing".

Anyone who has children who go to North Fork or have gone in the past, understand the value. I have heard comments in the past from public high school teachers that North Fork students acting like they are better than others. Most people think it just costs more than they can afford.

I think in general people put too much faith in public schools, in particular the humanities, English/writing/grammar, etc. If I did not believe otherwise, I would not make the painful stretch to pay tuition. I have not discussed this issue with other parents and would do so only if approached.

People are curious about how we manage to pay for NFS.

People who have been involved before either as students or parents of alumni always reinforce the decision.

People who teach in the MDSD seem quietly offended.

Parents are curious, but question the necessity as MSD has such high standardized test scores in English and wonder why in the world we would choose such a thing for our kid. It seems like if their kids don't complain or get good grades, then the parents are good with status quo.

A lot of people in the community have not heard of North Fork School. But for those who have it is highly respected for the high quality of education it offers.

***What do you think prospective families should know about North Fork programs?***

I don't know how to say it enough, but your school is what gives our children not just a step forward, but a giant leap ahead. If anyone is looking for a higher education, North Fork is it.

That the curriculum inspires learning

They should know how North Fork could prepare their child for college and for success in the future. Learning the skills and life skills my daughter has learned here will serve her well the rest of her life, no matter what profession she pursues.

North Fork will help their child to get into a good college, if that is something that is important to them.

Regardless of the field one chooses in life, enhanced communication goes further than most any other tool for career advancement. Not to mention so much else...

The biggest selling point for me is that my son enjoys his time and his learning at NFS. He doesn't always love doing all the work, but like anything worth doing, he enjoys having done it and he is totally engaged while he is there rather than just biding his time as he was at public school.

Great supplement to public school, opens students horizons to a higher standard of education, highly personalized and individualized instruction, highly engaging student discussion and input.

***Any other comments or insights you would like to share?***

Thank You for all that you do...

I admire that Marie teaches poetry at a high level

I'm very pleased this academic option exists as I clearly see positive results from my child. I wish it continued success!

The peer group has made a huge difference in our son's experience also. The group is a collection of independent thinkers and creative imaginations and I think all of them are thankful for the cohort in which they can be accepted as themselves.

Thank you for everything you do Marie, you are an amazing teacher. I am grateful for everything you have done and taught my child.

## STAFF

**Staff Survey – Overall average score = 4.3**

Standard 1: PURPOSE/DIRECTION = 4.6

Standard 2: GOVERNANCE/LEADERSHIP = 4.43

Standard 3: TEACHING/ASSESSING = 4.15

Standard 4: RESOURCES/SUPPORT = 4.2

Standard 1: USING RESULTS FOR IMPROVEMENT = 4.2

Staff survey results indicate a desire for school-provided professional development and training to interpret student performance data to use in assessing learning and to improve results. While the NFS staff would already say that teachers use performance data to inform lesson planning and to assist students in learning, there are now opportunities to attend MDSO teacher work days and to access training in these areas. North Fork teachers take advantage of these district professional development days when possible.

Previous years' staff comments indicated that teachers wanted to see a more consistent response to the problem of student non-performance. This issue has been less of a problem in the past five years, as regular teacher meetings have allowed teachers to address, as a team, issues of underperforming students and unresponsive parents.

**Staff Survey (5/10 = 50%) open-ended comments:**

***What do you like best about our school?***

Interested, involved community -- teachers, students, parents. High expectations and results.

the commitment to academic excellence, the offering of an alternative learning opportunity for local students, the integrated humanities-based focus, the track record of success, the small-group learning climate

NF School takes a personal interest in each student. The small class size allows for the teacher to be attentive to each student's needs.

Small class size, intimate and individualized learning environment, wonderful creative curriculum, strong leadership.

***What do you like least about our school?***

That those who do not attend North Fork never visit to see what we do and judge it as a "rich kids' school." That the public schools remain less than supportive and often try to undermine what happens here.

that it isn't more visible to the community, that it is under-utilized

Lack of technology.

***What is one suggestion you would like to offer to improve our school?***

Increase enrollment so classes can be 8-10 students for more peer-to-peer collaboration of diverse opinions and ideas.

continued efforts at outreach, showcasing student successes within the community

Better community outreach to grow the school.

**STUDENTS**

**Combined Student Survey – Overall average score = 4.56**

Standard 1: PURPOSE/DIRECTION = 4.79	[Alumni = 4.84	HS/MS = 4.62	WW = 4.9]
Standard 2: GOVERNANCE/LEADERSHIP = 4.56	[Alumni = 4.85	HS/MS = 4.37	WW = 4.45]
Standard 3: TEACHING/ASSESSING = 4.56	[Alumni = 4.81	HS/MS = 4.37	WW = 4.45]
Standard 4: RESOURCES/SUPPORT = 4.3	[Alumni = 4.58	HS/MS = 4.48	WW = 3.85]
Standard 1: USING RESULTS FOR IMPROVEMENT = 4.61	[Alumni = 4.73	HS/MS = 4.5	WW = 4.6]
	<b>Alumni avg = 4.76</b>	<b>HS/MS avg = 4.47</b>	<b>WW avg = 4.45</b>

Overall, students tend to rate NFS more highly than do their parents, as the students themselves are involved in the day-to-day work and privileges of a NFS education. While students complain about certain things (too much homework, no time for activities, desire for more technology) they also begin, especially in the core programs, to understand that self-esteem comes from their own hard work, and that no coddling or hands-on activities will increase their chances of doing well on the SAT and perhaps ultimately attending a college of their choice.

The student surveys and comments reveal an overall level of satisfaction with NFS – one that their parents can't deny. Alumni surveys, in particular, reflect the satisfaction with preparation that made them ready for college-level work.

**Alumni Student Survey (24/47 = 51%) open-ended comments:**

***What do you like best about our school?***

The best part of The North Fork School was Marie Furnary, who helped me to improve my writing skills beyond those of nearly all of my college peers and even many professors. College is stressful, but already knowing how to write well has helped me immensely. I can't stress enough how thankful I am for the writing skills I acquired at The North Fork School.

I loved that North Fork School offered me a challenging education that has made me the student I am today. I do not believe that I could have been as successful in college if not for the lessons I learned while attending. Although the material we were learning was important, I learned how to study and apply theoretical knowledge to practice. These were lessons that I can apply to the rest of my life, as well as the ability to write in a concise and clear manner. No matter what field you go into, writing will be a foundation. I also appreciated that the North Fork Staff were so invested in myself as a person and in my education.

I enjoy the freedom that Marie granted me to excel in a sophisticated learning environment. In high school I had a propensity to undermine authority and resist the public schooling system. However, at North Fork I truly felt as though every word I wrote was heard by someone who was listening with the intent of understanding. I was not a gear in a machine: instead I was speeding in a literary vehicle of my own design.

Educators are well informed and have a genuine interest in my education and future success.

North Fork was really the place I learned how to think. I credit nearly all my academic and career successes to the skills I developed under Marie's tutelage. "What did I like best" is a canned question; North Fork was a crucible for me as a thinking being. I "liked" it all.

Aside from the personal growth I experienced at North Fork, I appreciated how the curriculum prepares students to be extremely familiar with SAT and AP exam formats without sacrificing the quality of the education. While attending North Fork I was aware that some of our curriculum was structured to prepare us for these exams; it wasn't until I took the actual exams that I saw how substantially every individual exercise had improved my familiarity with them. I can't over-state how nice it was to feel over-prepared for the exams that would decide my future.

The learning environment is incredibly rigorous but supportive. I really appreciated the small classroom community and continued to seek out this experience in college.

Individualized attention, small class sizes, challenging curriculum

The rigorous, integrated curriculum is the #1 thing that prepared me for an analytical career in consulting and big tech. I looked for that same experience in my subsequent schools, including an elite boarding school and an ivy league college, and never found the same level of masterful craft in course planning, iterative learning, and delivery expectation.

The teachers' dedication to the students. They never give up and never let the students give up. This process of repeatedly failing at a thing and being coached to overcome it taught me grit which is probably the most important skill I possess.

### *What do you like least about our school?*

Honestly? The nightmares I STILL occasionally have about going to NFS without having read the book we were assigned, or without having written something I was supposed to have finished.

Although I didn't realize this at the time, the thing I liked the least (the rigor and requirements) has actually served me the most, not only in my higher education but also as a life lesson. Although these tasks are daunting for a high schooler, it does eventually pay off. If I could offer any suggestion, it would be to balance the rigor with more integrative activities, such as art projects, cooking, drama, plays, etc. I know that alumni will look back and appreciate North Fork, but I remember while I was in school I was sometimes overwhelmed.

What I like least about North Fork is actually what I enjoy second best. It was grueling work, and I mean that in the most positive way. My wild mind had to learn discipline to survive, and thus forged me into the writer who I am. A transforming work ethic and sleepless nights yielded the highest quality works that I proudly look back on. Because of this great lesson in tenacity, I fear no term paper or thesis. I fear nothing that I write.

Challenging

N/A

It's only available for a small range of subjects over two periods every day. Education of this quality available for every subject at a single school probably doesn't even exist.

Sometimes it was so challenging that was anxious and stressed out. But this is also because I put tremendous pressure on myself.

Stressful expectations

The fact that it doesn't have more support and recognition in the local community - it's a hidden gem!

I can't think of a thing I don't like.

***What is one suggestion you would like to offer to improve our school?***

A lot has probably changed since I attended NFS nearly fifteen years ago, but looking back on the experience, I can't think of anything I would change.

In my reflection as an alumni from North Fork School, I would suggest creating a more balanced environment between "fun" and rigorous demands. Although one of my greatest take aways from North Fork is the ability to work hard and persevere, I know that some of my classmates and myself found times when we were discouraged. I believe that there is a way to have high expectations and be encouraging, and when "fun activities" were integrated, I found myself more productive and enthusiastic about school. Even a change in scenery, like going to the coffee shop or going outside for class helped increase interest.

I don't know that I would change a thing.

More volunteer opportunities.

Perhaps NFS could use a new couch?

I don't feel qualified to offer advice. The teachers at The North Fork School are experts and I'm grateful for everything they have done for me.

Expand remote offerings and offer thought leadership pieces to gain enrollment and recognition

Offer more classes!

***Alumni students: please assess the affect of NFS classes on your life?***

*Many of you have already graduated from college and graduate school. You are in the best position to give us feedback on the value of your North Fork classes. We appreciate your taking the time to share your opinions!*

***How did North Fork School classes affect your succeeding high school, college, and/or Graduate School experiences?***

My writing skills exceed those of all other members in my small graduate cohort. College has been difficult, but knowing how to communicate effectively and eloquently is half the battle. Thanks to NFS, half of my battle was already won by the time I hit college. Most of my peers in both my undergrad and grad classes had to learn not only the material of the class, but also try to teach themselves how to write. I didn't have to do that and it helped me to learn the actual class material more effectively. Every single time I sat down to write an assignment, I was thankful for the skills I acquired at the NFS.

North Fork School was essential to my post HS experience because it gave perspective to the balance of academics and life. I knew I had the tools to handle challenging subjects because of the skills taught at the NFS.

NFS helped foster a mental resilience and tenacity that has served me well in the intervening years. By being challenging, yet supportive, it helped me to understand the world available to me through better education, and challenging myself intellectually.

I have yet to receive a grade lower than an A on any papers or writing assignments that I have turned in during my collegiate career. My skills are sharp, precise and consistent thanks to Marie's teachings. My work ethic is organized, and I am well-equipped for just about anything academic.

North Fork School classes gave me excellent writing, reading, and communication skills that allowed me to succeed in college. In every class involving writing, both technical and analytical, I have been at the top of my class and commended by professors for my writing. My communication skills have been invaluable in my professional life, even in settings such as technical interviews.

Gave me confidence to explore my own interpretation of texts. Gave me a challenge.

At NFS I learned how to write well, read critically, and discuss issues collaboratively and cogently. These skills proved invaluable in university.

Helped me to be a very strong writer

All of my successes have felt like extensions of the seeds of wisdom that were planted at North Fork School years ago. The most important thing that these teachers did was to forbid me from giving up. I recently acquired my BS in Chemistry and, during every single fifteen-page lab report, I had to fall back on the fortitude that I began cultivating at NFS when I was truly challenged by a teacher for the first time.

I was well beyond some of my classmates in terms of study skills and writing ability my freshman year of college. I continually receive positive feedback from supervisors about my strong work ethic which I would also attribute to Teachers at NFS.

Was very well-equipped to excel in all my college classes, never had anxiety about the quality of my writing

I credit all of my success as an analytical, critical thinker to my time at North Fork. Facing deadlines, working on pieces draft by draft until they reflected quality, juggling multiple "deliverables" at once, bringing learnings from different courses together into a cohesive thesis - these are all skills that helped me ace courses at Dartmouth and that I continue to use every day in my corporate career as a consultant and tech strategist. Quality work, collaboration, and receptiveness to constructive feedback are all attributes my managers have ascribed to my work, and they are the fundamentals taught at NFS.

As answered above: grit. Going through the editing process. Learning to write and rewrite and communicate effectively. These skills are priceless and have carried me far in college, graduate education and military leadership.

*Was the value you received worth the costs in time, effort, and money?*

Absolutely. Unequivocally. Absolutely, no question.

Yes! Yes! YES. Yes. Unquestionably.

Yes. Paying for the school was stressful because my academic performance decided if I could continue going there. I knew as a HS student that though it was a challenge for my parents to pay for it, I earned their trust and investment because the experience is worth it.

Tenfold. I doubt I would have discovered my love for literature without Marie and The North Fork School. Undoubtedly, I would have become a lesser man without her.

Yes. NFS classes are most likely the best value I have ever received for the money in education.

Yes. Would recommend NFS to any family with household income over 60k USD per year.

The personal growth I experienced at NFS was priceless. The scholarships I received purely based on SAT scores, on the other hand, more than paid for my time at NFS.

Without a doubt. I'm so grateful my parents and grandparents were able to pay for my tuition costs at NFS. The school is true gem in such a small community in the middle of Idaho.



*Would you want your own children to take classes like those you experienced at North Fork?  
Why or why not?*

Again, absolutely. More than any of my other childhood schooling, North Fork prepared me to succeed in furthering my education and living my life.

Yes,

Certainly. While I've learned a thing or two in, and since NFS, I'm still not a world-class wordsmith, so I'll leave the "why" to someone who is. In a famous speech, David Foster Wallace, talks of the true value of higher, liberal-arts education, and it perfectly embodies my feelings and why I will always value and fight for the type of education provided at NFS: "Probably the most dangerous thing about college education, at least in my own case, is that it enables my tendency to over-intellectualize stuff, to get lost in abstract arguments inside my head instead of simply paying attention to what's going on right in front of me. As I'm sure you guys know by now, it is extremely difficult to stay alert and attentive instead of getting hypnotized by the constant monologue inside your own head. Twenty years after my own graduation, I have come gradually to understand that the liberal-arts cliché about "teaching you how to think" is actually shorthand for a much deeper, more serious idea: "Learning how to think" really means learning how to exercise some control over how and what you think. It means being conscious and aware enough to choose what you pay attention to and to choose how you construct meaning from experience. Because if you cannot exercise this kind of choice in adult life, you will be totally hosed. Think of the old cliché about "the mind being an excellent servant but a terrible master." and I submit that this is what the real, no-bull- value of your liberal-arts education is supposed to be about: How to keep from going through your comfortable, prosperous, respectable adult life dead, unconscious, a slave to your head and to your natural default-setting of being uniquely, completely, imperially alone, day in and day out."

Absolutely. If I want my children to succeed in academia and therefore life, I would want to introduce them to the greatest treasures I have found in the days of my youth. Those vast potential riches that lie in their brains are unlocked by a spoon scraping a mug of hot cocoa....

Definitely. The strong analysis and communication skills taught at North Fork are extremely important in the modern world in every field. Most schools do not teach these skills effectively or in a way that even attempts to interest students.

Yes, because the small classes were helpful, the time was meaningful, and the teachers cared.

Yes. Any other education would be lesser, characterized by more busy work, less trust, lower standards. North Fork teaches students to be adults long before anyone else thinks they're capable of it.

Yes, alongside public school education for exposure to diversity of students and strong MDSD teachers.

Absolutely. I've never encountered an academic setting that I considered to be more productive and holistic.

Yes yes! The small classroom environment provides lots of one on one time with teachers and allowed me to process and brainstorm at my own pace. I would be lucky to find a school like NFS for my own children.

Yes, because my ability to write well and think clearly has positively impacted every area of my life

YES. Everyone should have the chance to take these rigorous, tailored, transformative classes. The kind of personalized experience you get at North Fork is almost impossible to replicate anywhere else. The classes I took here changed the trajectory of my life and allowed me to be competitive on a global scale. North Fork is not "easy" or always "fun" but it is exactly the training you need to be your best.

Yes. You can't even begin to compare the public school system with North Fork classes. North Fork educational processes prepare students for college and life afterwards by teaching grit, critical thinking, personal accountability. It's a challenging curriculum which you have to work hard at and typically don't succeed at until you learn how to learn! In the public schools you just have to show up to graduate. I know because I attended them too. North Fork education is the gold standard. I wouldn't accept anything less for my son and I would pay much more than they charge for him to have the opportunity to learn and grow there.

### **Current Elementary Student (WW) Survey (7/7 = 100%) open-ended comments:**

#### ***What do you like the most about your school?***

I like writing when we don't have to do school format and when we write stories. I also like working in groups.

The projects we make.

myths!

Doing arts and crafts with Mis Tracey. Like making the mask for different Gods.

it's cool I guess sometimes when we go on field trips but otherwise it's fine.

I like my school because we are free to write whatever we want. I also like how there are very little kids in it so i can concentrate better.

I like how there is not that many kids.

#### ***What is one thing you don't like about your school?***

I don't like missing my other school but I wish it was more times a week than two days.

I like everything.

waking up erly

having the 3 graders hear

math

I don't like how short it is.

Some of the kids are kind of annoying.

***What is idea that would make your school a better place?***

If it was closer to my other school then I could get to my other school faster so I wouldn't miss specials.

more art projects

MORE FOOD!!

Giving it an art room so students can come and bring art projects to school. students can come anytime like after school or in school. And on the first day you come you will get binder that holds all your papers. there will be fabric on the shelves and there pipe cleaners and spray paint, you will have your own desk. There will be clay and everything you can imagine.

I think that the teacher could be more strict to the students about behavior.

Less kids.

**Current Middle & HS Student Survey (9/9 = 100%) open-ended comments:**

***What do you like best about our school?***

The food provided there is definitely a huge plus, but the overall curriculum is fantastic and I have personally learned a lot during the time I have spent there. I also love that the teacher gets involved with the students and it's been a great experience to get to know people that are different than me.

I enjoy the small and interactive class sizes. I like the intensive curricula and I feel that I will be very prepared for college. I also like the flexible schedule.

In my public school I like science and being with my friends. In north fork I like getting a final draft completed.

The food provided is a huge plus, but the overall curriculum is fantastic and I personally have learned a lot in this past year. It's great that the teacher gets involved with the students, and it's been awesome getting to know people that are different than me, as well.

I like that Marie pushes us to high expectations and makes sure that we are understanding the material. We have extensive opportunities to practice skills and refine our reading and writing. My favorite aspects of the course are poetry and reading.

I like that North Fork provides skills students will need to learn in the future. I learn a lot and feel very productive in school. The teacher cares for her students and everyone knows they are payed attention to. The class size is very nice and more relaxed. The surroundings are very comfortable to work in and I have pushed to do my best work. I like the standards the teacher expects me to be at instead of a high school where students set higher achieving students to the level of students who do not do anything. North Fork has taught me how to manage my time between sports and school work. I enjoy being organized and knowing how to focus for long periods of time. The hard work we do in class is great, because it continues with all other schooling subjects.

I like how the learning is really personal and due to the small class sizes we are able to get work done quickly.

I really like the atmosphere it is very homey and neutral, it is a good place to come and focus on my work or tests. It is a way better learning environment than a traditional school and it also provides me with a way deeper learning experience.

### ***What do you like least about our school?***

The vocabulary test... I'm terrible at memorizing things and it's really helpful that our teacher helps us out when we're doing the tests, but it's not a lot of fun.

It's always very cold (temperature wise).

Confusing sentence structures.

The dreaded vocab tests, also I wish we had more class presentations.

The school is a more difficult commute since we have to drive farther to get there. (Also, I sometimes just don't want to do any work)

I wish their were a few more students for more diversity/ideas.

### ***What is one suggestion you would like to offer to improve our school?***

More presentations to do in front of the class and less vocabulary words.

Perhaps more advertisements to promote the school. I number of people have shown interest in it but lack resources to research the school.

I would like to have it after school so, that I don't have to not have 2 periods in the morning and no where to go.

Maybe less vocab words, but other than that I think there isn't much to improve upon.

It would be interesting to become familiar with a broader spectrum of writing styles and formats.

To improve the school, I would try to recruit more people to take North Fork classes. I do enjoy the small class size, but more people would lead to better work. There is one other student in my class and criticism from other students would be beneficial to perfecting writing pieces.

Classes should be a little more focused. Sometimes students go off on tangents and it takes away from class time.

cake every day

## Areas of Notable Achievement

1. Which area(s) indicate the overall highest level of satisfaction or approval?

**Standard 1 (4.62), Standard 2 (4.50), and Standard 5 (4.48)**

Highest scores averaged 4.7 across all surveys of all stakeholders. Comments and high-scoring questions (receiving scores of 5) indicated that stakeholders agree on the North Fork School's offering:

*high expectations  
a quality education  
a safe learning environment  
preparation for students' future learning success*

The highest-rated standards by group were:

Standard 1: PURPOSE/DIRECTION	<b>4.93</b>	<i>(alumni parents)</i>
Standard 2: GOVERNANCE/LEADERSHIP	<b>4.85</b>	<i>(alumni students)</i>
Standard 5: USING RESULTS FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	<b>4.44</b>	<i>(current parents)</i>

2. Which area(s) show a trend toward increasing stakeholder satisfaction or approval?

In 2004 and in 2014, NFS stakeholders completed standardized surveys that were similar to the ones the NFS used this year through AdvancED. That year, groups of survey questions included in all four types of surveys (student, parent, teacher, and community) had the following AVERAGE scores on a FIVE-POINT scale:

Quality of Instructional Program:	2004: 4.4	2014: 4.4	2019: 4.46
Support for Student Learning:	2004: 4.3	2014: 4.22	2019: 4.56
School climate/ Env. for Learning:	2004: 4.4	2014: 4.15	2019: 4.34

Compared to the survey responses of our 2004 surveys, ratings in all areas show increased stakeholder approval. Stronger trends are evidenced in the years of similar surveys (2014 & 2019).

Stakeholders appear to continue appreciating the high expectations and challenging coursework, the small student/teacher ratio, the increased responsibility of students to be self-motivated, and the strong academic preparation for future success that comes from NFS programs.

3. Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other stakeholder feedback sources?

All of the findings are consistent with other sources – conversations with stakeholders and with prospective parents, inquiries from new families who have heard about our programs, discussions between stakeholders and individuals in the community, test results, and college acceptances – all indicate that people are aware of and impressed with the quality of NFS academic preparation and the performance of our students.

In 2004, individual survey questions that were similar in all four types of surveys (student, parent, teacher, and community) had the following AVERAGE scores on a FIVE-POINT scale:

- 1) *The educational program offered to students is of high quality:* 4.8
- 2) *Students see a relationship between what they are studying and their lives:* 4.2
- 3) *The NFS is preparing students to deal with issues and problems they will face in the future:* 4.4
- 4) *Teachers hold high expectations for student learning:* 4.8
- 5) *The NFS provides students and teachers with a safe and orderly environment:* 4.7

In 2014, all types of stakeholders (students, parents, and staff) rated the following questions highest on their surveys:

- 1) *Teachers hold high expectations for student learning:* 4.8
- 2) *Our school provides a safe learning environment:* 4.7
- 3) *Our school's purpose and learning expectations are clear:* 4.9
- 4) *My school prepares me for success at the next level:* 4.7

In 2019, all types of stakeholders (students, parents, and staff) rated the following questions highest on their surveys:

- 1) *In my school, a high quality education is offered.* 4.85
- 2) *Prepared for success in the next school year.* 4.71
- 3) *High expectations in all classes.* 4.96
- 4) *Work that challenges my child/challenging curriculum & learning experiences.* 4.91
- 5) *Our school provides a safe learning environment.* 4.77

### **Areas in Need of Improvement**

1. Which area(s) indicate the overall lowest level of satisfaction or approval?

Lowest scores averaged 4.34 across all surveys of all stakeholders. Comments and low-scoring questions (receiving scores of 3.56-4.25) indicated that stakeholders agree that the North Fork School could improve or offer:

*(extracurricular) activities that interest students  
greater access to counseling and career planning  
a larger variety of technical resources and computers*

*opportunities for families to be involved in activities and learning*

The lowest-rated standards by group were:

Standard 1: PURPOSE/DIRECTION	<b>4.0</b>	<i>(current parents)</i>
Standard 2: GOVERNANCE/LEADERSHIP	<b>4.19</b>	<i>(current parents)</i>
Standard 4: RESOURCES/SUPPORT SYSTEMS	<b>4.2</b>	<i>(staff)</i>
Standard 5: USING RESULTS FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT	<b>4.2</b>	<i>(staff)</i>

2. Which area(s) show a trend toward decreasing stakeholder satisfaction or approval?

There are no downward trends in the survey data; even so, we constantly ask parents and students how we can adjust and improve their experience.

In 2014, areas of extra resources, activities, and technology were lowest-rated. As a part-time school, in which students are concurrently enrolled at the local public schools, or doing homeschooling online or through other academic institutions, the NFS does not offer extra activities or counseling services. Students receive and participate in most of their extracurricular activities at the public school or in community clubs and sports. The answers to questions about career planning and extracurricular activities do not pertain to NFS programs, as we supplant only academic courses in students' schedules.

However, NFS teachers offer intense college counseling and advice to HS juniors and seniors; middle school students and elementary students would not yet be aware of these services, so would rate them low in answer to a survey question.

Technology and computers continue to be addressed/updated annually, although we do not emphasize screen time in class – students complete homework on computers at home, and are taught to research through print materials in class, rather than "Googling" or using "Wikipedia" for quick first answers. Teachers spend significant time helping students learn to assess the validity of online resources.

3. What are the implications for these stakeholder perceptions?

Since 2014, The North Fork School has offered bi-annual stakeholder planning meetings at which purpose/direction statements and other concerns are discussed among the current stakeholders. An advisory Board was established as part of our continual improvement process in 2015, and, although participating parents change every year, the advisory board members have helped guide policy and staff decisions over the past five years.

Two items are especially interesting in this 2019 survey analysis:

1 – that Standard 3 – TEACHING AND ASSESSING FOR LEARNING – is not in the highest scoring nor is it in the lowest scoring area for any of the stakeholders.

The total average score for Standard 3 was **4.44** – indicating that all stakeholders are significantly pleased with/not critical of teaching and learning processes at the North Fork School.

2 – that the *lowest scoring standard from current parents* – Standard 1: PURPOSE/DIRECTION at **4.0** is also *the highest-scoring standard for alumni parents* at **4.93**. This indicates a broader view and more understanding from the parents whose children have completed NFS programs and have gone on to succeed at college – alumni parents simply know more about long-term results.

4. Which of the above reported findings are consistent with findings from other stakeholder feedback sources?

All of the findings are consistent with other sources – open-ended comments on the current surveys, conversations with stakeholders and with prospective parents, inquiries from new families who have heard about our programs, discussions between stakeholders and individuals in the community – all indicate that, while academic offerings and results are of the highest quality, the school site and extra offerings, as well as involvement of stakeholders in determining the future of the school, could all be improved.

This brings up the last point that most stakeholders would agree on criticizing (as seen in the open-ended comments): that tuition is a concern for all parents. The cost of tuition must stay low enough to allow families to participate in NFS programs; yet, without additional funds, the school cannot upgrade the site or its technology, nor can it offer more extra activities without extra charges. This paradox may be unsolvable. However, comments from alumni and alumni parents indicate that, after experiencing their consistent, high quality preparation for college classwork, they come to understand the true value of a quality education.