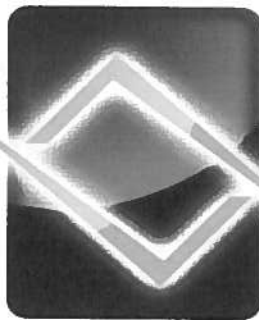


# **Polaris Expeditionary Learning School**

## **KEY RESULTS**

### **Parent Engagement and Satisfaction Survey**

**Spring 2016**



**NationalCenter**  
**f o r S c h o o l L e a d e r s h i p**

**Parent Engagement & Satisfaction Survey - Spring 2016**

# PSD - Parent Engagement & Satisfaction Survey - Spring 2016

## *Poudre School District - by Location*

### Highest Rated Questions - Polaris Expeditionary

Dimension	Question	Favorable Percent
Outreach and Engagement	29 I attend most school events offered to parents such as parent-teacher conferences and open houses.	97%
Responsiveness	36 School staff is accessible.	97%
School Climate	50 The school recognizes students for their accomplishments.	97%
Academics	4 My child's school offers him/her opportunities to explore areas of interest outside the core content areas.	94%
Communication	10 I am kept up-to-date on school activities and events.	94%
Discipline and Respect	19 The school offers its students a safe environment to learn.	94%
Homework	22 The level of difficulty associated with my child's homework is appropriate.	94%
Quality and Satisfaction	32 I am satisfied with the overall quality of the school that my child attends.	94%
Quality and Satisfaction	34 The school provides its students with a high quality education.	94%
School Climate	47 School staff is courteous and helpful.	94%

# PSD - Parent Engagement & Satisfaction Survey - Spring 2016

## *Poudre School District - by Location*

### Lowest Rated Questions - Polaris Expeditionary

Dimension	Question	Unfavorable Percent
Monitoring Student Progress	24 I regularly check my child's information (such as grades or attendance) using an online resource.	28%
Responsiveness	35 I am satisfied with the services provided by my child's guidance counselor.	23%
Responsiveness	39 When I call my child's guidance counselor, I get prompt feedback (if applicable).	17%
Academics	1 I consider my child's school to be an excellent school.	15%
Homework	20 Oftentimes, my child's homework assignment requires interaction with me or others in our family.	15%
Academics	3 My child gets the support he/she needs at school.	12%
Communication	11 I feel well informed about my child's school life.	12%
Academics	7 Public schools do an excellent job of educating students.	11%
School Pride	55 My child's school is well regarded in the community.	11%
Academics	2 I understand the school's academic expectations for my child.	9%

Overall Results by District  
Open-Ended Comments  
Poudre School District

1. Where do you get most of your information about your student's school?

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**Polaris Expeditionary**

- Principal telephone call alerting us to the newsletter and important information we need to be aware of.

# Overall Results by District

## Open-Ended Comments

### Poudre School District

#### 3. What could your child's school do to better involve you in your child's school life?

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##### Polaris Expeditionary

- I am happy with the amount of involvement I have. It took a little while for me to understand the way the online gradebook is set up, with learning targets, etc., and it also took a while to learn the idea of Student Led Conferences. The best thing I can think of would be some sort of meeting at the beginning of the school year for families who are new to this system, which would introduce the grading system, online gradebook, learning targets and SLC process. The first year one of my students was there, I spent the whole year lost, and when I asked the crew teacher, I didn't understand the process any better after hearing the explanation. Now that we've been with the school for several years, I have a better understanding, but it was mystifying coming from a traditional neighborhood school.
- not sure
- very engaging with parents at her school
- None
- More outreach with regular and individualized updates.
- I wish the PTA had meetings at times other than their coffee mornings- most working parents simply can't attend those.
- Permit parents to visit whenever.
- Nothing, that's my responsibility.
- Looking into how they can improve their teaching models instead of how to change the way a student learns. This has been our biggest struggle. Trying to fit their mold instead of the teachers having a willingness to try an alternative approach. Negativity when a student struggles, i.e. comments such as "you are a bad reader" (it should be "you are a developing reader") are destructive to a student's self-esteem and counterproductive to their learning.
- Nothing that comes to mind.
- It already has great communication via one on ones and the internet.
- they do such a good job of this already! I feel so welcome. The staff and teachers are always beyond happy to hear a concern or help with an issue or answer a question. Keep doing what you are doing!
- They do a great job with this...
- Keep me informed of the progress at school and ask for input on how to handle his specific needs.
- Help me find a house closer. That was tongue in cheek. We commute from Windsor daily, and while it's entirely worth the drive, it would be nice not to have to drive so far.
- I'm plenty involved.
- How it is now works great
- Not do entirely student led conferences... I hear nothing from teachers!
- My child's specific teacher should communicate more

## Overall Results by District

### Open-Ended Comments

#### Poudre School District

##### 3. What could your child's school do to better involve you in your child's school life?

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- Welcome parental involvement in the child's education. Some of the staff aren't always willing to engage in respectful dialog, so talking with them can be challenging and I feel less inclined to volunteer or come in and talk about things that may come up. More timely email response time. Better phone manners. It's not clear on how or when they choose to communicate with the parents.
- ?
- Nothing. I feel super welcome and involved there.
- Nothing. I get great emails, newsletters, phone calls. I feel i am well informed

# Overall Results by District

## Open-Ended Comments

### Poudre School District

#### 4. What do you most like about your child's school?

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##### Polaris Expeditionary

- The teachers really get to know each student individually. I love the small atmosphere and the many, many opportunities available to students at Polaris. The teachers are enthusiastic and caring. The principal goes way above and beyond in making sure every student and family have their needs met.
- the expeditionary learning model which gives kids a more hands on time. It should happen more often.
- I like that it has a small student body and that everyone knows each other. I like that that occasionally the elementary kids get to interact with the high school kids.
- \* relationships are built between teachers and students that rely on respect and responsibility
  - \* Polaris has helped re-build my children`s love of learning after a negative experience at another school
  - \* students who might feel excluded or marginalized at other schools (for example, gay students, students on the autism spectrum) are included and integral at Polaris because there is a strong commitment to mutual respect
  - \* students are held responsible for their own work, and my children are more accountable than ever for maintaining grades, doing homework and meeting deadlines than ever before, while still spending less time on homework than most schools require.
- I love that the student is responsible for their own learning. HOW to learn is stressed over memorizing facts.
- They have taken their individual style of learning into consideration as well as their own unique abilities, talents and challenges. This has led to higher academic success and motivation on the part of my student.
- the non traditional teaching methods appeal to my student and allows her to learn in a way that she understands. She thrives there.
- Our child is comfortable there with the Teachers and School curriculum
- Small size and special education support, K-12 nature, expeditions that result in depth in education rather than broad and shallow treatment of topics.
- I appreciate the class sizes of the school. I honestly think that middle school classes should capped at 25 students.
- The opportunity for other forms of education and the offering of intensives.
- consistency of policies as set by the administration and the approach to different learning styles.
- That they focus more on my child than on achievement. They just happen to do well on achievement measures because they DO consider the "whole child."
- The Expeditionary Learning component allows for creativity, curiosity and love of learning
- I like their ability to be academically successful without being overly concerned with uniformity and authoritative discipline. The intensives are also great.
- expeditions, child directed learning, getting the kids out of the classroom to learn, letting the kids move and play and be kids
- The teachers! They authentically care about the kids. This is in contrast to the school my daughter was going to before she started at Polaris. Teachers are respectful, kind and clearly love their jobs. Again, this is contrast to my daughter`s previous school (CLPMS)
- Diversity in students.
- The philosophy of learning.

## Overall Results by District

### Open-Ended Comments

#### Poudre School District

##### 4. What do you most like about your child's school?

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- Small class sizes, expeditionary learning model, outside of classroom field work, the teachers.
- My older students went to Polaris (Lab) and my younger ones have gone since kindergarten and we have be happy with every teacher and every interaction with staff there. My kids have always enjoyed going to school there and the teachers are really involved in helping them succeed.
- The teachers/
- I love the outdoor/out of the classroom learning that they provide as well as the small classrooms.
- Smaller classes,better for student to learn, classes gets involved with other grades, learning by hands,
- Big picture outlook, experiential education, growth mindset
- I like that they allow the students to be themselves and don` t burden them with unnecessary homework. I like the Intensives because it gives the students a chance to learn outside of the box.
- The teachers are amazing as is the school nurse
- The principal and the teachers!



**Overall Results by District**  
**Open-Ended Comments**  
**Poudre School District**

**5. What would you change about your child's school to help him/her learn better?**

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**Polaris Expeditionary**

- \* There is very little I would change. While Polaris might not be the best match for every student (no school works for everyone), it is a great fit for my kids. They are enthusiastic about the programs available to them and they like and feel respected by their teachers, largely because of the time spent in intensives and crew, but also because of the project-based nature of much of their work. I am very happy with Polaris as the best public school fit I am likely to find for my family.
- The Gifted program has been extremely disappointing for middle and high school. It went from having the students simply make up their own goal and then work to achieve that goal (which seems very lazy on the part of the teacher running the program) to him receiving nothing at all this year- nothing. I have twice emailed the counselor to inquire about what is being done to meet my child's ALP, and have received no replies at all. If an IEP were handled this way, it would be violating law. Why are ALP's not treated the same way in PSD?
- More flexibility in learning styles. More hands on learning time. Much more outside time.
- Even though there is a low teacher to student ratio, the teachers still seem over-worked. They need to be able to focus on teaching because each student has unique needs.
- not sure
- Not sure
- Communication from his school right when problem arises instead of after it has become a problem. I think my child has been treated unfairly and it is unlikely that he will return next year.
- none
- Allow the school more time to focus on learning and less time on measuring.
- More servicing learning and/or apprentice opportunities in the community. These should be explored and planned with the students, not for the students.
- More interesting food choices.  
More money for facilities.
- I would add more daylight to the classrooms. I would add even more movement to the daily activities
- That the staff actually listens and takes into account parents concerns. Diversity in programs (literacy) and staff. Multisensory lessons, diversity in message delivery, not all students fit the same cookie cutter molds.
- More challenges.
- More physical exercise.
- Nothing
- Nothing that comes to mind.
- More technology usage to prepare them for the need in their future. Improve there library. Have a full time art teacher. Include nutrition education. More out of the classroom field work.
- ??
- Better use of technology time. Feel that the students don't get adequate time to navigate and learn the computers.

Overall Results by District  
Open-Ended Comments  
Poudre School District

5. What would you change about your child's school to help him/her learn better?

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- I don't get any feedback from teachers directly on the way my student performs or areas that he needs help.
- Nothing to add, pleased with the system
- Don't take growth mindset to the extreme
- I feel like the academic expectations change at will and we don't always know what they are. It can be frustrating to try to be involved in your child's education because, as I was told, 'the school wants the child to handle his own education.' Are they still not learning? Then when the parent tries to become involved, as in my case, I was asked where have you been this whole time?
- Additional school counselors  
Teens need a lot of love and care and 1 per middle school and 1 for the high school level just is not adequate for all of their responsibilities.
- I sometimes think it could be a little more rigorous, but I like that they emphasize family time over busy work homework.
- Perhaps more resources for teachers so more opportunities could be offered to them for their own personal learning. Also increase supplies etc to help with more hands on type of learning.