Implementation Quality and Outcomes of The Leader In Me (TLIM) Program:

Case Studies at Two Diverse Elementary Schools

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The present study was designed to conduct a "case study" evaluation of *The Leader in Me* (TLIM) at two schools differing in geographic location and demographic characteristics. TLIM is designed to implement a school-wide transformation process to enhance students' life skills and workforce readiness. The foundation of the school change process is based on the integration of the 7 Habits described in Stephen Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* into all aspects of daily life in the school. Implementation of the TLIM process is facilitated by: (a) training and professional development by the developer (Franklin Covey) of the entire school staff in basic leadership principles, including the principles of the 7 Habits, (b) integration of TLIM concepts by teachers into classroom lessons, hall displays, and school-wide activities and systems for the purpose of fostering students' understanding, internalization, and application of the principles, and (c) transfer of the principles by students to their activities and communications at home and in the community. Additionally, a high level of implementation includes adoption of the habits by teachers, parents, and other community stakeholders.

The major purpose of the evaluation study was to assess implementation progress and activities with regard to the experiences and reactions of teachers, students, school administrators, and other key stakeholders (e.g., community leaders and business partners). A replicated qualitative case study design was employed in two schools—one an elementary school spanning grades K-6 in a suburb of a west coast city (WCES), and the other spanning grades K-5

in a small town in commuting distance of a medium-sized southeast coast city (SEES). The study addressed the five evaluation questions presented below.

Evaluation Questions

1. How is TLIM being used by teachers, administrators, and students at each school with regard to program-specific activities, classroom instruction, and school events in general?

2. What are the main components of program implementation at each school?

3. What are the following major participants'/stakeholders' perceptions regarding the program's value impacts on students' life skills, behavior, and academic achievement and transfer of benefits to the home and community?

     i. teachers?

    ii. students?

   iii. administrators?

    iv. community members?

4. What are trends in student achievement in reading/language arts (R/LA) and mathematics before and after program adoption?

5. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program implementation, and recommendations for improvement?

Methodology

A team of two experienced evaluators visited each school for 1.5 days each to collect the data and acquire firsthand impressions of the school environments. The evaluators conducted a school "walk-through" to examine facilities, classrooms, display of student work, and activities in the cafeteria, playground, gymnasium, etc. In focus groups and interviews, teachers and staff

were asked to share reactions or experiences they have had during the year regarding such topics as: (a) the benefits of various program components; (b) fidelity of implementation; (c) quality and adequacy of professional development and support; (d) impacts on the school, themselves personally, students, parents, and the community; and (e) strengths, weaknesses, and improvement needs. Students were asked to convey how they used the 7 Habits and effects on them in developing effective work habits, interacting with peers and adults, and resolving conflicts.

Grade-level Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics scores on the schools' respective state assessments were examined to determine trends over time relative to other schools in the district and across the state. The starting point for the trend analysis was at least two years prior to the individual school's initial implementation of TLIM.

Findings and Conclusions

Questions 1 and 2: How is TLIM Being Used by Students and Teachers? What are the Implementation Components?

Results indicated much similarity in how TLIM is used by students and teachers at each school. Unlike most curriculum-based programs, there is no prescribed set of lessons in TLIM. What will be observed both in the classroom and outside in the hallways are signs, banners, posters, and artwork that reinforce and celebrate the habits. What is likely to be heard is teachers and students intermittently using the language of TLIM (i.e., the 7 Habits) purposefully in the context of classroom activity and informal communications. Rather than being prescribed a lesson plan, teachers have autonomy to integrate TLIM with regular classroom instruction and management. Most, if not all, do this by discussing, modeling, and reinforcing the 7 Habits and

leadership concepts in the context of lessons, stories, student play and academic activity, and as a tool when responding to discipline problems.

Nearly all students, it seems, readily learn and internalize the 7 Habits and develop a shared vocabulary regularly used when interacting with classmates and adults. Tangible activities are the assignment of leadership roles to all students. At SEES, each child in every classroom had a leadership role of some type (homework collector, door opener, attendance taker), whereas at WCES, the roles were assigned at the school level. Also at SEES, a "sand dollar" incentive program was used to assign tokens (sand dollars), which could be traded in for rewards, for practicing the 7 Habits. Some teachers employ daily or regular exercises that reinforce the habits, such as writing reflections in a journal of what the habits personally mean (an example at SEES). Another component of TLIM, evident at both schools, is students' use of data notebooks to record personal and academic goals, and monitor progress toward them.

Leadership Day, which is held in the spring of each year, is a culminating activity that brings the entire school, as well as parents and community members, together to celebrate the year and give students the opportunity to demonstrate leadership skills through public speaking and performances.

Question 3. What are Major Participants'/Stakeholders' Perceptions of TLIM's Impacts?

Without question, the strongest consensus was that TLIM positively improved school climate. For the teachers and principals, the main contributors to climate changes were improved student behavior and the establishment of a culture, guided by the 7 Habits supporting respect and acceptance of others. An indirect effect was giving the school a prideful identity and unique sense of purpose.

Students translated the climate effects into feelings of increased order and security. Several noted explicitly that bullying was decreased because of classmates' exposure to the 7 Habits. With leadership roles came more explicit responsibility for behaving respectfully toward others and resolving rather than escalating conflicts (win-win was frequently mentioned as a strategy). There was also agreement among students in both schools that teachers, too, were nicer, more apt to listen to and respect students' perspectives, and more approachable as a result of practicing the habits.

A second clear impact of TLIM was developing students' self confidence and motivation. Practicing the habits provide a sense of direction and responsibility, which are motivating and reinforcing. The prevailing attitude of accentuating the positive makes it important to try but acceptable to fail. There is less fear than in a typical school environment of being embarrassed or ridiculed in the wake of failure.

A third type of impact was getting along better with others and resolving conflicts. Teachers, principals, and parents reported that there were fewer arguments, fights, disciplinary actions, and suspensions than in the past. Students reported feeling better equipped to respond in a positive way to conflicts. Students discussed these effects concretely with reference to using particular habits purposively (primarily win-win, synergize, seek to understand, and synergize) to relate better with other children and adults.

A fourth impact was making teaching easier and more enjoyable. This effect seems directly attributable to students behaving better and accepting responsibility for their actions, the overall school climate improving, and a school culture and order developing around the 7 Habits.

Perceptions by students and adults offered positive but weaker support for the impacts of TLIM on student achievement. Interestingly, both the student and teacher focus groups noted the benefits of TLIM for increasing students' self-motivation, organization, and personal accountability for completing homework and class assignments. The consensus from teachers and the principals was that learning had in fact improved but not yet in a way that necessarily would be visible on the high-stakes state assessments.

Question 4. What are Trends in Student Achievement?

SEES and WCES showed very similar patterns of student achievement. In both Mathematics and English/Language Arts, both schools consistently outperformed the state but were comparable to their school districts. However, it is far too early to judge the impacts of TLIM on student achievement, given that the most recent assessments (2010-11) are associated with only the first year of TLIM implementation in SEES and the second year in WCES.

What are the Program Strengths and Weaknesses and Recommendations for Improvement?

Our impression is that at both schools, the initial three-day training provided by Franklin Covey is very well received by teachers and quite effective in not only launching TLIM but in developing good understanding of the concepts and associated practices needed for quality implementation. An additional impression is that after 1.5 years at SEES and 2.5 years at WCES, the implementations are proceeding well and generally strengthening, even though there has been no additional formal training by FC. Teachers described an initial desire for more specific training and materials to support their efforts, but that as their implementation matured, they felt they learned how to integrate the habits in many different but effective ways. Teachers

stressed that this was not an adoption of a program but of a new instructional process with students' total personal growth and development at its center.

At both of the case study schools, strong principal support and leadership skills appeared to be a critical factor in ensuring fidelity of implementation. We suspect that under weaker, less involved principal leadership, implementation and sustainability of TLIM would face much greater challenges. Separate from principal leadership, a number of factors that appear to support implementation and sustainability, and therefore could be useful for other TLIM schools to consider, emerge from the case studies. These are:

- Introducing TLIM to a school in a gentle, inclusive way rather than in a top-down manner helps to create a positive foundation for faculty interest and buy-in. In both schools, a leadership team including administrators, counselors, and teachers was responsible for monitoring and supporting the process. A committed leadership and/or Lighthouse Team may be a key factor in program growth and sustainability.

- Community involvement develops wider and more stable "roots" for TLIM, which should make continuance of the program less dependent on particular school leaders

- Opportunities for faculty to visit model TLIM schools (e.g., A. B. Combs) increase their experiential knowledge and personal commitment.

- Once TLIM pervades the school culture, the intrinsic rewards that students and teachers receive from practicing the 7 Habits should increase sustainability.

- Leadership Day and other formal celebrations of achievements appear to provide important anchors for establishing identity as a TLIM school and showcasing

students' demonstration of leadership activities (e.g., performing, public speaking).

- Overt practicing of the 7 Habits by adults (principal, teachers, and parents) not only deepens the level of implementation in the school but strengthens students' learning of the habits through additional reinforcement, modeling, and feedback.

Given the strong principal leadership and seemingly effective early TLIM implementations at both schools, we were unable to identify any major weaknesses. In considering what might occur with changes in leadership or at other schools having weaker leadership or faculty buy-in, several potential concerns and associated recommendations come to mind.

- Although a true strength of TLIM is its lack of prescriptiveness and the considerable autonomy given to teachers, our impression is that many teachers would benefit from receiving more guidance in the form of sample lessons and suggested activities. Equally valuable would be some form of benchmarks or rubrics that operationally define what higher- and lower- fidelity implementation entails in various areas such as involving students in leadership roles, using data notebooks, teaching the 7 Habits, communicating with parents, etc.
- Neither case study school has had a strong influx of new teachers (and WCES practically none), but should staffing composition change more significantly, the danger exists of teachers inexperienced with TLIM not receiving sufficient training from the site-based Leadership or Lighthouse Teams. Supplementary material oriented more directly to professional development would be valuable for FC to develop.

- Related to the above suggestion, refresher training provided by FC every 2-3 years would be helpful to both experienced and new teachers for improving the quality of implementation. Lighthouse Teams and Leadership Teams should remain active in offering continuous site-based professional development, but bolstering the external training component (presumably at modest costs) would provide greater quality control while increasing the exposure of teachers and teams to national experts.

Given that the case studies involved only two, somewhat selective schools, the generalizability of these interpretations to other TLIM schools needs to be viewed cautiously. A recommended extension of this evaluation research would be to expand the cases to a larger number of randomly selected schools (perhaps 10-15) at various phases of implementation.

Implementation Quality and Outcomes of The Leader In Me (TLIM) Program:

Case Studies at Two Diverse Elementary Schools

The present study was designed to conduct a "case study" evaluation of *The Leader in Me* (TLIM) program at two schools differing in geographic location and demographic characteristics. TLIM is designed to implement a school-wide transformation process to enhance students' life skills and workforce readiness. The process is also intended to impact directly staff effectiveness and engagement, while creating a safe and engaging learning environment for students. The foundation of the TLIM process is based on: (a) training by the developer (FranklinCovey) of the entire school staff in basic leadership principles, including Stephen Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, (b) integration of TLIM concepts by teachers into classroom lessons, hall displays, and school-wide activities and systems for the purpose of fostering students' understanding, internalization, and application of the principles, and (c) transfer of the principles by students to their activities and communications at home and in the community.

The major purpose of the evaluation study was to assess implementation progress and activities with regard to the experiences and reactions of teachers, students, school administrators, and other key stakeholders (e.g., community partners). A replicated qualitative case study design was employed in two schools—one an elementary school spanning grades K-6 in a suburb of a west coast city, and the other spanning grades K-5 in a small town in commuting distance of a medium-sized southeast coast city. In subsequent sections of this report, we describe the design, data collection instruments, procedures, and results. The specific evaluation questions addressed by the study are as follows:

1. How is TLIM being used by teachers, administrators, and students at each school with regard to program-specific activities, classroom instruction, and school events in general?

2. What are the main components of program implementation at each school?

3. What are the following major participants'/stakeholders' perceptions regarding the program's value impacts on students' life skills, behavior, and academic achievement and transfer of benefits to the home and community?

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5. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the program implementation, and recommendations for improvement?

Methodology

Evaluation Design

For all evaluation questions, a "descriptive" design was employed with a focus on characterizing the processes and outputs associated with program implementation and outcomes during the year. For question 4, school-level or grade-level student achievement data obtained

from state websites was examined for a multiple-year period extending prior to and following TLIM adoption. Of interest was how the school performed relative to other schools district-wide and statewide. The case-study methodology, as described below, addressed the five evaluation questions via school observations, interviews, and analyses of school data.

Measures and Data Sources

A team of two experienced evaluators visited each school for 1.5 days each to collect the data and acquire firsthand impressions of the school environments.

Observations

The evaluators conducted a school "walk-through" to examine facilities, classrooms, display of student work, and activities in the cafeteria, playground, gymnasium, etc. Special focus was placed on examining levels of student behavior and demonstration of leadership roles.

Participation/Stakeholder Perceptions

Focus groups or interviews were conducted with diverse school personnel and TLIM stakeholders including principals, students, teachers, community members, and parents. Those participating were chosen by the principals and therefore, presumably more informed about or supportive of TLIM than others in the same population. However, the questions were designed to reveal perceptions about TLIM, both positive and negative, that could be corroborated across multiple interviewees. Copies of the interview/focus group protocols are provided in Appendix A.

Although an ordered set of questions was used as a guide for each session, the actual interviews were semi-structured, permitting deviations from the format (both additions and omissions) as deemed appropriate for maximizing the information provided from each group or individual. Core questions dealt with reasons for the school adopting the program, goals for use, implementation fidelity, teacher and student experiences and reactions, perceived impacts, strengths, weaknesses, recommendations. Teachers and staff were asked to share reactions or experiences they have had during the year regarding such topics as: (a) the benefits of various program components; (b) fidelity of implementation; (c) quality and adequacy of professional development and support; (d) impacts on the school, themselves personally, students, parents, and the community; and (e) strengths, weaknesses, and improvement needs. Students were asked to convey how they used the 7 Habits and effects on them in developing effective work habits, interacting with peers and adults, and resolving conflicts.

Student Achievement

Grade-level Reading/Language Arts and Mathematics scores on the schools' respective state assessments were examined to determine trends over time relative to other schools in the district and across the state. The starting point for the trend analysis was at least two years prior to the individual school's initial implementation of TLIM. Given the short duration of the TLIM implementation, less than two years at one school and less than three at the other, discernable impacts on achievement were not expected. However, it was considered relevant to report and interpret the achievement patterns in creating a more comprehensive profile of each school.

Procedures

       The interviews and observations were conducted during a 1.0 to 1.5-day visit by two Johns Hopkins researchers in early December, 2011. Several weeks prior to the visit, the principal at each school was asked to schedule times to conduct the interviews and focus groups. During the actual visit, the two observers toured the school, visited classrooms, and conducted the interviews/focus groups. Notes were taken during all interview/focus group sessions and entered into the computer for review and corroboration by the two researchers that were present. After the initial summaries were written up in report form, they were sent to the principals for review. Incorrect facts or misinterpretations were corrected on the basis of their feedback.

Southeast Elementary School (SEES)

Case Study Context

Southeast Elementary (SEES) is located in a small town within commuting distance of a mid-sized city in a southern state. Its grounds are adjacent to a middle school specializing in the performing arts, off of a main street in an attractive suburban neighborhood. The school enrolls approximately 840 students in pre-K through 5 and employs 52 teachers. Slightly over half of the students (51.7%) qualify for free or reduced-price lunch. The vast majority of students are Caucasian (55%) or African American (41%), with small percentages of Asians (1%) and Hispanics (2%).

SEES is now in its second year of implementing TLIM. As described in the sections below, the program was introduced by a new principal who was assuming leadership of the school at a time of adversity. In the prior year, both the former principal and school guidance counselor, who were regarded as anchors of SEES for many years, passed away. Student achievement had declined, student enrollees were becoming more disadvantaged socioeconomically, and the school failed to attain Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). TLIM, therefore, was viewed by many as the right program at the right time.

As part of the visit, we toured classrooms and saw clear evidence that the 7 Habits were integrated into daily instruction. For example, visible in every classroom were posters and a variety of bulletin boards defining and illustrating the 7 Habits. Also exhibited was the incentive program in which students received "sand dollar" tokens that could be traded in for rewards for good behavior related to the 7 Habits. In one of the classrooms, an art teacher who was new to the schools was preparing for class. Her room showed wall paintings and colorful drawings

related to the 7 Habits. She explained how she was learning the habits from the students and was discovering the many natural connections between them and her own curriculum. Evidence of the 7 Habits and TLIM abounded throughout the school. An additional observation, which we regarded as suggestive but certainly not conclusive regarding possible impacts of TLIM, was how friendly, polite, outgoing, and well behaved the students were both in and outside classrooms.

Focus Group Results

In the following sections, we summarize the responses given at various focus groups.

Community Focus Group

Personal knowledge and involvement with TLIM. The principal and a local business leader both learned about TLIM at a conference, read the book ("The Leader in Me" by Stephen Covey), and shared their interest with colleagues. A community and school contingent visited AB Combs Elementary School in North Carolina and attended a presentation by Sean Covey at a TLIM conference. They continued to research the model, while the principal shared the book with 5th grade teachers. Awareness and interest in the model grew as word spread and additional stakeholders read the book and participated in meetings and informal communications regarding TLIM. .

Based on their impressions of TLIM and of both school and community needs (see next response), the community supporters decided to pursue an effort to raise the funds (approximately $35,000) necessary to implement the program, which needed to be accomplished in less than 6 weeks They succeeded and felt a great sense of accomplishment. There was wide

participation in fundraising, ranging from donut purchases and small monetary donations to gifts exceeding one-thousand dollars.

Primary reasons for adopting TLIM. Responses given by members of the focus group were:

- The school and the business community had built a "respectful partnership" in which the school staff and principal demonstrated an understanding of how the businesses worked – including budgeting schedules, hours worked, and what could be supported.

- The potential of TLIM to have sustainability. As one community member put it, "The only ones (new initiatives) that stick are the ones that change the culture. You could tell from the beginning that this [TLIM] could do that, and it would have staying power."

- The principal never forced anything – she planted the idea, teachers bought in, parents got on board, and the community responded.

- The idea behind this program was an "easy sell" in this community – easy for the media to describe, and stakeholders saw raising awareness to be just as important as raising funds

- This is a small community in which relationship building and trust are important factors in adopting any new partnership. According to one respondent, "We needed to feel it – do a gut check; this program appeals to all senses – you can really feel this."

- Employers are worried about the work and personal life skills that are missing in many new entries to the workforce, such as skills for communicating, resolving conflicts, managing time, working in teams, etc. Local business spend substantial amounts of money on workforce development, and community leaders felt that incorporating these

life and work skills into the elementary school curriculum could enhance their efforts. Students need to learn these soft skills early so they do become habits.

- High school instructional time is wasted because students don't know how to manage themselves in a learning environment. And, high school is probably too late for these habits to be introduced.

- The overall initiative was seen as an "operating system" that could draw all key stakeholders together to move in a positive direction at a time when this school needed to heal and boost morale (due to the passing of the principal and guidance counselor).

TLIM influences on the school and students. There was strong consensus among focus group members that TLIM was benefitting school culture and students' personal development significantly. According to one individual, "Listening to students talk to each other can be a lesson for everyone – the students live and breathe the 7 Habits." A parent added, "What they [students] are bringing home from school is changing family dynamics. We are a better family than we were before the 7 Habits." Additional comments reflected the beliefs that students were internalizing the 7 Habits and applying them in authentic ways, especially in interactions with peers. Accountability for behavior was being developed as students learned to care about each other.

Sustainability of the initiative. When asked about the sustainability of TLIM relative to many of the other, short-lived interventions and programs, the consensus of the focus group was quite positive. While acknowledging that it would take at least two years for the initiative to become established, the group believed that it would be durable due to the strong support by students, teachers, parents, and the superintendant (even if the SEES principal happened to leave). Also acknowledged was the interest by community leaders in not only maintaining

TLIM at SEES, but expanding it to other schools in the district, especially at the middle school level.

Benefits of TLIM. Most comments dealt with the effects of TLIM in helping students to develop into caring and responsible adults. Individual comments indicated that:

- "This program reaches the person; teachers feel better about themselves and at the same time, are thinking that students are becoming better people."
- "Kids need a reason to do this… kids who were in trouble in the past are now on the honor roll and receiving awards."
- "When students receive recognition, it changes everything."
- "TLIM is not all about academics, but about positive behavior, discipline, and building character."
- "This builds self-confidence so kids have a chance to succeed."

Suggested improvements. The predominant theme regarding program improvements concerned the need to "tell the story of TLIM," so that more people in the community would be informed. Specific responses conveyed:

- "There is a need for better marketing to get the word out about TLIM."
- "Once a school has adopted the program, it needs more guidance on how to educate the parents about the habits and how to support its children."
- "Have access to more success stories…have an easy to use forum for sharing success stories."

- "More people need to know what is working and the results that they are experiencing, such as the several stories about kids who were experiencing discipline problems but are now on the honor roll."

- "What will happen when these kids go to middle school and high school? We need a really engaged school district that supports this [program] at all levels and in all schools. Just imagine!"

- "Steal some ideas from the Host program [a community outreach initiative] that was operating at SEES for 6 – 8 years. It is important to involve as many people from the community as possible and if they have minimal training and background in education, you must make involvement easy for them. Hundreds of volunteers were involved in the past – it is important to pull them back in and make it easy for them to transition to this initiative."

Student Focus Group: 5th Graders

What TLIM means. Two predominant themes regarding the meaning of TLIM to the students emerged from the focus group's responses. One was that TLIM was improving behavior and respect throughout the school:

- "There are many positive changes – no more pushing and nasty talk – when that happens we teach each other to use the 7 Habits."

- "The teacher just incorporates the 7 Habits into whatever we are doing."

- "The 7 Habits really flow. After class, we all need to synergize because we need to work as one."

- "We use a journal each day to write about what we think each habit means, then the teacher summarizes. "The kids' ideas come out first."

The second theme concerned the impacts of the habits on the students personally. One student described how the habits always "provide a reference to look at" in knowing what is best to do. Another child talked about the impacts of the habits in the long run, saying, "This is something that will go on throughout your life, not just something for little kids." A third respondent used the term "ownership" to describe her view of the habits.

How TLIM has been helpful. Students discussed a number of ways that TLIM has been beneficial to them personally or to the school. The most heartfelt responses concerned how the habits have helped them to deal with social problems. Specific responses were:

- "TLIM helps me calm myself down so I can deal with my sister."
- "The special education student in our class used to be mean, [but] now is nice because the kids in our class have a way to remind her how to behave."
- "Everyone has a leadership role – each year you apply for a role (some are better than others). If you are a leader you have to be open and give each of these roles a chance. You learn to use the 7 Habits to stay cool and get what you want."
- "The change has been bigger for the teachers. They are really looking for the [ways we use the] 7 Habits and are more encouraging with us."
- "Kids are making new relationships with more kids [who] you might not have been friends with before the 7 Habits."

- "Feeling more confident helps you find the strength to deal with mean people. It helps us to make better choices. The energy goes to being great not good. This has been harder for 4th and 5th graders because they have not had as much time with TLIM."

Students were less certain that TLIM was improving their academic achievement. Several comments, however, reflected indirect impacts in improving learning strategies:

- "TLIM helps with time management and with making relationships for a lifetime."
- "It helps me with goals. We write them down, write about our goals, and then we talk about our goals."

Most important impacts. Three students volunteered responses, two concerning the positive impacts of developing leadership skills and one a personal problem at home:

- "TLIM helps to develop my self-confidence so I can be a leader. I was bad in 3rd grade, ok in 4th grade, and now in 5th grade I am a leader."
- "Having a leadership role for everyone is important."
- "I can better deal with my bossy sister since this helps me with knowing what I want to be."

What is not liked about TLIM. In response to this direct question, students struggled to identify any dislikes. One ended the silence by saying, "It's all positive." Another volunteered that TLIM seemed "babyish" at first, but now his "eyes are open." Reactions to prior questions, however, conveyed that, despite the perceived success and helpfulness of the program, there

were still behavior problems in the school and a cohort of students who did not practice the habits well or fully in dealing with others. Estimates of the size of the latter ranged from 10% to 50% of the student population.

Favorite habits. When asked which habits were the most useful to them personally, students identified varied choices:

- Synergize – "Helps me with my little sister."

- Seek first to understand – "Knowing why someone is behaving badly is important – you don't always know unless you ask and listen."

- Sharpen the saw – "I have to take care of myself so I can be good in sports."

- Be proactive – "Because this one sums up all of the 7 Habits – do the right thing when no one is watching."

- Win-win – "The world is not always fair, but this habit helps to get things done even when it is difficult."

Student Focus Group: 3rd and 4th Graders

What TLIM means. In describing what TLIM meant to them, focus group respondents primarily emphasized the development of positive attitudes (e.g., "[It] means that you come to school with a positive attitude."). One student focused on the habit of being proactive, meaning that "you are prepared and ready to learn." Another mentioned concerns that "there are still lots of kids—especially young ones—who misbehave." "These children sometimes yell at teachers and don't care." TLIM was seen by this student as helping to improve these behaviors ("We have a tally sheet and they get a rating every day.")

How TLIM has been helpful. The following responses convey students' perceptions that the 7 Habits are most valuable in providing structure, order, and common words and meanings for guiding effective behaviors:

- "The 7 Habits help kids remember what to do and how to behave or else kids just wouldn't know what to do."
- "The poster is there so you can see it and you know what to do."
- "Using the terms helps – everyone has memorized the 7 Habits."

How they learned the 7 Habits. Students indicated that they learn the 7 Habits in multiple ways. One way is through direct teaching of the habits in their classes. Another is through stories that teachers read from TLIM books (e.g., "The teacher reads stories to us and we talk about the habits we see in the stories."). A third way is when teachers illustrate the habits when presenting lessons (e.g., "In math, we use habits to get organized and synergize."; "In history, we relate the behavior of the people or groups we are studying to the habits or the lack of the habits, such as, the explorers were sometimes greedy, the civil war involved people who did not first seek to understand."). A fourth involves spontaneous emphasis on the habits in connection with learning or social activities (e.g., "Teachers ask us to use our "synergy level voices" when we discuss things.").

Use of the habits at home. There was strong consensus by members of the focus group that the habits were used outside of school in interactions with parents, siblings, and friends. The major themes were exercising better work habits by being proactive, putting first things first, and sharpening the saw; and interacting collaboratively and positively with others by using the habits of win-win and synergy. Individual responses included:

- **"**We synergize when we play games. It helps us move through the levels quicker."

- "Taught our parents the habits; it helped them a lot."

- "I sharpen the saw at home. This helps me a lot. I take better care of myself now."

- "I get my homework done first and I am better organized."

- "We use 'win-win' to get chores done at home."

- "We use the habits to settle arguments with friends."

- "My parents read the book, 'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families'. First my dad read it, then my mom, and now we use it – less yelling."

What is not liked about TLIM. As with the fifth-grade focus group, students were hard pressed to identify any parts of TLIM that they didn't like. One student volunteered that she found the TLIM song "too babyish," adding that "the third graders here are synergizing to write a new song." A few others alluded to the need to ensure that all students, particularly older ones, are held accountable for learning and using the 7 Habits, and that the school rules are consistent with the 7 Habits and enforced.

Favorite habits. Interestingly, individual students collectively identified at least five of the habits as the most useful to them personally. Individual responses included:

- "Sharpen the saw – [It] provides balance, and if I take care of first things first, then I have more time to play."

- "Begin with the end in mind – I have a plan written down so that I can use my time well. I like setting goals. I know what I will do while I am at daycare and what I will do as soon as I get home from daycare so I will meet my goals."

- "Begin with the end in mind—I set goals to get good grades – I know what I need to do to go to college – I want to go to Duke."

- "Win-win – I use this with my friend when we can't agree but this helps us still work things out."

- "Synergize – No one is ever left out – everyone has a part."

- "Be proactive – Take charge of your own self before you take charge of anyone else. Take responsibility for yourself before you tell others what to do – instead, be a good model for others."

School Leadership Team Focus Group

School's involvement with TLIM. Several members of the Leadership Team explained that the principal and a member of the business community first became acquainted with TLIM. Because the faculty were interested in new strategies that would address both academics and character development, TLIM was next introduced (by the principal and community member) at a Leadership Team meeting. The TLIM book ("The Leader in Me") was circulated among school leaders and some teachers and parents, after which small "book chats" began.

Due to the passing of the former principal and guidance counselor, the school was suffering. It had not made AYP and the student population was becoming increasingly socioeconomically disadvantaged. As one team member put it, "We needed something that would make us a family again. This [TLIM] is a good way of living." Another added that, ""The

book sharing was a gentle way to spread this idea. Business partners bought books for the faculty."

Focus group members concurred that the timing for adopting TLIM was just right. While some teachers believed that finding TLIM (at such an ideal time) was serendipitous, there was awareness in the focus group of the principal's role and skill in "gently" orchestrating the initiation to TLIM. There was general agreement that it was beneficial to have someone new to their community introduce an innovative idea.

Next, the idea was spread to families using "cottage meetings" in which 15 to 20 parents were invited to a teacher's or community member's home to learn about TLIM. A primary goal of the meetings was to raise funds toward the $35,000 needed to adopt TLIM, but related interests were to discuss the initiative and identify strategies that could be used to launch it. According to one respondent, "We [as teachers and leaders] decided that it was time to stand up for what was right." The concept was supported by the school community, but it took time to raise the funds and make a final decision. Four weeks after the cottage meetings were held, the first check came in.

What made the initiative work? The focus group members viewed TLIM as different from other "programs" that had come and gone in the past. One distinguishing factor was the perception that TLIM would not greatly increase demands on teachers or interfere with current teaching approaches that were working. Another important factor was teachers' genuine interest in the TLIM approach, professional development, and materials. Specific comments by individuals conveyed:

- **"**This [TLIM] was not seen as 'one more program, one more thing to do' by the teachers. It is not a character program; it is a way of doing things."

- "Teachers had 7 Habits Signature training for 3 days during their furlough days and yet they still had good attendance. Teachers did not feel that someone was telling them how to deal with their kids. They wanted more direction, yet they wanted to use the model in a way that fit their needs. Ultimately, this was the strength of the program and why it was adopted at SEES."

- "Implementation training occurred in November. This provided a boost, but still did not tell everyone what to do – just that the habits had to fit into their everyday lives before they could truly teach their students to use them."

- "The values (imparted by the 7 Habits) are strong and important. It is a myth that they will fix everything. But, wow, how we talk about them is so powerful."

Teacher support for TLIM. When asked what percentage of teachers are "on board" with TLIM, the principal voiced the opinion that "100% think it is the right thing to do and 80% are doing this with fidelity. We must keep this alive, yet 20% are still struggling." The group appeared to agree with that assessment, with one member offering, "Teaching is an art and a struggle, and as we all grow, people will know if this is for them."

What is most helpful? What needs improvement? Although the group appeared mostly satisfied with TLIM, there was a general consensus that the provider (FC) could provide more guidance and support from a communications and networking standpoint. Respondents also discussed strategies and challenges associated with preparing faculty, particularly new teachers, for implementing TLIM. Specifically, focus group members responded that:

- "The [TLIM] website could be helpful, but is not as user friendly as it could be."

- "Webinars and networking would help."

- "We have done some Skypeing with other schools who are interested in the program. By talking and presenting to others, we have to process our thoughts about our own implementation. It is a good learning experience for us and for the other schools. We will do more of this." [The implicit message appeared to be the school needed to initiate such networking, which otherwise might be facilitated by FC.]

- "The principal will need to have something to offer everyone on the staff at different levels of implementation."

- "New teachers need to be brought aboard and prepared. Kids teach [the 7 Habits] best. There is a certification team that can help teachers move forward in their implementation. The Lighthouse Team is 7 Habits certified so they can now begin to train others."

- "The chamber of commerce is holding trainings for community members and this has opened up some slots for new teachers to get training."

- "The outside (FC) coach helps – builds ties between the school and the program."

Outcomes of TLIM. The group was first asked about perceived impacts on school climate. There was strong agreement that the influences were extremely positive. Among the specific effects were creating greater acceptance of everyone in the school; serving as an anchor for behavior and attitudes; providing a common language, clear expectations, and common values; and making everyone more aware of other people and their needs.

A second potential impact examined was increasing students' motivation and confidence. Focus group members concurred that students were more likely than in the past to take charge of themselves and assume leadership roles. One teacher referred to the data notebooks making students more aware of and accountable for their own learning. Another said, "Students don't get told their grade, they know it." Additional responses included:

- "Kids seem more loving toward each other."
- "Teachers are more likely to point out what is good in kids."
- "Not there yet. But strong to moderate use of the habits prevails and this is making more students and adults more aware of the need to increase the positive ways in which they relate to others, improve the level of communication in class."
- "Teachers need to get better at how they use the habits in their own lives before they can really teach/model for the students."

When asked about academic impacts, focus group members expressed the view that it was too early and that such outcomes would occur over time. Several indicated anecdotally that they personally had seen students who, because of TLIM, have improved their behavior, allowing for greater academic achievement. If the school stays the course, school-wide academic improvement will become more evident.

There were varied reactions concerning TLIM impacts on communications and parent involvement. Attempts have been made to make parents more aware of TLIM and the 7 Habits through packets sent home, newsletters, and school events. Many of the students report interactions at home involving the 7 Habits, including efforts to teach them directly to their

parents. Thus, parent awareness is increasing but involvement with the school hasn't yet substantially changed.

Focus group members voiced agreement that TLIM has improved the quality of their work as teachers. One factor has been enabling teachers to use more specific and shared language with students regarding expected behaviors instead of using general verbal pleas, such as "be nice". Self-practicing of the 7 Habits also helps teachers to develop more positive attitudes, even on days when they feel frustrated. An example is "sharpening the saw," which reminds teachers that they, too, need to remain mentally and physically healthy. Given the stresses of the present standards-based environment, TLIM reminds the teachers "to celebrate the small successes" and focus on developing students beyond what they score on accountability tests.

Needed improvements. The focus group responses conveyed overall satisfaction with TLIM. As conveyed earlier in the session, there was consensus that FC could make its website more helpful and facilitate networking both between them (FC) and schools and between schools. The TLIM materials (e.g., books) were viewed positivity. At the local level, the group expressed worries about what will happen to current 5th graders when they go to middle school. They indicated uncertainties about the degree to which there needs to be ongoing explicit instruction and practice of the 7 Habits or if learning them in early grades is sufficient. Focus group members were split about how to continue TLIM beyond fifth grade, but agreed that it must continue. Middle and high school students need to use the habits on their own and continue to share them with others.

Sustainability of TLIM. Although no one could be certain about the future, there was overall optimism about the sustainability of TLIM, even if the current principal left the school (which was not anticipated any time soon). The group believed that sustainability would be supported by keeping the certification team up-to-date and informed, ensuring the preparation of new teachers, and making Leadership Day a quality event with high parent and community participation. In general, the strong commitment to TLIM by the students and community members were viewed as significant factors for ensuring longevity. One team member, in considering the implications of TLIM not being continued at the school, captured in a succinct and light vein the extensive investment already made: "There would be a lot of classroom redecorating to do."

Lighthouse Team Focus Group

The Lighthouse Team is composed of teachers and staff whose goal is to position SEES for qualification by FC for "Lighthouse" status based on the quality of its TLIM program and leadership.

Why TLIM was selected. The initial question asked the focus group the reason for selecting TLIM given that so many educational programs are available. A team member quickly replied that TLIM is not really a "program" but rather a culture and set of ideals and practices for children and adults. TLIM was viewed as a way of helping children to "build on themselves" and not "one more thing" for the school to do [but an essential component of the school's approach].

In response to a follow-up question about how TLIM got started at SEES, the team reiterated the history that was described by the prior groups; i.e., the principal and the

community member first learning about TLIM and introducing it to the Leadership Team. In general, responses reinforced the idea that the faculty had been feeling frustration about the current emphasis [from NCLB] on boosting test scores as the primary goal of education. Accordingly, there was high receptivity, especially given the low morale due to the loss of the two revered school leaders, to an approach that would promote the development of "the whole child." Isolated comments indicated:

- "[The initiative] began as a book study and built on that."

- "The school was in a tough place – really needed a boost."

- "This provided a common vocabulary."

- "Children would be treated as more than a test score."

- "Knew kids were missing the soft skills; these [habits] make them shine."

- "Older teachers know that this was needed; younger teachers need to know."

Teachers' implementation needs for TLIM. The focus group's responses described TLIM as fairly easy for teachers to implement relative to programs that had been adopted in the past. As described by one respondent, "At first they wanted lesson plans. This was a big struggle because they did not want a 'prescription,' yet they wanted to know how to do this, and what to do to make it work." Another indicated that teachers found it easy to integrate the 7 Habits into literature discussions and social studies lessons.

From that point in the session, the responses turned toward training and professional development issues. Although the initial training and the FC consultant were viewed as effective, team members agreed that additional ongoing support would be helpful to increase fidelity of implementation. As one respondent put it, "You can't have too much of this outside

support." As with the Leadership Team, this group was less satisfied with the TLIM website, indicating that "links to sample lessons are not working properly, uploading and sharing one's lessons is not working." One team member suggested that the website "should be designed to help with specific issues such as how to improve the use of data notebooks at each grade level. Right now there is only one generic example and the faculty would like to understand how to refine the use of data as students mature." Interest in further training was expressed with regard to (a) holding class meetings, (b) best uses of leadership journals and data notebooks, (c) assisting students in setting personal and academic goals, and (d) helping new teachers with implementing TLIM.

Perceived outcomes. The focus group first reflected on school climate changes, which they viewed as highly positive. Team members agreed that the students have "accepted the language" of TLIM and see themselves much more than in the past as responsible for solving their own problems. An important component of the school climate improvements, also voiced by the students, was teachers having more positive attitudes toward the students, in part, due to learning and practicing the 7 Habits themselves.

When asked about TLIM's effects on student confidence, the strong consensual view was that it and self-esteem had increased. There was less certainty, however, that motivation had changed demonstrably.

Effects on quality of teaching. The Lighthouse Team agreed that TLIM had improved the quality of teaching at SEES, and offered a number of illustrations:

- "Teachers seem to believe (at least some of them) that this is helping to shape the future of their community, therefore teaching is more enjoyable."

- "Discipline referrals are down, which helps [teachers]."

- "It is easier [to teach] when the students take on more of the mundane classroom tasks."

- "When teachers learn to use the 7 Habits in their own lives, they are better people first and better teachers second."

- "It is much more rewarding to see how much more self-aware students are of their own strengths and successes."

Suggested improvements. Due to the high satisfaction of the group with TLIM, only one suggestion for improvement was offered: professional development should emphasize more how deeply you have to understand the foundational principles and the habits before you jump into *The Leader in Me* model. In the opinion of the focus group, the habits should come *after* you learn about things like paradigm shifts, deposits, and withdrawals, etc. Knowing these principles makes the habits more meaningful[1].

Teacher support and sustainability. This focus group was more confident and assertive than others in communicating what members believed to be extremely high, almost unanimous support by faculty (95% was the suggested level) for TLIM and very limited concern that TLIM would not be sustainable for many years if they (the Lighthouse Team) remained active and committed.

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[1] In fact, the 7 Habits are introduced following training on paradigm and conceptual changes in a school. This was part of the training at SEES, but apparently not recognized by this respondent.

Parent Focus Group

A total of 9 parents, having differing histories and present degrees of involvement with SEES and TLIM in particular participated in the focus group. The parents were upfront in describing themselves as more active in supporting the school than are typical parents.

How TLIM got started and what it brings. The parents reiterated the history of TLIM, as described in other focus group summaries above. However, they placed particularly strong emphasis of the effectiveness of the principal and some community members in introducing TLIM in a very informative and sensitive manner ("with style and grace") that motivated the school community to want to proceed and "take the risks necessary." What attracted parents then and remain as important now is TLIM's emphasis on developing each child's personal growth and life skills as a supplement to the regular academic focuses of the school. Specific comments included:

- "This is a way to capitalize on each child's strengths and a way that each child can be the leader of him or herself."
- "TLIM incorporates some basic skill sets – life skills – that they will use forever."
- "Simple, basic values we taught our child [are taught]; now everyone at school is doing this, and they [students] are now in charge of themselves. They are more likely to make the right choices for themselves."
- "We love that it is incorporating basics such as accountability and confidence. Schools have drifted away from this."
- "Now we have a common language with the business community. My child will be able to talk the language of business."

- "TLIM plants a seed – curiosity ensues – what is a leader and how is it in me? This helps children to think about if you are going to do something great, you are going to have to put yourself out there. It is important for students to learn this when they are young and willing to try [too late in high school]. Bad habits must be overcome. We see [in my business] that young workers are not motivated nor do they put themselves out there as leaders."

TLIM impacts. The initial prompt referred to possible TLIM impacts on school climate. One respondent viewed TLIM as improving climate, but believed that the school has always been a "hospitable place" and, therefore, changes were less observable. Another parent volunteered that TLIM was helpful especially in "putting a positive spin on discipline." She added that instead of hearing reprimands from teachers, positive language and speaking with (not at) children is now much more common across the building. A third described observing "noticeable improvement" in children's behavior and that students are being more polite and generous in helping others.

Noting that the focus group consisted of all Caucasians and one Asian American, we inquired about the impacts of TLIM, if any, on racial integration within the school. The parents felt that TLIM helped in general, but were non-committal about specific impacts. However, the Asian American parent expressed the view that a subtle form of discrimination still exists. It was agreed that racial interactions can be quite complex and that it was still was unclear whether TLIM is making a difference.

There was much stronger consensus that TLIM is helping students gain motivation and self confidence. One contribution was identified as increased practice in setting goals and

thinking ahead. Another was the increase in opportunities to speak in public. One parent focused on learning from mistakes, saying, "It is empowering to students to see that doing the right thing is commended, and that if they see someone doing the wrong thing, they can do something about it." A second parent discussed the effects on her own child: "My 5th grader has changed completely. He was very shy, but now he is not afraid to speak up, make things right." Another parent expressed the belief that developing these skills and attitudes in elementary school would make a difference when the students were in high school.

When asked whether TLIM was helpful to students in getting along with others and resolving conflicts, parents offered a number of positive explanations:

- "Yes, it takes time to come to this kind of a solution but they are learning."
- "My child now interacts with others with disabilities with more tolerance, more than I would have had at that age or even now."
- "They are learning that it is safe to communicate and to listen."
- "They are learning how to talk to each other with respect, make good eye contact, etc."

There was less certainty about the effects of TLIM on academic achievement. In general, parents viewed the 7 Habits as fostering the development of positive learning skills and attitudes. As one parent put it, "first things first [has an] obvious connection to homework and schoolwork." Other responses noted that when behavior was good in school, teachers had more time to focus on academics. One parent suggested that the data notebooks were valuable in teaching students to set goals and to try to achieve them. Additional responses shifted away from academics toward parents' high regard for the teachers and their caring attitudes, and the important role that the quarterly award ceremonies played in celebrating each student's success.

Effects on parent involvement. There was general agreement that TLIM was viewed

positively by parents, but that the degree of involvement with the school depended much more

on personal factors, such as home responsibilities, work commitments, and free time. One parent

noted that the difficult economic times have forced her to take a part-time job, which was

reducing her availability to come to school. Suggestions for increasing parent involvement

included orienting invitations to come to school around learning the 7 Habits rather than just

volunteering, and continuing to send information about the 7 Habits home in newsletters.

Sustainability. For the most part, the parents expressed confidence that TLIM had strong

sustainability. They believed that that parents, students, and teachers were supportive of TLIM,

making it less dependent on the principal alone. One parent pointed out that TLIM had caused a

"culture change," which would be difficult to remove. Another reinforced this idea from the

perspective of individuals by saying, "The rewards that one gets from these habits will continue

these practices." Parents seemed confident that TLIM would continue at SEES, but were

concerned about what would occur in middle school if TLIM were not adopted there. They

ended the focus group on the hopeful note that even if the middle school didn't have TLIM, "Our

children can be shining examples to others."

Student Achievement Trends

In this section of the report, we examine student achievement outcomes in Reading and

Mathematics at SEES on the state assessment prior to and following the school's adoption of

TLIM in 2010-11. Clearly, it would be premature to evaluate TLIM in any way based on these

results. The 2010-11 scores represent performances assessed only about seven months after

TLIM was first introduced to SEES students. The results, therefore, are presented primarily for

the purpose of creating a more complete profile of SEES over the past four years.

Mathematics

Four-year outcomes in Mathematics on the state assessment are depicted in Figure 1. The pattern reflects fairly comparable performances by SEES, the school district, and the sate across all four years. In 2007-08, SEES scored virtually the same as the district and state. In the subsequent three years, SEES trailed the district by 6, 2, and 5 percentage points, respectively, while exceeding the state by 2, 8, and 7 percentage points, respectively.
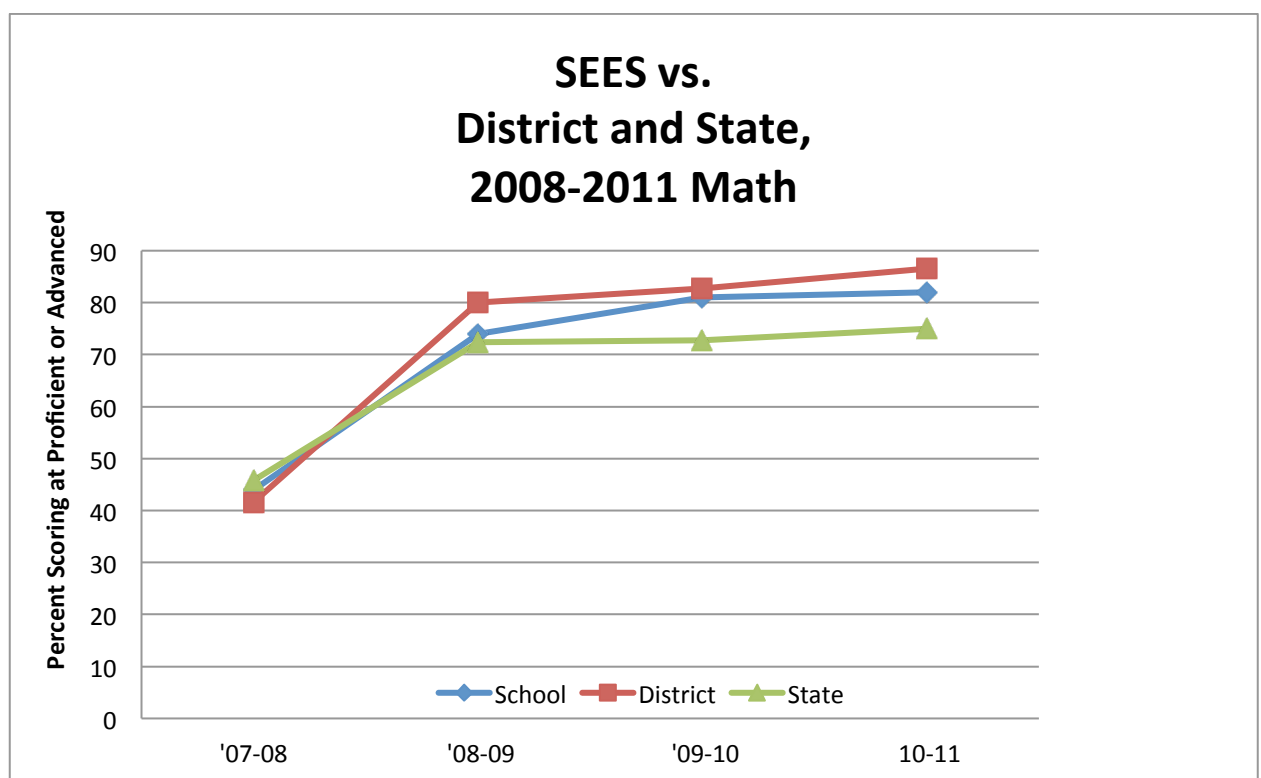

Figure 1. Percentage of students achieving proficient or advanced status in Mathematics on the state assessment.

Note: TLIM was initiated in the fall of 2010-11.

English/Language Arts (ELA)

Similar to the Mathematics results, the pattern for ELA reflects slight advantages for SEES relative to the state and even smaller disadvantages relative to the district. Across the four years, SEES surpassed the state by 7, 5, 6, and 2 percentage points, while surpassing the district by 1 point in 2007-08 with deficits of 1, 4, and 6 percentage points over the next three years. Thus, although the declines are very small, 2010-11 was the least favorable year normatively for SEES, although the percentage scoring proficient or advanced still remained above 80%.
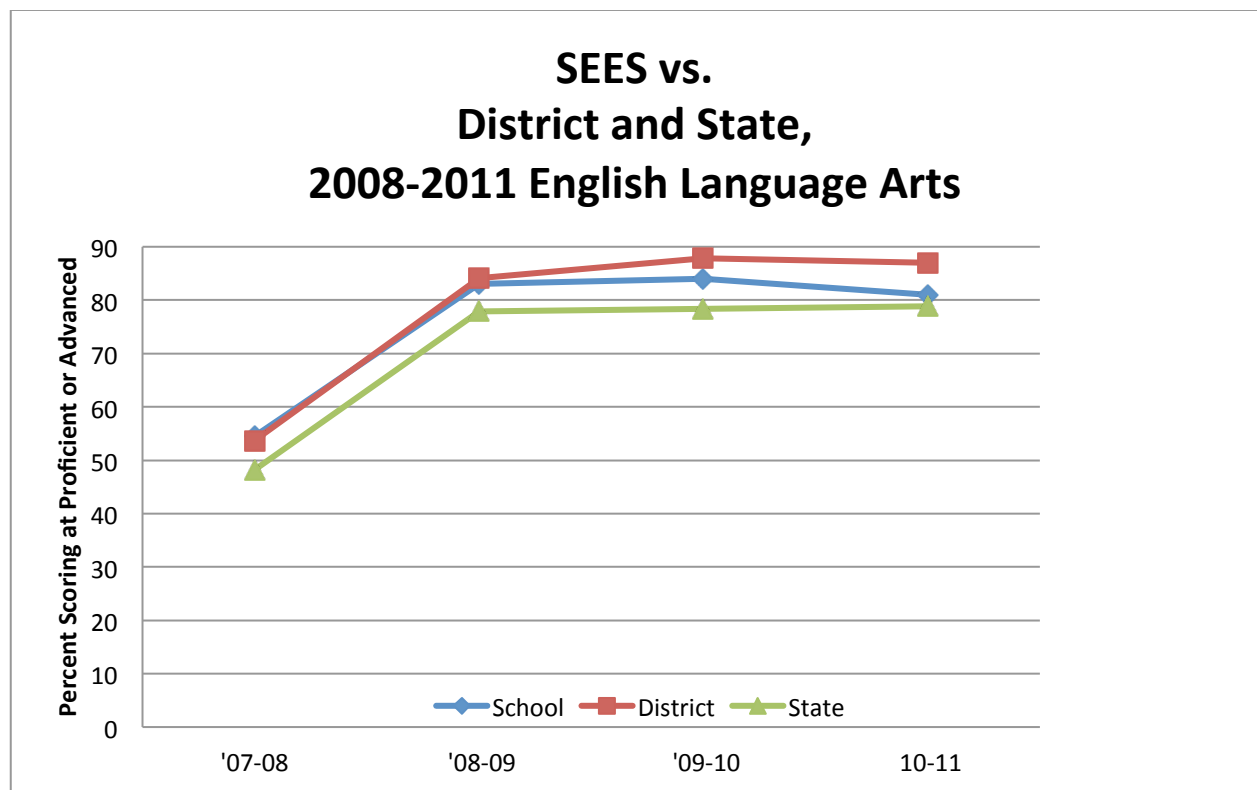

**SEES vs.
District and State,
2008-2011 English Language Arts**

Y-axis: Percent Scoring at Proficient or Advanced (0–90)

X-axis: '07-08, '08-09, '09-10, 10-11

Legend: School, District, State

Figure 2. Percentage of students achieving proficient or advanced status in English/Language Arts on the state assessment.

Note: TLIM was initiated in the fall of 2010-11.

West Coast Elementary School (WCES)

Case Study Context

The researchers found the school environment to be extremely inviting for both children and adults. The school is located on a moderately busy residential street in a mixed socioeconomic but well-maintained and reportedly safe neighborhood, largely populated by families of Asian descent. At first glance, from across the street, the school gave a very modest appearance and seemed much too small to accommodate the approximately 660 students enrolled. However, on exploring the building, the deepness of the facility and the ample classrooms and outside play areas (including an extremely large playground and field) became evident. The halls and classrooms were brightly decorated, displaying students' work and achievements, and reinforcing the 7 Habits. At the time of our visit, approximately 20 volunteers, mostly managers, from the local Panda Express restaurants were on the grounds planting flowers and shrubs as a community service to the school. Panda Express is a community partner that initiated local interest in TLIM in 2008-09 by funding the initial professional development exposure, provided by FC trainers, to teachers and staff. As we walked around the facility, the students were extremely polite and friendly (compared to what we have seen at other, non-TLIM schools), greeting and welcoming us to the school and their classrooms.

WCES is a neighborhood school; if a parent wants his/her child to attend from out of district, the child must get released from the home district and there must be available space. The school currently has a waiting list. The 660 students who are enrolled at WCES are in grades K-6 and 28 regular teachers are employed. The student population is highly disadvantaged, with 84% qualifying for free or reduced-price meals. More than half (56%) are English Language

Learners. Asian/Pacific Islanders (63%) and Hispanics (34%) account for almost the entire

student population. The remainder of the students are Caucasian and there are no African

Americans.

<p align="center">*Focus Group and Interview Results*</p>

Principal Interview

The interview began with a review of the principal's background. This was his third year

as principal at the school. He grew up in the district, attended district schools, and taught in the

district. He previously worked as a migrant education coordinator for six years. His major

responsibilities in that position included tracking the academic achievement of the migrant

students and initiating interventions for them.

How TLIM was introduced to the school. According to the principal, TLIM began in

2008-09 with optional training for teachers, which was supported by Panda Express. Only a few

teachers opted to attend. A subsequent training was mandated for all teachers and,

encouragingly, teachers were positive about what they learned about TLIM. The first year was

"more like a pilot; some teachers used the 7 Habits in their lessons and shared with other

teachers the success they were having." Teachers who were struggling with implementation

visited classrooms that were experiencing success. To increase exposure of the school

community to TLIM, the school hosted an open house at the church next door. The principal

characterized the event as a "mini-Leadership Day with Power Point presentations by students."

It was a huge success and about 1000 people attended.

Reflecting on the school culture and the strong union presence in the district, the

principal emphasized the importance of having unanimous (100%) teacher buy-in to TLIM, or "it

won't work." As a new principal in 2008-09, he was aware of the revolving door of former

principals coming and leaving, about one every two years. He saw no strong traditions at the school, no real identity. The school appeared to be dispirited and stagnating. Test scores were adequate but not the highest in the district. Still, he saw "a good school with good teachers."

He personally became acquainted with TLIM through the superintendent's interest. Following the initial trainings and exposure to TLIM, teachers with seniority came on board. He and most of the staff saw potential for positively changing the culture of the school.

Reasons for implementing TLIM. As a continuation of his responses to the prior question on background events, the principal identified multiple reasons for why TLIM was considered a good fit for the school:

- TLIM creates a common language, kids know the language.

- School has issues – a high percentage of low SES students and a large ELL population (whose needs, in his opinion, TLIM had the potential to address).

- Given the lack of consistency in administration (a new principal every 2-3 years), TLIM could help to establish a solid foundation and common culture.

- As a new principal, he was asked by teachers, "What are you going to bring in?" Thus, there was an expectation for change.

- The goal was to make the school where you want your own children to attend (and TLIM seemed likely to further that goal).

- TLIM provides teachers an opportunity to be creative.

- It is not a curriculum; it is embedded with existing curriculum (and thus, would not require changing teaching methods and lessons that were working). "Teachers can incorporate the 7 Habits into daily lessons."

- TLIM develops the potential of children by giving them responsibilities, such as

introducing their teachers at back-to-school night and public speaking.

As an aside from describing the school's reasons for adopting TLIM, the principal mentioned that implementation has been successful and there has been positive media coverage. There is district-wide implementation of TLIM, but other schools are not at the same level as WCES. He believes that teacher acceptance of TLIM at WCES is extremely high—from 90-100%.

Professional development/support. The principal again described professional development as formally consisting of the initial three-day workshop that Panda Express sponsored. Subsequently, there has not been external training, but professional development does occur through the principal's support and encouragement of teachers' networking and sharing ideas. He indicated that "cross-grade collaboration now occurs," and that "teachers visit each other's classrooms for ideas regarding bulletin boards, etc." He noted, however, that while some teachers use FC materials, most do not. Presently, the training of new teachers is not an issue because the staff is very stable and there are no new teachers in the district due to budget restraints. All teachers in the school were trained when TLIM was introduced.

According to the principal, the "TLIM spirit is kept alive" in several ways. Surprise visits by the local TLIM representative in association with WCES's efforts to achieve Lighthouse status keep teachers engaged. Preparing for Leadership Day also energizes the staff. Still, the principal would like to see more structured professional development, feeling that it would boost morale.

Impacts of TLIM. With regard to student behavior, the principal attributes partly to TLIM, the reduction in suspensions from 35 in the year before he became principal, to 18 in his first year, 7 in his second year, and only 4 in his third year. This year, there are no suspensions

thus far (through early December).

He also noted that test scores have gone up and discipline referrals have gone down. Generally, these outcomes are perceived as due to TLIM and other positive changes in the school.

Community involvement. The principal seemed especially proud of increased involvement of the community with the school, some attributed directly to TLIM and some generally associated with TLIM and other changes. His specific responses noted that:

- Panda Express is a funder of the school (and funder/supporter of TLIM). (As previously noted, on the day of the interview, approximately 20 volunteers from Panda Express were planting trees and flowers at the school in a beautification project.)

- Two students from each grade level are chosen annually for a formal Christmas luncheon at Panda Express headquarters. Teachers select these students based on meeting set by Panda Express.

- The school supports a monthly clothing and school supply drive in conjunction with local women's groups

- There are annual events now scheduled at the school, like Open House and Back to School Night.

- Kiwanis Club support provides a book for every student every year; distributed at an annual reading day event.

Suggested improvements of TLIM. The principal acknowledged the challenges of sustaining new programs, and indicated that ensuring high-fidelity implementation of TLIM would continue to be a priority at the school. Aside from the professional development activities mentioned earlier, he tries to deepen the faculty's commitment to TLIM by sending (with

Panda's support) different teachers to A. B. Combs Elementary School in North Carolina (the first and most advanced TLIM program in the U.S.) to review their program. He continues to encourage within- and across-grade collaboration by teachers. More uniquely, he actively attempts to buffer teachers from district directives that might interfere with TLIM. Overall, he is optimistic that TLIM will have strong staying power despite the typical challenges of sustaining programs over time.

PTA President Interview

The PTA President was a parent of two daughters enrolled in the school and was highly active with school activities during the past several years.

Personal knowledge of TLIM. He became acquainted with TLIM by reading *The Leader in Me* and participating in an initial training session sponsored by Panda Express. He described TLIM as "a great journey for me" in the sense of gaining many useful insights from the 7 Habits, both personal and connected with school events. In his opinion, the school's adoption of TLIM unequivocally has been beneficial to children, the teachers, and the school community in general. While vague on specific reasons that the school adopted TLIM, he believed that the values and teachings of the 7 Habits were needed at the time as a supplement to academic focuses. TLIM seemed to be the right program at the right time.

Children's understanding of the concepts. His perception was that the habits "made more sense" in the upper grades than in the lower grades. That is, older students understood them more abstractly whereas younger students related them to the behaviors and choices of characters in TLIM-related stories. In relation to his own children, he stated, "My kids don't pick-up on all

of the habits, only one or two, but subconsciously they are learning all of them, and they will come out later on in life."

Impacts of TLIM. The PTA president believed that a primary effect of TLIM was on building students' self-confidence "by being a leader; the leader role rotates and every child gets to be a leader." He was less certain about effects on academics but believed that to the extent students were more confident and motivated, learning and achievement would improve over time.

Concerns about TLIM. Given his highly favorable attitude toward TLIM and the school overall, he had no concerns about the program. However, from a broader perspective, he was dissatisfied with parent involvement at the school, indicating, "We don't have the participation I would like; it is always the same group of parents volunteering." Although a core group of parents pitched in with fundraising, it was still challenging to raise the money needed on a "day-to-day" basis. One barrier, in his opinion, was the many different cultures and languages represented at the school. His general perception was that teachers were having to do more with fewer resources. On a positive note, he added, "There have been 2-3 sessions on the 7 Habits for parents, in different languages, and these are well attended."

Concluding comments. In recapping his impressions (he was running late for work), he noted that the principal was, in his opinion, the primary catalyst for TLIM working well and the school moving forward. Key factors were the principal's personality and interest in advancing the school with technology. He was optimistic that the principal would remain at the school long enough to build a solid foundation for continuance of TLIM (and other positive changes).

Grade 6 Student Focus Group

What TLIM involves. Initial questions asked students to describe TLIM and how it

affects them. Responses were varied but the dominant themes were practicing the 7 Habits and engaging in leadership activities. Overall, the 7 Habits were viewed as making school more enjoyable, and particularly "safe and happy." Respondents described their own uses of the 7 Habits in dealing more respectfully and effectively with classmates. One commented that there was no bullying in the school as a result. Another volunteered that the habits are continually taught by his teacher in connection with lessons and stories. As a reversal of more accustomed roles, several students indicated that they, in turn, taught their parents and siblings the 7 Habits. "It's part of our vocabulary," one said.

Impacts of TLIM. The next series of questions prompted students on whether TLIM was beneficial in certain ways. First, students strongly agreed that the school was a more comfortable and safer place because of TLIM. Specific habits identified as being helpful were win-win, put first things first, and synergize.

The group also concurred that leadership and self-confidence were fostered through TLIM and the 7 Habits. Specific responses were:

- "We are all leaders."

- "The whole school is a leader."

- "It [TLIM] builds confidence, like during open house we speak to the parents."

- "It teaches respect by other kids for kids."

- "It is supportive of us."

Positive effects on getting along with classmates and classroom behavior were also noted, with particular reference to "win-win" as an effective habit. On the academic side, there was clear consensus that TLIM was helpful for becoming better students. Specific illustrations included:

- "We put first things first, like do homework first."

- "It [TLIM] reminds kids to do class work versus talking."

- "It teaches us to synergize when we work in groups."

- "It teaches us to seek to understand."

In response to a prompt regarding the effects of TLIM on the way teachers interacted with them, several students expressed positive views indicating that teachers were more respectful and were practicing the 7 Habits themselves. For example, one student said, "When they [teachers] use the 7 Habits, they can solve problems with kids who don't want to learn." Two other respondents conveyed the idea that when students practiced the 7 Habits (such as being proactive and taking charge of their own learning), they earned respect from teachers.

What students like most and least about TLIM. The group identified four aspects of TLIM as most liked: (a) learning what you need to do (i.e., how to behave and act), (b) building self-confidence, (c) the rules are "kid friendly" (not as strict as other programs), and (d) respecting teachers and being respected in return. When asked what they didn't like about TLIM, the students said "nothing" -- everything is covered in the 7 Habits. The only improvement that anyone could think of was to add more stories to TLIM.

Most and least favorite habits. Two habits were identified by students as their favorites: (a) sharpen the saw in order to achieve balance and (b) start with the end in mind by having a plan and organization. Only one student offered a least favorite habit: "First things first; I want to go to sleep but my mom wants me to study."

Grade 4 Student Focus Group

Use of the 7 Habits. The group voiced strong agreement that they used the 7 Habits routinely and frequently. Their teachers discuss the habits and post them in the classrooms.

When asked to give more specific examples of how the 7 Habits are helpful to them, several respondents offered the following:

- "They help me a lot – I feel more self-confident."

- "They help me to be a good citizen: be polite, respectful, helpful."

- "They encourage other people [to try harder, to be nicer]."

Effects on school safety. There was a clear consensus in the group that TLIM made the school a safer and more welcoming place. Interestingly, students' responses explained the effects from the perspective of leadership, emphasizing the theme that good leaders behave properly and respectfully (therefore, the school is very safe).

Effects on leadership. Continuing with the leadership theme, students were asked to discuss in greater detail what leadership meant and involved for them as part of TLIM. Responses included being polite, helping one to keep trying, helping others, and to have manners. One respondent explained that leadership roles are assigned every other week to students. Examples include door person, technician (computers), attendance taker, back pack arranger, and table leader (in charge of homework).

Effects of TLIM. Despite their enthusiasm for TLIM, students did not feel that the program had much effect on increasing their interest in school and academics. On the other hand, they believed that by using the 7 Habits, they were able to get along much better with their classmates. They also agreed that, as a result of TLIM, their teachers were showing more interest in them. Exemplary responses were:

- "They respect you more."

- "When someone breaks a habit, the teacher talks about the habit and how to use it."

- "Some teachers use them [the 7 Habits] more than others."

What is liked most and least about TLIM. Although students discussed and gave positive examples of using the 7 Habits and TLIM in general throughout the session, when asked specifically to identify what they liked most about the program, they became absorbed with effects on visitors and events:

- **"**We have a lot of visitors to our school."

- "On Leadership Day, we get to dress up."

- "I introduced my teacher to the parents at back-to-school night—it makes me feel successful."

- "You can show visitors that you're respectful and a leader."

As occurred with the sixth-grade focus group, they were unable to identify any aspects of TLIM that they disliked or would change, with one student stressing the positives, "[TLIM] makes school a safer place; there is no bullying."

Parent Interview

Two female parents, both of whom were school PTA members, were interviewed together. Both were very familiar with the school and the neighborhood; one actually attended the school as a child. They described their knowledge of TLIM as being primarily connected to their children's participation in the program and what they had learned at PTA meetings and through volunteering at the school.

Why TLIM was adopted. Several reasons, mostly involving desirable attributes of the program, were given:

- To instill confidence so children will do well in school.

- It's very supportive of children.

- It creates a safe and nurturing environment; the school feels like a second home.

- It creates a sense of belonging.

- It teaches respect.

- The children genuinely care about each other and teachers genuinely care about the children.

- It teaches responsibility.

Children's understanding of the habits. Both parents agreed that the habits were easy for most children to understand. Understanding is fostered by the visual presence of the habits in posters and classroom displays. Another helpful factor is that the students "live by the habits" rather than just memorizing them. The students use the language of the habits at home and teach it to the parents.

Impacts of TLIM. The parents believed that school climate was positively affected by the teaching of values (self-discipline, responsibility, respect) that have been neglected in school curricula in recent years. TLIM enhances school climate by developing a culture of concern for others.

They also agreed that TLIM increases students' motivation and self-confidence. As one put it, "The confidence level is unreal." Other comments attributed some of the effect on students to the motivational teaching style of the teachers and particularly the involvement of the principal. One parent added that self-confidence is higher because it's a safe environment.

An improved ability by students to relate to others and solve interpersonal conflicts was also noted. One said, "You see a difference; they work with each other." The other indicated that "Regarding behavior, there is a sense of calm."

Parents also believed that TLIM was affecting academic achievement in positive ways. One way was an increase in motivation and taking the initiative to try (to learn). Another was

through increased self-esteem and confidence. A third was greater responsibility for homework completion.

Effects on parent and community involvement. The two parents expressed pride in the growth of the PTA but weren't certain about how much was due to TLIM specifically. According to one, "The school is getting more attention from businesses due to its Lighthouse status."

Effects on teacher interest and effectiveness. The parents lacked firsthand knowledge about the specific effects of TLIM on teachers. In general, they believed that TLIM was making teachers' work more rewarding and easier due to increased parent enthusiasm about the school and mutual support for TLIM by parents, teachers, and staff.

Most and least successful aspects of TLIM. Neither parent was able to identify any negative or less successful aspects of TLIM, perceiving that it was getting "better and better every year." Noted as positive aspects were the win-win and synergize habits, both of which emphasized working effectively with other people. In general, they appreciated that TLIM was bringing back values and teachings that they learned in school regarding how to behave and treat others. In concluding their responses, the parents described the importance of having an effective principal. Important qualities of the present principal were believing in and practicing the habits himself, having a strong interest in the children's futures, motivating teachers and parents, and "going the extra mile."

Teacher Interview

Two Kindergarten teachers, each with over 10 years' experience, were interviewed together. Both began by affirming that TLIM was better than any previous programs they had experienced, such as a character education curriculum. In particular, they regarded TLIM as

more engaging and provided everyone with a common language related to how to act and treat others. They added that the school previously had a high rate of principal turnover. This principal's commitment was noted to make a big difference in the school environment and the success of TLIM.

How TLIM was adopted. The teachers gave a brief history of the events that led to TLIM being adopted at WCES. As described in other focus groups, Panda Express offered voluntary trainings during the summer of 2009. Only about 2-3 teachers attended but were favorable about what they learned. A second, mandatory training was offered next. It, too, was very favorably received (in the words of one interviewee, "inspirational") and teachers were impressed to see TLIM working in videos and demonstrations. Allaying concerns that TLIM would be one more program to learn and possibly interfere with practices that were working, teachers discovered that it would easily blend with current teaching activities. As one interviewee described it, "You use what you already do and incorporate the language into your lessons." Students, in turn, internalize the language. Although there was some resistance, buy-in occurred over time.

Professional development needs. The teachers identified both positive aspects and needs relating to professional development. On the one hand, they believed that the initial training and the school Lighthouse Team provided good support for the majority of teachers. The principal was singled out as instrumental in this effort by being "enthusiastic, motivational, and proactive." A third positive factor was the ability and tendency of teachers to work together and share ideas. On the other hand, the need for increased PD opportunities, particularly of a formal nature (i.e., from FC) was acknowledged. Minimally, in their view, both old and new teachers would benefit from a refresher training every few years.

Impacts of TLIM. The teachers enthusiastically discussed ways in which TLIM has

improved school climate. They pointed to all the posters and signage throughout the hallways, offices, and classrooms communicating the school's identity as a TLIM school. This identity was seen as translating into greater school pride, inspiration, and sense of community. A second theme relating to school climate was developing more positive attitudes by students. As one teacher said, "There is positive reinforcement to being a leader, rather than negative feedback 'don't do this, don't do that'." Similarly, the teachers agreed that student motivation and confidence was being increased by "knowing the parameters and expectations" and having more structure and order for students with low self-esteem.

With regard to students' relationships with classmates, the teachers saw improvement due to increased awareness (fostered by the 7 Habits) of their own behaviors. Two habits that were viewed as especially influential were synergy and win-win.

Although the teachers were uncertain about effects on test scores, they believed that TLIM was helping students academically in several ways. One was being more focused and on-task. A second was through more positive behavior. A third was increased self-management ("The students are policing themselves.").

Parent involvement was not viewed as appreciably affected yet by TLIM. The two teachers perceived parents as being generally supportive, but one added "Some accept the program; others do not." Parents are kept somewhat informed about TLIM through a monthly newsletter that encourages practicing the 7 Habits at home.

Effects on teachers. Both interviewees conveyed that teachers were positively influenced by TLIM. Specifically, since the program has been introduced, there is more collaboration among teachers and teaching is easier due to established discipline and classroom rules.

What is most and least successful about TLIM. In identifying the most successful

aspects, the two teachers offered the following:

- "We're building a community."

- "Having the children take pride in their school."

- "It is school wide."

- "It helps bring together a diverse population."

The least successful components concerned the perceived need for more external

guidance and support for implementing TLIM:

- "The teacher website could be more helpful and more user-friendly."

- "We need more information and resources, such as graphics."

The principal's role. The concluding questions concerned the importance of principal

leadership for the success of TLIM. The teachers concurred that the present principal had a

major role in making TLIM accepted throughout the school community and effective for

students. One believed that in the absence of strong and supportive leadership, TLIM would

"deteriorate" in the school. In that regard, it seemed necessary for teachers to assume a more

active role. A positive factor is that the Leadership Team meets monthly with one teacher from

every grade level. Still, more could be done to ensure that the sustainability TLIM is not

dependent on a particular principal.

Student Achievement Trends

In this section, we examine student achievement outcomes in Mathematics and Language

Arts at WCES on the state assessment prior and following the school's adoption of TLIM in

2009-10. As we cautioned in presenting test results for SEES in the first case study, it would be

premature to evaluate TLIM based on these results. The 2010-11 scores represent performances

assessed in only the second year of TLIM implementation. If TLIM were an academically

oriented intervention, earlier effects might be anticipated. However, seemingly, the time required to progress from positive school climate and behavior changes to measurable gains in math and English/Language Arts would seem to take more than two or three years. The results, therefore, are presented primarily for the purpose of creating a more complete profile of WCES over the past four years.

Mathematics

Four-year outcomes in Mathematics on the state assessment are depicted in Figure 3. The results show that WCES was comparable to the school district in 2007-08, with both scoring considerably above the state. In 2008-09, WCES moved slightly ahead of the district while increasing its advantage over the state. In Year 1 of TLIM (2009-10), TLIM increased the percentage of students achieving proficient or higher by one percentage point (to 74%), while the district substantially declined (62%). However, in Year 2, the WCES advantage diminished to its smallest levels in three years, to 2 percentage points over the district and 10 over the state. Overall, these results show WCES to be performing reasonably well given the very high percentage of disadvantaged students (84% F/R lunch eligible), but do not reflect positive impacts associated with the TLIM implementation.
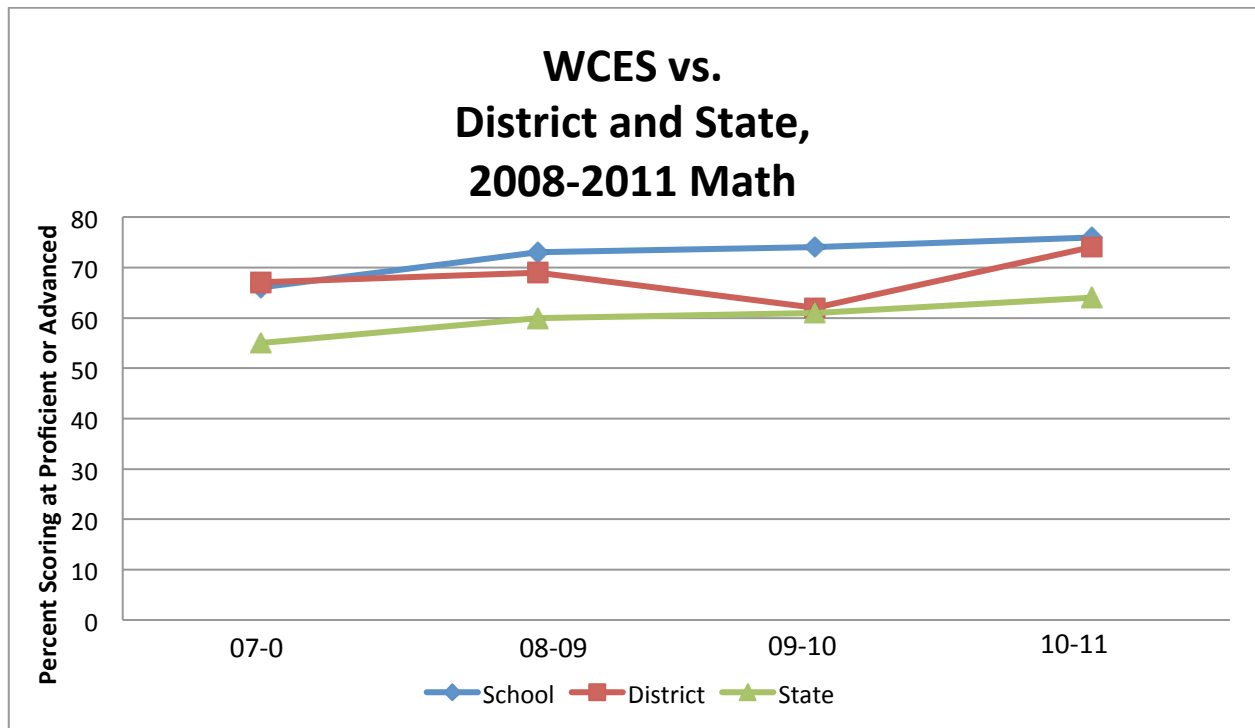
WCES vs. District and State, 2008-2011 Math

Figure 3. Percentage of students achieving proficient or advanced status in Mathematics on the state assessment.

Language Arts

Results for language arts essentially mirror those for mathematics. In 2008-09, WCES reversed a somewhat disappointing year in 2007-08 by outperforming both the district and state (58% proficient or advanced vs. 56% vs. 47%, respectively. While increasing its advantage slightly over the district in 2009-10, WCES declined normatively in 2010-11 by trailing the district by 2 percentage points and surpassing the state by only 5 percentage points (61% vs. 63% vs. 56%). Similar to the mathematics results, WCES is performing reasonably well in language arts considering its disadvantaged and high ELL student population, but lost ground to the district and state last year. The TLIM adoption in 2009-10 does not appear to have affected student achievement as measured by the state assessments.
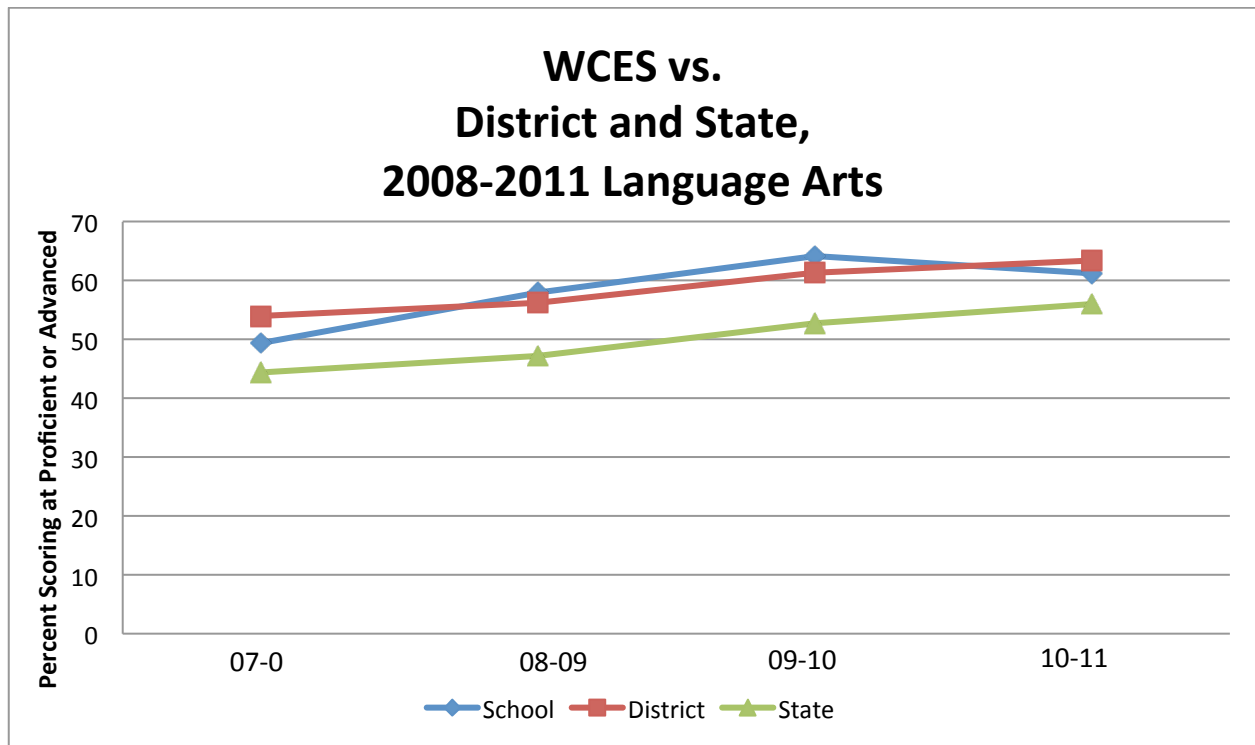
WCES vs.
District and State,
2008-2011 Language Arts

Figure 4. Percentage of students achieving proficient or advanced status in Language Arts on the state assessments.

Discussion and Conclusions

In this section, we discuss the findings from the two cases and offer conclusions related to the five evaluation questions. Before proceeding, however, it seems important to consider several properties of the research that seem influential in interpreting the meaning and implications of results. First, only two schools were visited, and both were in fairly early phases (years 2 and 3, respectively) of implementing TLIM. Second, the schools were selected purposively based on the perception by FC that they were "fast starters" in implementing TLIM. Third, both schools appeared to have strong and popular principals, a factor which we will discuss in sections below relative to the results obtained.

Questions 1 and 2: How is TLIM Being Used by Students and Teachers? What are the Implementation Components?

Our results indicate much similarity in how TLIM is used by students and teachers at each school. Unlike most curriculum-based programs, there is no prescribed set of lessons in TLIM. Thus, walking into a classroom in a TLIM school, one is unlikely to see a teacher-presented lesson on the 7 Habits. What will be observed both in the classroom and outside in the hallways are signs, banners, posters, and artwork that reinforce and celebrate the habits. What is likely to be heard is teachers and students intermittently using the language of TLIM (i.e., the 7 Habits) purposefully in the context of classroom activity and informal communications. Rather than being prescribed a lesson plan, teachers have autonomy to integrate TLIM with regular classroom instruction and management. Most, if not all, do this by discussing, modeling, and reinforcing the 7 Habits and leadership concepts in the context of lessons, stories, student play and academic activity, and responding to discipline problems. At SEES and, to a lesser extent, at

WCES, teachers use the FC materials to illustrate applications of the 7 Habits in stories. More frequently, they look for opportunities to highlight the 7 Habits while teaching regular lessons (e.g., discussing how an army general put first things first in planning for a battle). Nearly all students, it seems, readily learn and internalize the 7 Habits and develop a shared vocabulary in interacting with classmates and adults (e.g., "Let's synergize on the math assignment." "Kesha wasn't being proactive today.").   Accordingly, TLIM isn't a structured program with defined activities but rather a ubiquitous set of attitudes, behaviors, rules, and goals that permeate the culture of the school.

Other tangible activities are the assignment of leadership roles to all students. At SEES, each child in every classroom had a leadership role of some type (homework collector, door opener, attendance taker), whereas at WCES, the roles were assigned at the school level. Also at SEES, a "sand dollar" incentive program was used to assign tokens (sand dollars), which could be traded in for rewards, for practicing the 7 Habits. Some teachers employ daily or regular exercises that reinforce the habits, such as writing reflections in a journal of what the habits personally mean (an example at SEES).   Another component of TLIM, evident at both schools, is students' use of data notebooks to record personal and academic goals, and monitor progress toward them.

Leadership Day, which is held in the spring of each year, is a culminating activity that brings the entire school, as well as parents and community members, business partners, and often visitors, together to celebrate student progress and give students the opportunity to demonstrate leadership skills through planning and participating in public speaking and performances. Leadership Day appears to serve the essential purposes of reinforcing the school's identity as a TLIM school and in communicating to the broader community what TLIM is. For the students,

Leadership Day appears to provide a means of making the outcomes of the learning process more tangible. By planning and participating in the event itself students engage in a potentially powerful learning experience. When participating, they also receive feedback about what is valued from the larger community, whose attendance itself reinforces their activities and accomplishments.   Although it was only early December, the Lighthouse Team at WCES was already developing plans and assignments for its Leadership Day.

In general, TLIM is primarily observable in how students and adults interact with one another and in the very salient visible display of TLIM principles (e.g., inspirational quotations about leadership and respecting others) and the 7 Habits in particular. Although students and teachers were likely predisposed to some degree to be on "best behavior" for the case study visits, we have been in many schools under similar circumstances and perceived both of the TLIM schools as unusual with regard to how students presented and conducted themselves.

Question 3. What are Major Participants'/Stakeholders' Perceptions of TLIM's Impacts?

There was general agreement among all of those interviewed—teachers, principals, students, parents, and community members—regarding TLIM's major impacts. Without question, the strongest consensus was that TLIM positively improved school climate. For the teachers and principals, the main contributors to climate changes were improved student behavior and the establishment of a culture, guided by the 7 Habits, supporting respect and acceptance of others. An indirect effect was giving the school a prideful identity and unique sense of purpose. A result was increased collaboration among staff, which was further fostered by the Lighthouse Team and a highly supportive School Leadership Team. Both schools shared

these conditions and the experience of being the only one in their districts that was implementing TLIM at all (SEES) or fully (WCES).

Students translated the climate effects into feelings of increased order and security. Several noted explicitly that bullying was decreased because of classmates' exposure to the 7 Habits. With leadership roles came more explicit responsibility for behaving respectfully toward others and resolving rather than escalating conflicts (win-win was frequently mentioned as a strategy). There was also agreement among students in both schools that teachers, too, were nicer and more approachable as a result of practicing the habits.

A second clear impact of TLIM was developing students' self-confidence and motivation. Although we cannot determine what percentage of students were affected to what degree, we heard from both students and adults numerous explanations and concrete examples that indicated the following:

- Practicing the habits provide a sense of direction and responsibility, which are motivating and reinforcing.
- The TLIM "culture" stresses the recognition and fulfillment of one's potential rather than focusing on weaknesses.
- The prevailing attitude of accentuating the positive makes it important to try but acceptable to fail. There is less fear than in a typical school environment of being embarrassed or ridiculed in the wake of failure.
- Leadership roles, public speaking, and accountability (e.g., data notebooks) increase self-monitoring and self-confidence.

A third type of impact supported by the data was getting along better with others and resolving conflicts. Teachers, principals, and parents all agreed and gave examples illustrating how student behavior was improved. Specifically, they reported that there were fewer arguments, fights, disciplinary actions, and suspensions than in the past. Students discussed these effects concretely with reference to using particular habits purposively (primarily win-win, seek to understand, and synergize) to relate better with other children and adults.

A fourth impact was making teaching easier and more enjoyable. Given that we talked to only a sample of teachers at each school (and ones likely to be relatively positive and knowledgeable), we remain uncertain about the depth and breadth of such influences. Where they occurred, they seem directly attributable to the types of effects just described, i.e., students behaving better and accepting responsibility for their actions, overall climate improving, a new and improved school culture, and sense of order were developing around the 7 Habits.

Perceptions by students and adults offered positive but weaker support for the impacts of TLIM on student achievement. Interestingly, both the student and teacher focus groups noted the benefits of TLIM for increasing students' self-motivation, organization, and personal accountability for completing homework and class assignments. Frequently mentioned in this regard were the first three habits—being proactive, beginning with the end in mind, and putting first things first. Some students believed that their grades had improved as a result, but others felt uncertain. The consensus from teachers and the principals was that learning had in fact improved but not yet in a way that necessarily would be visible on the high-stakes state assessments. Other issues, such as learning English as a second language, overcoming achievement deficits, and dealing with socioeconomic disadvantages, comprised much more significant challenges to raising achievement.

Increasing parent involvement with the school remains a potential, but not fully realized, effect of TLIM at both schools. As conveyed by the teachers, principals, and parents who were interviewed, the reality is that parent involvement depends on factors much more influential than appealing school programs, such as work responsibilities, childcare, English language barriers, and past or perceived negative interactions with school in general. Still, concrete examples regarding increased parent interest in the school because of TLIM were offered. Leadership Day is one example, community involvement is another (very salient at both SEES and WCES), and the high natural appeal and common understanding of the 7 Habits and their potential to increase one's lifetime success to most adults is a third.

Question 4. What are Trends in Student Achievement?

SEES and WCES showed very similar patterns of student achievement. In both Mathematics and English/Language Arts, the two schools consistently outperformed the state but were comparable to their school districts. A global characterization that would seem to aptly capture their status would be "holding their own but not excelling." As we indicated in reporting the achievement results (see Figures 1-4) in prior sections, it is far too early to judge the impacts of TLIM on student achievement, given that the most recent assessments (2010-11) are associated with only the first year of TLIM implementation in SEES and the second year in WCES. However, within the four-year period examined, 2010-11 did not reflect normative growth for both schools.

Compared to academically-oriented intervention programs, TLIM is not designed to directly change curriculum or teaching methods. To the extent TLIM helps to build a positive school climate, however, it creates conditions in which teachers relate and communicate more

effectively to students, work more collaboratively with one another in planning and coordinating lessons, and spend less instructional time dealing with behavior issues. As supported strongly in the research literature, positive school climate thus serves as an important precondition for school improvement and effectiveness. At the same time, students are developing through the 7 Habits, improved self-management skills, confidence, motivation, and cooperativeness with peers and adults.

Based on these interpretations, positive effects of TLIM on achievement seem reasonable to hypothesize over time, but not likely to occur in the short run. Reinforcing this interpretation were responses by several teachers at each school emphasizing the importance of TLIM building character and teaching values that have been neglected in the contemporary era of achievement testing. Teachers believed that achievement would be positively impacted at some point, but such effects were not the main purpose of TLIM for them and the students anyway.

Question 5: What are the Program Strengths and Weaknesses and Recommendations for Improvement?

Our impression is that at both schools, the initial three-day training provided by FC is very well received by teachers and quite effective in not only launching TLIM but in developing good understanding of the concepts and associated practices needed for quality implementation. An additional impression is that after 1.5 years at SEES and 2.5 years at WCES, the implementations are proceeding well and generally strengthening, even though there has been no additional formal training by FC. These outcomes suggest that once a "critical mass" of teachers subscribe to the program in a context of strong principal and community support, TLIM is much more self-sustainable than are typical educational programs.

On the other hand, and as would be expected with any program, the degree of support and/or interest varied across teachers. An associated concern (compared to other educational programs) involves the degree to which the internal support provided by the school community (other teachers, parents, and other stakeholders) is sufficient to develop weaker implementers' interest and skills, and thereby maintain positive momentum for implementation fidelity and growth. At both of the case study schools, strong principal support and leadership skills appeared to be a critical factor in ensuring fidelity of implementation. We suspect that under weaker, less involved principal leadership, implementation and sustainability of TLIM would face much greater challenges.

Separate from principal leadership, a number of factors that appear to support implementation and sustainability, and therefore could be useful for other TLIM schools to consider, emerge from the case studies. These are:

- Introducing TLIM to a school in a gentle, inclusive way rather than in a top-down manner helps to create a positive foundation for faculty interest and buy-in.
- Community involvement develops wider and more stable "roots" for TLIM, which should make continuance of the program less dependent on particular school leaders.
- Opportunities for faculty to visit model TLIM schools (e.g., A. B. Combs Elementary Schools) increase their experiential knowledge and personal commitment.
- Once TLIM pervades the school culture, the intrinsic rewards that students and teachers receive from practicing the 7 Habits should increase sustainability. This factor gives TLIM an advantage over curriculum-based social-emotional learning

and character development programs in which students are taught information and problem-solving strategies, but may not internalize and authentically use what they learn.

- Leadership Day and other formal celebrations of achievements appear to provide important anchors for establishing identity as a TLIM school and showcasing students' demonstration of leadership activities (e.g., performing, public speaking). These events promote parent and community involvement and make the concepts, strategies, and effects more tangible and understandable for them.

- Overt practicing of the 7 Habits by adults (principal, teachers, and parents) not only deepens the level of implementation in the school but strengthens students' learning of the habits through additional reinforcement, modeling, and feedback.

Given the strong principal leadership and seemingly effective early TLIM implementations at both schools, we were unable to identify any major weaknesses. In considering what might occur with changes in leadership or at other schools having weaker leadership or faculty buy-in, several potential concerns and associated recommendations come to mind.

- Although a true strength of TLIM is its lack of prescriptiveness and the considerable autonomy given to teachers, our impression is that many teachers would benefit from receiving more guidance in the form of sample lessons and suggested activities. Equally valuable would be some form of benchmarks or rubrics that operationally define what higher- and lower-fidelity implementation entails in various areas such as involving students in leadership roles, using data notebooks, teaching the 7 Habits, communicating with parents, etc.

- Neither case study school has had a strong influx of new teachers (and WCES practically none), but should staffing composition change more significantly, the danger exists of teachers inexperienced with TLIM not receiving sufficient training from the site-based Leadership or Lighthouse Teams. "The Leader in Me" book provides inspiring and informative descriptions of the TLIM philosophy of components, but wasn't designed as a professional development guide. Supplementary material oriented more directly to the latter purposes would be valuable for FC to develop.

- Related to the above suggestion, refresher training provided by FC every 2-3 years would be helpful to both experienced and new teachers for improving the quality of implementation. Lighthouse Teams and Leadership Teams should remain active in offering continuous site-based professional development, but bolstering the external training component (presumably at modest costs) would provide greater quality control while increasing the exposure of teachers and teams to national experts.

In conclusion, the case studies revealed highly enthusiastic and collaborative school communities that were experiencing many benefits from TLIM. Our strong impression is that the majority of teachers are highly supportive of TLIM and view it relative to other "programs" as easy to implement, providing a much-needed supplement to academic and testing emphases, and effective for building the confidence and character of their students. We were also convinced that the vast majority of students value TLIM for many reasons, especially giving them guidance, structure, and order for planning and behaving; facilitating their interactions with peers; and creating a bridge and common language for communicating with adults. However,

given that the case studies involved only two, somewhat selective schools, the generalizability of these interpretations to other TLIM schools needs to be viewed cautiously. A recommended extension of this evaluation research would be to expand the cases to a larger number of randomly selected schools (perhaps 10-15) at various phases of implementation. Such case studies should include more extensive classroom and student-centered observations.

APPENDIX A: Instruments

TLIM Teacher Focus Group

Hello. My name is _____. FranklinCovey has asked Johns Hopkins University to conduct a study of the TLIM program. The purposes are to describe how the program is implemented at different schools, the nature of the involvement by school staff, students, and the community, and the perceived success of different program components. The ultimate goal is to provide Franklin/Covey with useful evidence for better understanding how the program works and what it does, and for continuing to improve it in the future.

Please answer the questions honestly so that we can obtain accurate information about TLIM at this school. Your responses will be completely confidential and reported in a way that does not identify you. Do you have any questions before we begin?
_____

1. Let's start by learning about the school's involvement with TLIM.
   a. When did implementation begin? What did you know about it, and how were you or other teachers involved in the decisions and processes?
2. What do you feel are the main reasons that your school adopted TLIM?
3. What type of professional development and support have you received for implementing TLIM? Do you feel sufficiently prepared as result
4. Describe how TLIM attempts to influence, and what its impacts have been for, each of the following areas:
   a. Developing a positive school climate.
   b. Increasing students' motivation and self confidence
   c. Increasing students' ability to relate to classmates and adults, and resolve interpersonal conflicts.
   d. Increasing students' academic achievement.
   e. Increasing parent and community involvement
   f. Making teaching more enjoyable and effective.

5. What parts of TLIM have been *most* successful, and why?
6. What parts of TLIM have been *least* successful, and why?
7. How can TLIM be made better for the future?

TLIM Stakeholder Interview

Note: This interview protocol will be adapted as appropriate for adult interviews, such as parent leaders, community members, professional school or district staff, etc.

Hello. My name is _____. FranklinCovey has asked Johns Hopkins University to conduct a study of the TLIM program. The purposes are to describe how the program is implemented at different schools, the nature of the involvement by school staff, students, and the community, and the perceived success of different program components. The ultimate goal is to provide Franklin/Covey with useful evidence for better understanding how the program works and what it does, and for continuing to improve it in the future.

Please answer the questions honestly so that we can obtain accurate information about TLIM at this school. Your responses will be completely confidential and reported in a way that does not identify you. Do you have any questions before we begin?
_____

1. Let's start by having you describe your personal knowledge and involvement with TLIM.
2. What do you feel are the main reasons that this school adopted TLIM.
3. What are your impressions about TLIM's influences in each of the following areas. (We can skip any with which you are unfamiliar):
    a. Developing a positive school climate.
    b. Increasing students' motivation and self confidence.
    c. Increasing students' ability to relate to classmates and adults, and resolve interpersonal conflicts.
    d. Increasing students' academic achievement.
    e. Increasing parent and community involvement.
    f. Increasing teachers' interest and effectiveness.
4. What parts of TLIM appear *most* successful, and why?
5. What parts of TLIM appear *least* successful, and why?
6. How can TLIM be made better for the future?

TLIM Principal Interview

Hello. My name is _____. FranklinCovey has asked Johns Hopkins University to conduct a study of the TLIM program. The purposes are to describe how the program is implemented at different schools, the nature of the involvement by school staff, students, and the community, and the perceived success of different program components. The ultimate goal is to provide Franklin/Covey with useful evidence for better understanding how the program works and what it does, and for continuing to improve it in the future.

Please answer the questions honestly so that we can obtain accurate information about TLIM at this school. Your responses will be completely confidential and reported in a way that does not identify you. Do you have any questions before we begin?
_____

1.   Let's start by learning about the school's involvement with TLIM.

        When did implementation begin? What did you know about it, and how were you and your staff involved in the decisions and processes?

2.   What do you feel are the main reasons that your school adopted TLIM?
3.   What type of professional development and support have you and your staff received for implementing TLIM? Do you and the staff feel adequately prepared as a result?
4.   Describe how TLIM attempts to influence, and what its impacts have been, for each of the following areas:
   a.   Developing a positive school climate.
   b.   Increasing students' motivation and self-confidence.
   c.   Increasing students' ability to relate to classmates and adults, and resolve interpersonal conflicts.
   d.   Increasing students' academic achievement.
   e.   Increasing parent and community involvement.
   f.   Increasing teachers' interest and effectiveness.
   g.   Increasing your effectiveness as a school leader.
5.   What parts of TLIM have been *most* successful, and why?
6.   What parts of TLIM have been *least* successful, and why?
7.   How can TLIM be made better for the future?

TLIM Student Focus Group

Hello. My name is _____. I work with Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, Maryland. I have been asked to talk to teachers and students to learn about The Leader in Me program. I want to find out what you do in the program, what you like the most, what you don't like as much, and how the program can made as good as possible for you and other students.

Please answer the questions honestly to help me obtain correct information.   Your responses will be completely confidential and reported in a way that does not identify you. Do you have any questions before we begin?
_____

1. Let's start by learning about TLIM. What activities does it involve in your regular classes?
    a. What about when you are not in class, like on the playground or in the cafeteria?
    b. What about outside of school? Does TLIM affect what you do at home or when you are with friends or adults in your community?
2. Has TLIM been helpful in the following areas? Why or why not?
    a. Making your school feel safe and welcoming.
    b. Helping you to be a leader.
    c. Increasing your interest in school and belief in your ability to succeed.
    d. Increasing your ability to get along with classmates and adults, and resolve arguments or conflicts.
    e. Increasing what you learn in classes.
    f. Increasing your parents' involvement in your school and your schoolwork.
    g. Increasing your teachers' interest in you and your success.
    h. Making school more fun and beneficial.
3. What parts of TLIM do you like the most, and why?
4. Which of the 7 Habits do you like the most and why?
5. What parts of TLIM do you *not* like as much, and why?
6. How can TLIM be made better for the future?