

Evaluation of  
**The  
Leader in Me**  
in the Cedar Valley

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Executive Summary 1 BACKGROUND & METHODS 3 Introduction 3 Evaluation of Leader in Me in Waterloo  
Schools 8

Methods 10 Limitations 17 Acknowledgements 18

RESULTS 19

Evaluation Question 1a: In LIM schools, to what extent are students applying the 7 habits (Private Victory) and how does this differ by level of implementation? 19

Student Survey 19 Teacher Survey 26 Teacher and Principal Interview 27 Summary 29

Evaluation Question 1b: In LIM schools, to what extent are students applying the 7 habits (Public Victory) and how does this differ by level of implementation? 30

Student Survey 30 Teacher Survey 35 Teacher and Principal Interview 36 Summary 39

Evaluation Question 2: In LIM schools, to what extent are students' gifts and talents being identified and nurtured and how does this differ by level of implementation? 40

Student Survey 40 Teacher Survey 44 Teacher and Principal Interview 45 Summary 48

Evaluation Question 3: In LIM schools, to what extent are students participating in authentic leadership opportunities and how does this differ by level of implementation? 49

Student Survey 49

Student Focus Group 52 Teacher Survey 54 Teacher and Principal Interview 56 Summary 58

Evaluation Question 4: How do LIM schools at different levels of implementation differ from non-LIM schools in student engagement?

Evaluation Question 5: How do LIM schools at different levels of implementation differ from non-LIM schools in academic performance? 59

Student Survey 59 Student Focus Group 61 Teacher Survey 64 Teacher and Principal Interview 65

District Administrative Data 69 Summary 77

Evaluation Question 6: How do LIM schools at different levels of implementation differ from non-LIM schools in school climate? 79

Student Survey 79 Teacher Survey 85 Teacher and Principal Interview 87 WCSD Building Staff Climate Survey 89 Summary 90

Implementation Feedback/Other Results 91 Recommendations 95

## APPENDICES

Appendix A: Summary Table of Evaluation Questions, Data Sources, and Items 96 Appendix B: Student Survey

102 Appendix C: Student Focus Group Protocol for Leader in Me Schools 106 Appendix D: Student Focus Group

Protocol for Non-Leader in Me Schools 107 Appendix E: Teacher Survey 108 Appendix F: Teacher Interview

Questions for Leader in Me Schools 114 Appendix G: Principal Interview Questions for Leader in Me Schools

115 Appendix H: Teacher Interview Questions for Non-Leader in Me Schools 116

Appendix I: Principal Interview Questions for Non-Leader in Me Schools 117 Appendix J: Comparison of Sample

to School Demographics for 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grades 118

## List of Tables

Table 1. The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People 3 Table 2. Seven Habits: Language, Principles, Practices 5 Table

3. Leader in Me School Implementation Process 7 Table 4. Evaluation Questions and Data Sources 9 Table 5.

Participating Schools Identified by Implementation Level 10 Table 6. Student Response Rates by School 11

Table 7. Teacher Survey Response Rates 13

## List of Figures

Figure 1. Percent of Teachers by Gender and Ethnicity 13 Figure 2. Percent of Teachers by Highest Level of Education 14 Figure 3. Percent of Teachers by Years at Current School 14 Figure 4. Percent of Teachers by Total Years of Teaching Experience 15 Figure 5. Percent of Teachers by Grade Level 15 Figure 6. 7th Graders' Agreement that "I have what it takes to do well in school." 20 Figure 7. 7th Graders' Agreement that "If I don't do well in school it's because I'm not smart." 20

Figure 8. 4th Graders' Agreement that "I write my goals down." 21

Figure 9. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "I plan out the steps I need to take to achieve my goals." 22

Figure 10. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "When I have a lot of homework and other activities, I create a plan to get things done." 22

Figure 11. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "I forget to turn in my homework on time." 23 Figure 12. 7th Graders' Agreement that "I plan out the steps I need to take to achieve my goals." 24

Figure 13. 7th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "I look for ways to help other students at school without being asked." 24

Figure 14. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of Student Independence (7 Habits - Personal). 26

Figure 15. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of the Frequency of Student Independence (7 Habits-- Personal) 26

Figure 16. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "When I'm working on a group project, other students ask me for ideas." 30

Figure 17. 4th Graders' Agreement that "I solve problems better when I work with others." 31

Figure 18. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "I keep my ideas to myself when working with others." 31

Figure 19. 4th Graders' Agreement that "When I meet an adult, I am afraid to talk to them." 32 Figure 20. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "I encourage others to do their best." 32 Figure 21. 7th Graders' Agreement that "I solve problems better when I work with others." 33

Figure 22. 7th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "When I meet an adult, I am afraid to talk to them." 33

Figure 23. 7th Graders' Agreement that "I am good at organizing a group to complete a project." 34

Figure 24. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of the Frequency of Student Interdependence (7 Habits-- Public) 35

Figure 25. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of Students Interdependence (7 habits – Public). 35

Figure 26. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "My teacher lets me spend time learning about things that interest me." 40

Figure 27. 4th Graders' Agreement that "My teachers ask me what my interests are." 41 Figure 28. 4th

Graders' Agreement that "School helps me discover what I'm good at." 41

Figure 29. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "People at school notice when I'm good at something." 42

Figure 30. 4th Grade Students' Responses to "List three gifts for talents you have." 43 Figure 31. 7th Grade Students' Responses to "List three gifts or talents that you have." 43 Figure 32. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of Student Talent Development. 44

Figure 33. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "Students get to help make decisions at my school." 49

Figure 34. 4th Grade Students' Responses to "What makes someone a leader?" 50 Figure 35. 7th Grade Students' Responses to "What makes someone a leader?" 50 Figure 36. 4th Grade Students' Responses to "How are you a leader at your school?" 51 Figure 37. 7th Grade Students' Responses to "How are you a leader at your school?" 51 Figure 38. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of Student Leadership Opportunities (Voice) 54

Figure 39. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of Student Leadership Opportunities. 54 Figure 40. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "I don't like school." 59 Figure 41. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "I am interested in the work at school." 60 Figure 42. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of Student Engagement. 64 Figure 43. Median Number of Student Absences. 69

Figure 44. Percent of Students with at Least One Major Referral. 70 Figure 45. Percent of Students with at Least One Minor Referral. 70 Figure 46. Total Number of Bus Suspensions. 71 Figure 47. Total Number of In-School Suspensions. 71 Figure 48. Total Number of Out-of-School Suspensions. 72 Figure 49. Percent Proficient in Reading Iowa Assessments. 73 Figure 50. Percent Proficient in Math Iowa Assessments. 73

Figure 51. High SES 9th Grade Students' First Semester GPA by Middle School Experience. 74 Figure 52. Low SES 9th Grade Students' First Semester GPA by Middle School Experience. 74

Figure 53. Number of Credits High SES Students Earned During First Semester in 9th Grade by Middle School Experience. 75

Figure 54. Number of Credits Low SES Students Earned During First Semester in 9th Grade by Middle School Experience. 75

Figure 55. Number of Tardies High SES Students Receive During First Semester 9th Grade by Middle School Experience. 76

Figure 56. Number of Tardies Low SES Students Receive During First Semester 9th Grade by Middle School Experience. 76

Figure 57. 4th Graders' Agreement that "I Feel like an important member of my school." 79 Figure 58. 4th

Graders’ Estimates of the Frequency that “I feel safe at school.” 80 Figure 59. 4th Graders’ Estimates of the Frequency that “Adults at my school listen to students’ ideas.” 80

Figure 60. 4th Graders’ Estimates of the Frequency that “Some students are teased or picked on at this school.” 81

Figure 61. 4th Graders’ Agreement that “Other students at school care about me.” 82

Figure 62. 4th Graders’ Agreement that “Students in my school help each other even if they are not friends.” 82

Figure 63. 4th Graders’ Agreement that “I enjoy talking to the students here.” 83 Figure 64. 4th Graders’ Agreement that “Students here respect what I have to say.” 83 Figure 65. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of School Climate. 85 Figure 66. Teacher Differences In Perceptions of Staff Empowerment. 86

Figure 67. Differences Between Leader in Me and Non-Leader in Me Elementary Schools on the 2017 Annual WCSD Staff Climate Survey. 89

Figure 68. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of Instructional Practices. 91 **Appendix J**

Figure J1. Comparison of Sample to School Population Gender 118 Figure J2. Comparison of Sample to School Population Free/Reduced Lunch Status 118 Figure J3. Comparison of Sample to School Population IEP Status 119 Figure J4. Comparison of Sample to School Population Minority Status 119 Figure J5. Comparison of Sample to School Population ELL Status 120 Figure J6. Comparison of Sample to School Population Gifted Status 120

## Executive Summary

The Leader in Me is Franklin Covey’s whole-school transformation process, based on Dr. Stephen Covey’s *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. It teaches 21<sup>st</sup>-century leadership and life skills to students and creates a culture of student empowerment based on the idea that every child can be a leader in their own unique way. Nineteen schools in the Cedar Valley are currently implementing the Leader in Me (LIM).

This evaluation study sought to explore the extent to which the components of LIM—the 7 Habits and related employability skills, gifts and talents, and leadership opportunities—were being implemented in Waterloo CSD schools. In addition, it explored related student and school outcomes including student engagement, academic performance, and school climate. Multiple sources of data were collected including approximately 600 student surveys from 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders at 11 schools, roughly 175 teacher surveys, student focus groups, and phone interviews of teachers and principals at each participating school.

Some general findings specific to each research question, including positive or promising findings and suggested room for growth, are as follows:

Evaluation question	Summary of positive findings	Room for growth
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1a: Private victory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teachers in LIM schools felt that their students were stronger in all skills related to independence/private victory on the survey. Indeed, both 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders in LIM schools showed differences in about half of the student survey items which asked about Personal Effectiveness.</li> <li>Teachers and principals also felt that LIM increased students' confidence, a finding somewhat reflected in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade survey data.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No differences were found among non- and LIM students in the survey items asking about Perseverance or Future Aspirations.</li> </ul>
1b: Public victory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LIM teachers agreed that their students were stronger in most of the skills reflected in the interdependence/ public victory items on the survey, and student survey data reflected this, showing some significant differences between LIM and non-LIM students in terms of both Interpersonal Effectiveness and Group Leadership.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the interviews, teachers and principals at LIM schools stated that they felt student interdependence was still a work in progress.</li> </ul>
2: Gifts and talents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LIM 4<sup>th</sup> graders and their teachers felt that there was a strong climate of talent identification and development at their schools. Both 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders were more likely than non-LIM students to claim interpersonal talents.</li> <li>LIM schools integrated student gifts and talents into the life of the school to a much greater extent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Aside from being somewhat more likely to state that interpersonal skills were among their gifts and talents, LIM 7<sup>th</sup> graders did not feel that their talents and gifts were identified or nurtured at their school.</li> </ul>

3: Leadership opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Both 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade LIM students were more likely to say a leader is caring/kind, and that they were leaders at their school by getting their work done and doing their best.</li> <li>As with gifts and talents, LIM schools thought more broadly about leadership opportunities and integrated them into school life much more extensively.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In the focus groups, students questioned the relationship between leadership opportunities and student behavior.</li> </ul>
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4 and 5: Student engagement and academic performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some higher engagement was apparent among the 4<sup>th</sup> grade LIM students.</li> <li>• Students felt that LIM had helped them be better students by helping them behave better and providing them with opportunities to take ownership of their learning.</li> <li>• LIM schools fostered engagement through the use of student-focused approaches.</li> <li>• There are some promising academic and behavioral outcomes (i.e., tardies, failing grades) among 9<sup>th</sup> graders who attended a LIM middle school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the survey, LIM 7<sup>th</sup> graders did not report any greater engagement in school, nor did the teachers surveyed feel that their students were more engaged on the whole.</li> </ul>
6: School climate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Both 4<sup>th</sup> graders and teachers from LIM schools were more likely to agree with most of the survey items asking about positive aspects of their school climate. In addition, the district school climate survey showed differences in most school climate items between staff of LIM and non-LIM schools at the elementary level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the survey, LIM 7<sup>th</sup> graders did not report any differences in their school climate.</li> <li>• No differences were found between LIM and non-LIM middle schools on the district climate survey.</li> </ul>

## BACKGROUND & METHODS

### Introduction

#### Leader Valley

Leader Valley is a talent development initiative of the Greater Cedar Valley Alliance & Chamber. Through their business/education partnership, Leader Valley supports the implementation of The Leader in Me (abbreviated in this report as LIM), an initiative which prepares Cedar Valley PreK-12 students for work and life.

#### The Leader in Me

The Leader in Me is Franklin Covey's whole-school transformation process, based on Dr. Stephen Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. It teaches 21<sup>st</sup>-century leadership and life skills to students and creates a culture of student empowerment based on the idea that every child can be a leader in their own unique way. LIM is inclusive of all students in school (<http://www.theleaderinme.org/what-is-the-leader-in-me/>).

As implemented in the Cedar Valley, LIM has the following four components:

1. Teach and model the 7 Habits
2. Identify and nurture the gifts and talents of all students
3. Provide authentic learning and leadership opportunities
4. Teach essential employability and life skills

**1. Teach and model the 7 Habits.** The table below presents *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* and how LIM adapts them for students (from <http://www.theleaderinme.org/footer-menu/q-a/>):

Table 1. The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People	Principles	Application Using Age-Appropriate Language for Students
<i>Habit 1: Be Proactive</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiative</li> <li>• Responsibility</li> <li>• Choice</li> <li>• Accountability</li> </ul>	<p>You're in Charge: "I am a responsible person. I take initiative to make things happen. I choose my own actions, attitudes, and moods. I do not blame other people for my mistakes. I focus on the things I can influence."</p>
<i>Habit 2: Begin With the End in Mind</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision</li> <li>• Planning</li> <li>• Purpose</li> </ul>	<p>Have a Plan: "I plan ahead. I know how to set and achieve goals. I do things that have meaning and make a difference. I am an important part of my classroom and contribute to my school's mission and purpose."</p>
<i>Habit 3: Put First Things First</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritization</li> <li>• Organization</li> <li>• Discipline</li> </ul>	<p>Work First, Then Play: "I spend my time on things that are most important. This means I say no to things that are less important. I set priorities, make a schedule, and follow my plan. I am disciplined and organized."</p>
<i>Habit 4: Think Win-Win</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consideration</li> <li>• Courage</li> <li>• Mutual benefit</li> <li>• Fairness</li> </ul>	<p>Everyone Can Win: "I balance courage for getting what I want with consideration for what others want. I build good relationships with others by being kind, saying I'm sorry when needed, and keeping commitments. When conflicts arise, I look for options that work for both sides."</p>

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People	Principles	Application Using Age-Appropriate Language for Students
<i>Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, Then to Be Understood</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Respect</li> <li>• Mutual understanding</li> <li>• Empathy</li> </ul>	<p>Listen Before You Talk: "I listen to other people's ideas and feelings. I try to see things from their viewpoints. I listen to others without interrupting. I am confident in voicing my ideas. I look people in the eyes when talking."</p>
<i>Habit 6: Synergize</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creativity</li> <li>• Cooperation</li> <li>• Diversity</li> <li>• Humility</li> </ul>	<p>Together Is Better: "I value other people's strengths and learn from them. I get along well with others, even people who are different from me. I work well in groups. I seek out other people's ideas to solve problems."</p>



<i>Habit 7: Sharpen the Saw</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Renewal</li> <li>• Health and wellness</li> <li>• Continuous improvement</li> <li>• Balance</li> </ul>	Balance Feels Best: “I take care of my body by eating right, exercising, and getting sleep. I spend time with family and friends. I learn in lots of ways and lots of places, not just at school. I find meaningful ways to help others. I am balanced.”
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In LIM schools, the 7 Habits are conveyed to students in many ways: 1) educator modeling, 2) direct instruction, 3) integration into curriculum, 4) practice in authentic situations, 5) school environment, and 6) communications.

**2. Identify and nurture the gifts and talents of all students.** Leader Valley LIM schools recognize that each student has gifts and talents, such as talents with music, technology, public speaking, planning activities, or artistic productions. Educators in LIM schools work with each student to help them identify and nurture those talents.

**3. Provide authentic learning and leadership opportunities.** Dr. Covey defines leadership as a choice, not a position. Leader Valley believes that all students can make the choice to be a leader in their own way and that we must encourage them to make that choice. Before they can be a leader of others, they must be a leader of themselves. LIM schools work to create leadership opportunities for students within their classrooms, across the school, and in the community. Educators in LIM schools help ALL students take advantage of those opportunities.

**4. Teach essential employability and life skills.** LIM aims to give students in Cedar Valley schools the employability and life skills needed to be effective in the classroom today and in the future. The employability and life skills include the “key practices” in the table below:

Table 2. Seven Habits: Language, Principles, Practices (Source: Leader Valley)

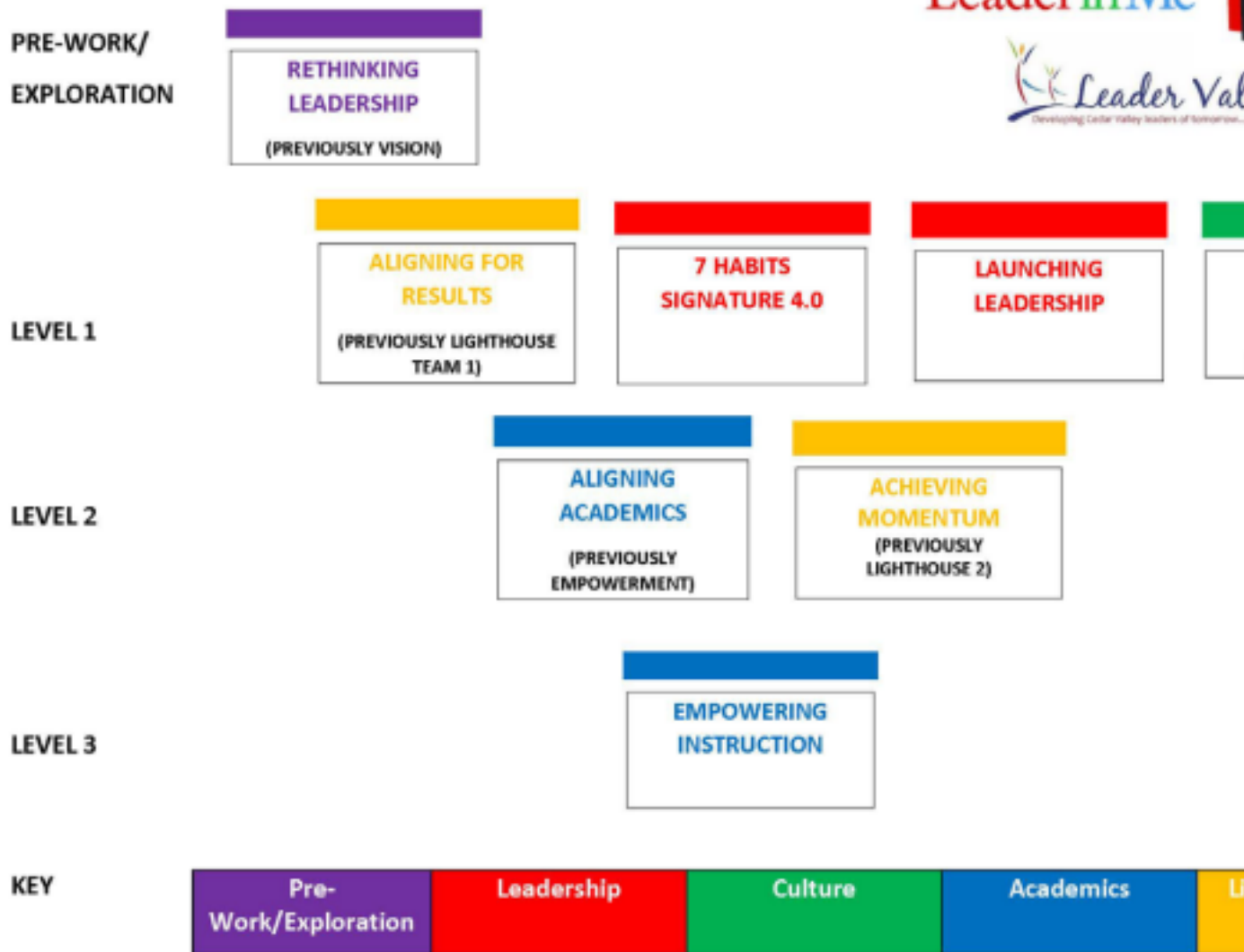
		STUDENT LANGUAGE	KEY PRINCIPLES	KEY
	<b>Foundations</b>		Primary Greatness Paradigms (See Do Get)	Char Effe

	<b>Habit 1 - Be Proactive</b>	I'm in Charge of Me	Attitude Responsibility Choice Accountability	Pause Proactive Circle Transitions
	<b>Habit 2 - Begin With the End in Mind</b>	Have a Plan	Vision Commitment Purpose	Definition Personal Setting
	<b>Habit 3 - Put First Things First</b>	Work First, Then Play	Prioritization Integrity Execution Discipline	Focus Elimination Daily Stay
<b>PRIVATE TO PUBLIC VICTORY</b>	<b>Emotional Bank Account</b>	Bucket Filling	Consideration Kindness Respect	Keep Be L Apolog Forgive
	<b>Habit 4 - Think Win Win</b>	Everyone Can Win	Mutual Benefit Fairness Abundance	Abundance Courage Consistency
	<b>Habit 5 - Seek First To Understand</b>	Listen Before You Talk	Respect Mutual Understanding Empathy Courage	Practice Respect
	<b>Habit 6 - Synergize</b>	Together is Better	Creativity Cooperation Diversity Humility	Value Seek
	<b>Habit 7 - Sharpen the Saw</b>	Balance Feels Best	Renewal Continuous Improvement Balance	Daily Focus Over

LIM has established a sequence of implementation levels from Level 1 or beginning through Level 3 (Table 3). The schools participating in this study ranged in implementation level from Beginning through Lighthouse. Levels 1 and 2 in the current study correspond to level 1 in Table 3 and Lighthouse corresponds to Level 2.



## LEADER IN ME SCHOOL IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS



7

### Evaluation of Leader in Me in Waterloo Schools

In July 2015, Leader Valley approached the Center for Educational Transformation (CET) at the University of Northern Iowa about conducting an evaluation of LIM in the Cedar Valley. Over the next year, CET and Leader Valley staff worked together to identify desired outcomes to be evaluated and develop an evaluation plan. Evaluation tools and protocols were developed by CET staff beginning in summer 2016 and data collection began in fall 2016.

#### Audiences for this Report

FranklinCovey currently assesses implementation of LIM through surveys of educators, parents, and students in LIM schools, but Leader Valley was interested in learning more about the extent to which LIM has been effective in the Cedar Valley and where further training and support are needed. It commissioned this study and worked with CET staff to identify variables of greatest interest.

The primary audiences of this evaluation are thus Leader Valley and Waterloo Community School District (CSD), as well as current and potential funders. Finally, FranklinCovey is interested in the findings of this report because of the long history of LIM in the Cedar Valley and the lack of studies of LIM of this scope and scale.

### Evaluation Questions

This study sought to explore the extent to which the components of LIM—the 7 Habits and related employability skills, gifts and talents, and leadership opportunities—were being implemented in Waterloo CSD LIM schools. In addition, it explored related student and school outcomes including student engagement, academic performance, and school climate. Table 4 shows the sources of data that were collected and analyzed to explore each evaluation question.

Table 4. Evaluation Questions and Data Sources

	Data collected for this study					Existing data analyzed for this study	
<b>Evaluation questions</b>	Y V I S L A P T S	L P V R E V I T I T I T I T I	Y V I S L A P T S	W I T H I N T H E S T U D Y	W I T H I N T H E S T U D Y	A R C H I V E S A R C H I V E S	A R C H I V E S A R C H I V E S

		A S S E S S M E N T		P E R F O R M A N C E	I M P L E M E N T A T I O N	W E L F A R E	S C H O O L C L I M A T E
1. IN LIM schools, to what extent are students applying the 7 habits and how does this differ by level of implementation?	X		X	X	X		
2. In LIM schools, to what extent are students' gifts and talents being identified and nurtured and how does this differ by level of implementation?	X		X	X	X		
3. In LIM schools, to what extent are students participating in authentic leadership opportunities and how does this differ by level of implementation?	X	X	X	X	X		
4. How do LIM schools at different levels of implementation differ from non-LIM schools in student engagement?	X		X	X	X	X	
5. How do LIM schools at different levels of implementation differ from non-LIM schools in academic performance?		X		X	X	X	
6. How do LIM schools at different levels of implementation differ from non-LIM schools in school climate?	X		X	X	X		X

See Appendix A for a table of specific questions from each of the data sources which corresponded to each evaluation question.

## Methods

### Participants

The Waterloo CSD schools implementing LIM are at various levels, ranging from beginning to Lighthouse. Currently, 13 schools in Waterloo CSD are implementing LIM, eight of which participated in this study. In addition, three Waterloo CSD schools not yet implementing LIM participated in the study as control/comparison schools. The schools participating in this evaluation are presented below according to their level of implementation, along with their number of students, percentage of minority students and percentage of students eligible for free or reduced lunch (Table 5).

Table 5. Participating Schools Identified by Implementation Level

School	School size	% FRL	% minority
<b><i>Elementary Schools (grades K-5)</i></b>			
Non-LIM	587	89.7%	70.0%
Non-LIM	556	90.4%	77.9%
Beginning	309	89.3%	68.3%
Level 1	476	91.4%	77.3%
Level 2	448	59.2%	44.4%
Level 2	517	71.9%	49.1%
Advanced Level 2	467	61.0%	20.6%
Advanced Level 2	379	44.1%	26.6%
Lighthouse	536	49.0%	27.6%
<b><i>Middle Schools (grades 6-8)</i></b>			
Non-LIM	388	63.4%	28.9%
Lighthouse	836	49.5%	30.0%

As shown in Table 5, 11 Waterloo CSD schools participated in this study. We targeted 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders in these schools for the surveys and focus groups for several reasons. First, we focused on students in one elementary grade and one middle school grade in order to capture the range of LIM experiences in Waterloo CSD. We chose 4<sup>th</sup> grade as an “old enough” elementary grade to read and complete a survey by themselves, although we did read the survey aloud to the 4<sup>th</sup> graders to ensure that all of them understood the response scales and items. We chose 7<sup>th</sup> grade because, whether a middle school was comprised of grades 6/7/8 or 7/8/9, 7<sup>th</sup> grade would always reflect a middle school perspective on LIM.

## Procedures

### *Student Survey*

The student survey (see Appendix B) is comprised of selected items from

- The FranklinCovey student survey
- The Student Engagement Instrument (SEI) from the University of Minnesota (<http://checkandconnect.umn.edu/research/engagement.html>)
- The 2017 Chicago Public Schools 5 Essentials Student Survey (<https://www.uchicagoimpact.org/sites/default/files/2017%20CPS%205Essentials%20Student%20Survey.pdf>)

The student survey was piloted with a 5<sup>th</sup> grader and some of the questions were simplified so that 4<sup>th</sup> graders could complete it on their own, although we did read the survey aloud when administering it to 4<sup>th</sup> graders.

The format of the student survey consisted of a series of statements with a five-point Likert-type response scale. Roughly half the items asked students to indicate how much they agreed with each statement using the categories, *Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree*. The remaining statements asked students to estimate how frequently something occurred using the response categories, *Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, and Always*. In addition there were three open-ended questions that asked students to list three talents they have, list three things that make someone a leader, and describe how they are a leader in their school.

A pre-survey was administered in October 2016 and an identical post-survey in April and May 2017. All 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders at the participating schools who returned parent consent forms and were present on the day of the survey completed it. Findings in this report are based solely on the student post-survey data. The reasons for this are two-fold: little change was seen between the pre- and post-surveys and additional non-LIM schools were added to the sample in Spring 2017, providing a more thorough evaluation via a better comparison group.

Response rates for each school varied from roughly 25% at the Lighthouse middle school to 75% at one of the advanced level 2 elementary schools (Table 6). The student samples were well matched to the school populations for their respective grade levels on free/reduced lunch status, minority status, ELL status, IEP status, gender, and gifted status. The exceptions to this were that minority students were underrepresented at one Level 2 elementary school and males were underrepresented at one non-LIM elementary school. (See Appendix J for figures showing sample/school percentages for gender, IEP status, ELL status, minority status, free/reduced lunch status, and gifted status.)



Table 6. Student Response Rates by School

LIM Level of Implementation	Postsurvey	
	# Students Participating	Response Rate
<b><i>Elementary Schools (Grades K-5)</i></b>		
Non-LIM	37	46.3%
Non-LIM	32	32.7%
Beginning	33	60.0%
Level 1	28	35.0%
Level 2	27	57.4%
Level 2	31	45.6%
Advanced Level 2	61	76.3%
Advanced Level 2	50	58.8%
Lighthouse	37	40.7%
<b><i>Middle Schools (Grades 6-8)</i></b>		
Non-LIM	49	36.0%
Lighthouse	73	24.5%

Multiple demographic variables were correlated with LIM level of implementation and were controlled for throughout the survey data analyses thus all data points presented in the figures are adjusted means. In 4<sup>th</sup> grade, several variables were controlled for in the analyses, including student free/reduced lunch status, minority status, ELL status, and school-level percent free/reduced lunch. In the 7<sup>th</sup> grade sample, the two 11 schools were fairly similar demographically consequently student free/reduced lunch status was the only variable controlled for in the survey item analyses. All significant findings are represented in figures throughout the report.

### ***Student Focus Groups***

The protocol for student focus groups at LIM schools (see Appendix C) asked students to describe LIM, reflect on whether LIM had made them better students, and reflect on leadership: whether they were leaders, who in their class were leaders, and whether everyone in their class got the chance to be a leader. These questions were developed in order to 1) assess student understanding of LIM, and 2) supplement the open-ended student survey questions, “Please list three things that make someone a leader” and “How are you a leader at your school?”

The student focus groups at non-LIM schools (see Appendix D) were meant to provide a control or comparison group for the focus groups at LIM schools. This protocol also asked students what leadership looks like in their

classrooms, whether they were leaders, who the leaders were in their class, and whether all students in their class got the chance to be a leader. It also asked them to reflect upon what would help them be better students.

One focus group at each participating school in WCSD was conducted. All students participating in the focus groups were randomly selected from the students who participated in the student survey unless their parents opted them out of this component of the study. In all, 11 focus groups were conducted, involving a total of 66 students. Eight of the 11 focus groups (48 students total) were conducted at LIM schools; three focus groups involving 18 students were conducted at non-LIM schools. At the 4<sup>th</sup> grade level, two to three students were randomly selected from among the survey participants from each classroom resulting in six students per school and nine focus groups total (54 students total). At the 7<sup>th</sup> grade level, six students were randomly selected from among the survey participants, resulting in two focus groups with 12 students total. The focus groups were conducted in April and May 2017.

### **Teacher Survey**

The teacher survey (see Appendix E) is comprised of selected items from

- The FranklinCovey teacher survey (FC)
- The Leader Valley teacher survey (LV)
- The student survey created for this evaluation

The format of the survey is similar to the student survey described above. Teachers responded to a series of statements that addressed the evaluation questions as well as answering several open-ended questions. Roughly half the items contained a five-point Likert-type response scale from *Strongly Disagree* to *Strongly Agree* and the other half used a frequency-based five-point response scale.

Like the student survey, the teacher survey was administered in both the fall (November 2016) and the spring (May-June 2016). It was sent to all teachers at Waterloo CSD schools participating in the study as well as teachers from four Cedar Rapids schools which matched the Lighthouse elementary and middle schools in Waterloo in terms of student demographics. Seventy-two teachers completed both surveys and 128 completed the post-survey, for a total of 171 respondents. Only post-data is included in this report for the same reasons as noted in the student survey section above. For purposes of the teacher survey analyses, we grouped the teachers in two categories, non-LIM and LIM, due to small sample sizes within some levels of LIM implementation at the 4<sup>th</sup> grade level. Further, we combined 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade levels together due to the small sample size (n=10) for the 7<sup>th</sup> grade LIM teacher group. Percent free/reduced lunch was controlled for in all the teacher survey analyses.

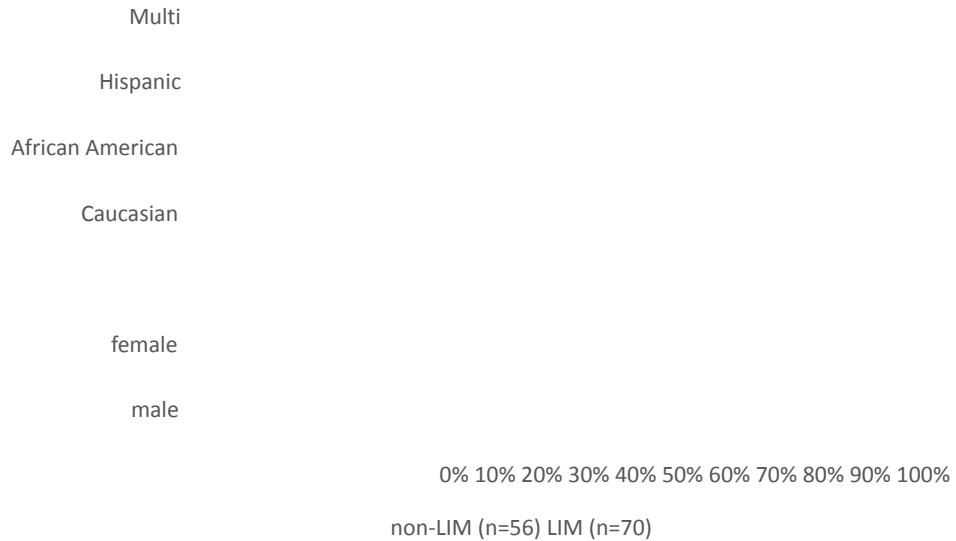
It should be noted that response rates were higher for LIM compared to non-LIM teachers (Table 7). As shown below, teachers from both groups were compared on a number of demographic and job-related variables to establish that the two samples were reasonably matched.

Table 7. Teacher Survey Response Rates

<b>Teacher Post-Survey Group</b>	<b># Invited in Spring 2017</b>	<b># Completed</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>
LIM	112	70	62.5%
Non-LIM	162	56	34.6%
Total	274	126	46.0%

LIM and non-LIM teachers were well matched in terms of gender and ethnicity; over 90% of teachers were white females (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Percent of Teachers by Gender and Ethnicity



Level of education was collapsed into three categories: bachelor's degree, bachelor's plus some coursework, and master's degree or more. About 30% of both teacher groups had bachelor's degrees. A chi-square test showed a significant difference in the proportion of LIM and non-LIM with master's degrees,  $\chi^2(2, N=116) = 7.89, p=.019$  (Figure 2). More than 60% of non-LIM teachers had at least a master's degree compared to 43% of LIM teachers.

Figure 2. Percent of Teachers by Highest Level of Education

Masters or more

Bachelors plus coursework

Bachelors

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80%

non-LIM (n=56) LIM (n=70)

Non-LIM teachers tended to have more experience at their current school compared to LIM teachers though both groups had comparable percentages of teachers with less than five years at their current school (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Percent of Teachers by Years at Current School

10 or more years

5-9 years

2-4 years

0-1 years

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50%

non-LIM (n=56) LIM (n=70)

Non-LIM teachers also had more experience in general, with higher percentages reporting 16-24 years of experience compared to LIM teachers (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Percent of Teachers by Total Years of Teaching Experience

25 or more years

16-24 years

10-15 years

5-9 years

3-4 years

0-2 years

0% 5% 10% 15% 20% 25% 30% 35% 40%

non-LIM (n=56) LIM (n=70)

More LIM teachers were teaching at the elementary level (86% vs. 54%) and more non-LIM teachers were middle school classroom teachers (46% vs. 14%),  $\chi^2(1, N=126) = 15.75, p=.000$  (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Percent of Teachers by Grade Level

Middle School

Elementary

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

non-LIM (n=56) LIM (n=70)

### ***Teacher and Principal Interviews***

The teacher and principal interview protocols for LIM schools (see Appendices F and G) include questions addressing all of our evaluation questions, as well as questions about how LIM compares to similar programs their school has had, the extent to which school staff are on-board with LIM, components of LIM their school struggles to implement, and LIM's effect on collaboration and synergy among school staff. In addition, the interview protocol for LIM principals asked them why they decided to implement LIM at their school and whether they feel LIM is "working" at their school, and the interview protocol for LIM teachers asked them how long they had been involved with LIM (at their current school or previous schools) and whether their

15

students do any form of self-assessment in the classroom, an approach related to LIM's focus on goal-setting and accountability (Habits 1 and 2).

The teacher and principal interview protocols for non-LIM schools (see Appendices H and I) also asked about our evaluation questions, only not in the context of LIM (i.e., these protocols asked about whether other programs at the school had addressed the intended outcomes of LIM). In addition, the non-LIM principal interview protocol included questions about programs the school had or was currently implementing to 1) teach 21<sup>st</sup> century leadership and life skills to students, 2) create a culture of student empowerment, and 3) equip students to be better students, as well as a question about why the school had not adopted LIM. The non-LIM teacher interview protocol also asked whether students in their class do any self-assessment, and if their school had or was currently implementing any programs or initiatives to foster staff collaboration and synergy.

Twenty-five teachers were interviewed: 12 from non-LIM schools and 13 from LIM schools. Fifteen principals were interviewed: 7 from non-LIM schools and 8 from LIM schools. We interviewed 2 teachers from almost every school participating in the study; these teachers were recruited from 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades and volunteered to be interviewed. The interviews took place in May and June 2017.

## **Limitations**

16

Several limitations common to observational studies apply to this evaluation study and prevent us from making any inferences about causation. First, the study relies on self-selected teacher and student samples for our survey data and teacher interview data. While we collected demographic information from the teachers, there are no known population parameters from this group, so its similarity to the district teacher population is unknown. Similarly, the teachers who were interviewed were volunteers in this evaluation and their representativeness of their school is unknown. Further, the low response rates with some of the teacher groups, particularly at the non-LIM schools, is problematic for generalizing the findings.

Second, all of the data is self-reported with the exception of the institutional data used to examine academic outcomes and school climate. However, we used multiple types of data (surveys, focus groups, interviews)

with multiple populations (students, teachers, principals) so that we were not relying on a single group's self report or a single type of self-reported data to draw our conclusions. In addition, the fact that our data spans students and adults in the school allows us to more fully assess the difference between LIM as "enacted" and as "received"--that is, whether students' experience of LIM resembles the LIM experience that school adults are aiming to provide.

Another limitation of this study concerns the difficulty of grouping schools into cohorts of implementation to facilitate valid and meaningful analysis of that data. We were able to disaggregate our data by school duration of LIM implementation, thus accounting for duration of program exposure, even though the data we collected did not capture the various durations of implementation in "real time." However, with the exception of "pre LIM" schools (schools planning to implement LIM with staff beginning in the 2017-18 school year) and Lighthouse schools, it was difficult to describe the level of LIM implementation of individual schools and group those schools into meaningful categories. For example, duration of involvement with the program (e.g., via staff training from Leader Valley) did not necessarily reflect duration of program implementation with students, as some schools took more time than recommended for their staff to learn the program before implementing it with students. Some schools with the longest durations of implementation reported (or their data revealed) less fidelity with implementation due to staff turnover and other factors. Aside from the criteria for Lighthouse schools, FranklinCovey does not have an "implementation tracker" tool to independently assess schools' levels of implementation of LIM. Ultimately, with the student data we grouped the schools in two ways depending on grade level. For the 7<sup>th</sup> grade only non-LIM and Lighthouse schools were available so two levels of implementation are indicated in the results. For 4<sup>th</sup> grade, there were five levels of implementation so to examine trends in the data we aggregated the schools into five groups (pre- and non LIM, beginning and level 1, level 2, advanced level 2, and Lighthouse) based on the LIM director's expertise and experience working with the schools.

### **Relationship of LIM Duration of Implementation to WCSD School Demographics**

A final limitation concerns the nature of the WCSD schools at various stages of LIM implementation. The WCSD schools which chose to implement LIM earliest and have been implementing LIM the longest and thus are most likely to show positive results are also among those with the lowest percentages of minority students and students receiving free and reduced lunch (FRL), a commonly-used indicator of socioeconomic status. Conversely, the WCSD schools newest to LIM are among those with the highest FRL rates and largest minority student populations in the district. We controlled for these demographic differences in our quantitative analyses. Nevertheless, it is worth noting that SES, more than LIM, may explain some of our findings, ranging from academic and behavioral outcomes at specific schools to the nature of the gifts and talents students listed on the survey.

### **Acknowledgements**

We are grateful for the contributions of the Waterloo and Cedar Rapids Community School Districts, particularly the teachers, students, and principals who participated in this study. We are also grateful to Dr. Eve Miller at Franklin Covey, Dr. Mary Losch, Brad McCalla, Darcy Wiegmann-Dally, and Winnie Akinyi for their assistance with this project.

## **RESULTS**

The findings of this evaluation are presented by evaluation question.

### **EVALUATION QUESTION 1a:**

**In LIM schools, to what extent are students applying the 7 habits (Private Victory) and**



## how does this differ by level of implementation?

### Student Survey

Leader in Me focuses on the “private victory” or personal responsibility, vision and management in the initial stages of implementation. We assessed three components of the private victory: confidence, perseverance, and personal effectiveness.

### *Confidence*

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

Students were asked four questions pertaining to their confidence in doing well in school. No significant differences were found between students based on level of LIM implementation. Students on average *agreed* that they are good at learning things if they put their mind to it, have what it takes to do well in school, and believe if they work hard they can do well in school. Students on average *strongly disagreed* that if they don't do well in school it's because they are not smart.

#### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

There were small but significant differences between the non-LIM and Lighthouse 7<sup>th</sup> graders in two items assessing confidence. Consistent with the 4<sup>th</sup> grade findings, students in both groups on average *agreed* that they have what it takes to do well in school though Lighthouse students more *strongly agreed* (Figure 6).

Figure 6. 7th Graders' Agreement that "I have what it takes to do well in

		school."
Strongly Agree	Agree	2.5 2
	Strongly Disagree	1.5 1
Neutral	5	4.6
	4.5 4	4.3
Disagree	3.5 3	

Non-LIM Lighthouse  
Level of Leader in Me Implementation

Both groups also *agreed* that they are good at learning things if they put their minds to it and that if they work hard they can do well in school. Lighthouse students, however, were more likely to *disagree* that if they don't do well in school it's because they are not smart (Figure 7).

Figure 7. 7th Graders' Agreement that "If I don't do well in school it's because I'm not smart."

		Level of Leader in Me Implementation
Strongly Agree	Agree	
	Neutral	
Disagree		2.0
	Strongly Disagree	
5		
	4.5 4	
3.5 3		
	2.5 2	
1.5 1		1.7

No 4<sup>th</sup> grade differences were seen in the five perseverance items. Students on average *agreed* that whenever they do something they try their best, that they try to do well on their schoolwork even when it isn't interesting, and that they do their work before they play. Both groups also reported that if a task is hard they often keep trying even if they don't do well. Though not significantly different, LIM students were *neutral* in their response to "I can do better at school than I'm doing now" compared to students from beginning LIM schools, who tended to *agree* more with this statement.

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

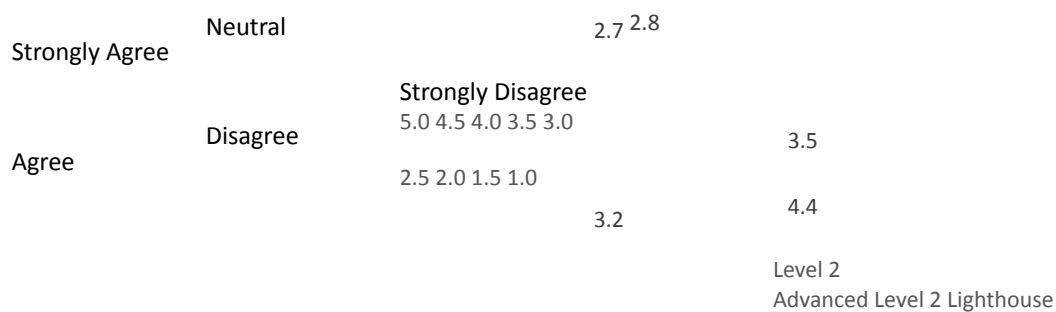
Seventh graders in both groups also responded similarly to all five perseverance items. Students on average *agreed* that whenever they do something they try their best and that they try to do well on their schoolwork even when it isn't interesting. Both groups, on average, responded between *neutral* and *agree* that they do their work before they play and that they could do better at school than they are doing now. Lastly, students reported that if a task is hard, they often keep trying even if they don't do well.

### Personal Effectiveness

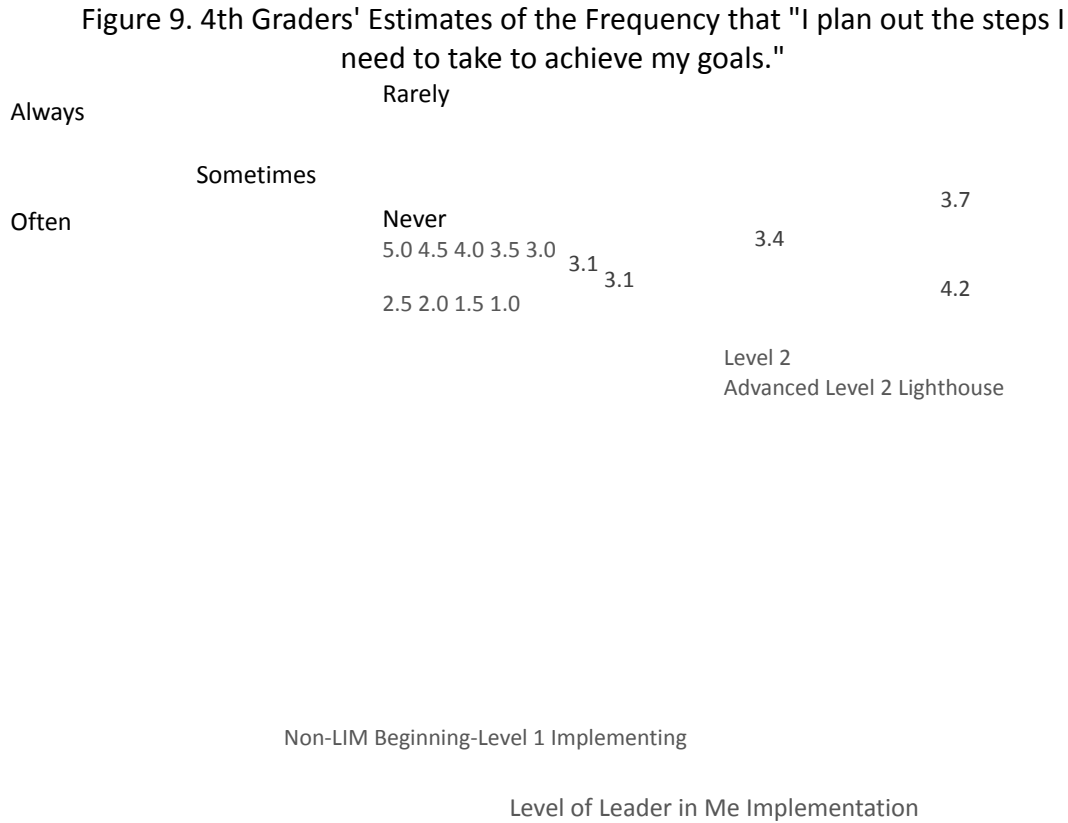
#### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

Personal effectiveness was assessed with eight items that addressed students' organization, goal setting, and responsibility. Several items pertaining to goal setting and planning showed differences between the five groups. As Figure 8 shows, non- and beginning LIM students on average were *neutral* or *disagreed* that they write their goals down, compared to students in advanced LIM schools who tended to *agree* that they did.

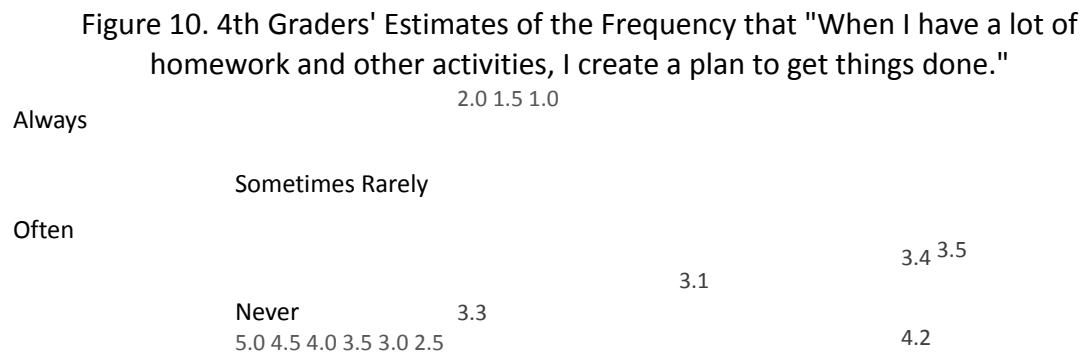
Figure 8. 4th Graders' Agreement that "I write my goals down."



Similarly, students in advanced LIM schools reported that they *often* plan out the steps that they need to take to achieve their goals, compared to beginning LIM students who report doing this only *sometimes* (Figure 9).



Compared to non- and beginning LIM students, those at advanced LIM schools were more likely to *agree* that when they have a lot of homework and other activities, they create a plan to get things done (Figure 10).



Non-LIM Beginning-Level 1 Implementing

Level of Leader in Me Implementation

Students on average reported that they *sometimes* to *often* organize their materials and school stuff the night before school, but there were no group differences.

22

One finding that seems counterintuitive given the other personal effectiveness findings is that non and beginning LIM students reported they *rarely* forgot to turn in their homework on time. Advanced LIM students, on the other hand, reported that they *sometimes* forgot to do this (Figure 11). It may be that students become more self-reflective, conscientious, or honest the longer they are in LIM.

Figure 11. 4th Graders Estimates of the Frequency that " I forget to turn in my homework on time."



Non-LIM Beginning-Year 1 Implementing

Level of Leader in Me Implementation

Students were similar in their responses to several other items. They reported that they *sometimes* to *often* look for ways to help other students at school without being asked, although there was a slight

increase in frequency at advanced LIM schools. Students also reported that if they don't understand something at school, they ask questions to make things clear *often* or slightly less than *often* on average. Lastly, students were similar in their level of agreement that they are in charge of how well they do in school; on average students *agreed* to *strongly agreed* with this statement.

Two items were used to assess students' attitudes about the importance of school. No significant differences were seen across LIM status in 4<sup>th</sup> grade; students *strongly agreed* that school is important for getting a job and important for their future.

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

Few differences were seen between non-LIM and Lighthouse students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade on the personal effectiveness items. Lighthouse students were more likely to *agree* that they plan out the steps they need to take to achieve their goals compared to non-LIM students; however, both groups on average were *neutral* in their response to this statement (Figure 12). No differences were seen in other items pertaining to goals: students on average *rarely* to *sometimes* write their goals down, *sometimes* create a plan to get things done when they have a lot of homework and other activities, and *sometimes* organize their materials and school stuff the night before school. They also *rarely* to *sometimes* forget to turn in their homework on time. Students on average also *agreed* to *strongly agreed* that they are in charge of how well they do in school and reported that if they don't understand something at school, they ask questions to make things clear *sometimes* to *often*.

Figure 12. 7th Graders' Agreement that "I plan out the steps I need to take to achieve my goals."

Strongly Agree	1.5	1
Agree	4.5	4
Neutral	3.5	3
Disagree	2.5	2
Strongly Disagree	5	

Non-LIM Lighthouse  
Level of Leader in Me Implementation

When asked how often they look for ways to help other students at school without being asked, Lighthouse students on average reported they did so *sometimes* to *often* while non-LIM students reported they did so *sometimes* (Figure 13).

Figure 13. 7th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "I look for ways to help other students at school without being asked."

Frequency	Lighthouse	Non-LIM
Always	5	0
Often	4.5	3.5
Sometimes	3.5	3.1
Rarely	2.5	1.5
Never	1.5	0

Non-LIM Lighthouse  
Level of Leader in Me Implementation

Two items were used to assess students' attitudes about the importance of school. No significant differences were seen across LIM status in 7<sup>th</sup> grade; students *strongly agreed* that school is important for getting a job and important for their future.

## Teacher Survey

The teacher survey shows significant differences in all four private victory items, suggesting that teachers at LIM schools feel their students display and understand the attitudes, dispositions, and habits of mind captured by Habits 1-3 more so than teachers at non-LIM schools (Figure 14). LIM teachers also were more likely to



agree than non-LIM teachers that students at their school understand that school is important for their future. LIM teachers reported that their students more frequently are willing try something new and difficult without their help (Figure 15).

Figure 14. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of Student Independence (7

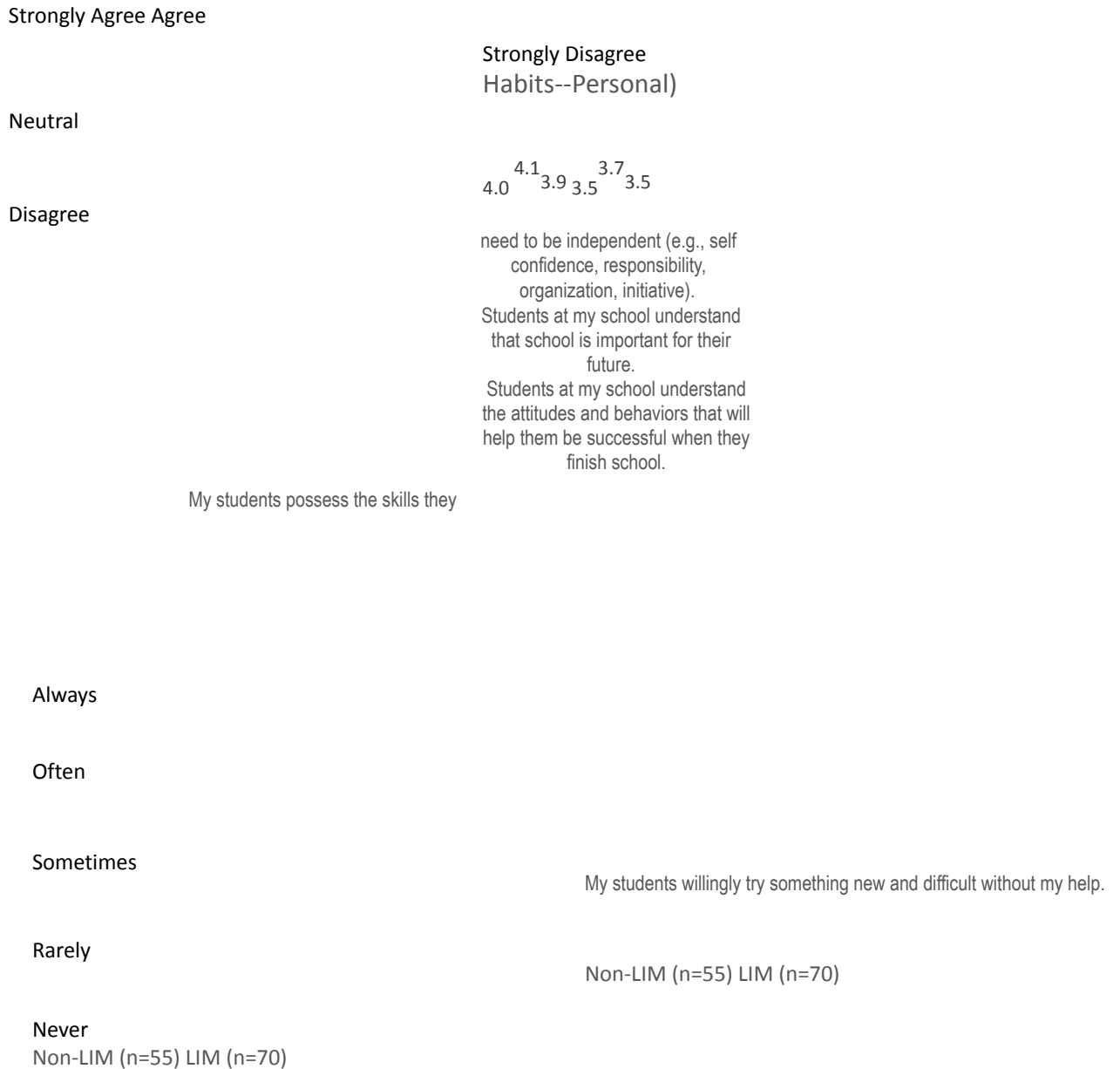


Figure 15. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of the Frequency of Student Independence (7 Habits--Personal)

## Teacher and Principal Interview

### *Student Confidence*

Teachers and principals from non-LIM schools were asked if their school had any programs or initiatives specifically to cultivate student confidence and if their students are seen as confident. They commented that in general, confidence was not a trait they saw in their students.

#### **Non-LIM Schools**

*You know, I could not say that as an encompassing statement. I could say individually, but no I don't. I couldn't say that our students are confident. I know teachers talk about you know, answer your question with confidence, but that's hit or miss depending on which teacher you have.*

*I would say that as a whole if I had to make a general statement I think that the kids at [this school] because of their lack of academic success in the recent past do not hold the confidence that they need to hold, and they are definitely under-confident. Because they know that they're not prepared to face some of the challenges academically that are being put in front of them.*

LIM teachers and principals were asked whether they felt that LIM had had an impact on their students' confidence. They commented that confidence was a trait they noticed among their students and believed that LIM had had a great impact on it. LIM teachers and principals talked about student confidence from the perspective of what students are doing, not what teachers are doing or have done to try to instill confidence in the students. For instance, LIM educators in the schools in the early stages of LIM implementation commented on the excitement of students when they realized that they could have leadership jobs and be in charge of things within the school.

#### **Level 1 LIM**

*...I had a pretty confident group this year. They're pretty egotistical so I would like to say yes, but I don't know if I could attribute it to that just because it was still kind of fresh this year... I think a lot of them found it very motivational in that it's them being leaders. Even if you don't think you're a leader you are a leader in some way. I think it really got them thinking, "What am I good at?" I did have several students since we've rolled it out say, "Hey, can I be in charge of this? Can I be in charge of this?" So just kind of setting new roles.*

*They come to me every morning wanting to be the announcement leader on the intercom first thing in the morning. So seeing students get in front of audiences and large groups of people at assemblies and have confidence, yes! Especially when I think about the future for our kids, what a gift we're giving them now because we all know that, that's like the number one fear for adults as we get older, speaking in front of large crowds.*

### **Beginning Level 2**

*I think, from my own experience, I would say the confidence piece is fairly strong, I would say probably it's the top of the list of things that I definitely will notice with students that are engaged in attempting to implement and kind of apply those things. They definitely, you see that throughout the year, whether it's serving or jobs or just feeling a little more in control. That breathes confidence in students.*

27

*I think it has affected student confidence in that they believe they're capable learners and if I ask them what did it take for you to be able to be successful with whatever they're working on, they can tell me "Well, I worked really hard, I practiced" whatever they were practicing, and "I didn't give up".*

In the advanced stages of LIM implementation, teachers and principals commented on how student confidence continues to grow as students take on more leadership jobs and responsibilities.

### **Advanced Level 2**

*Any increase in confidence is more likely due to their jobs in the building. That they're out there, they're in front of the students, they're in front of the parents, they're in front of the visitors, and they're doing their job competently.*

*I think it has really impacted the students' confidence in showing how they can be a leader, that they do have the ability to do different things, how they can communicate and do things with the community. How they can communicate with their classmates, their teachers and the whole school. They just shine, like when we have students that are welcoming others, when we have programs in the building. They just are shining, standing out front there and introducing their classmates. I've just seen the confidence level in the students, all students, even the students that kind of hang out in the corner and don't want to talk. I've seen confidence in them rise also because of their jobs.*

*I think that we've seen an increase in kids knowing that they are capable of doing things outside of the box. I saw a student, three years ago, who was shy and inward, very quiet, not really outgoing, and he has blossomed. He is now in middle school and he's working to try and get LIM at the middle school level. He is the leader of Robotics Club. He's done amazing things, and he's just one example. I've seen other kids that have taken on roles.*

### **Lighthouse**

*I think self-confidence...even if it might be something small in my room where they say, "oh wow, I really enjoy taking the lunch count", or doing this, or reading to that little first grader that you had in because I always have a little extra kindergarten or first grade buddy every year and then all of a sudden, I'm like, "See, you could tutor. Let's sign up for that job." So I think self-confidence and just realizing that I can do other things.*

*[LIM] has [impacted student confidence]... our achievement scores are up and those things don't improve unless student confidence is higher. Is there a particular metric or system that we're using specifically to target students' confidence? I can't say that we do [have one], but all our other metrics that are aligned that again we are up in our, we've been up in Iowa Assessments last five years and that doesn't happen unless student confidence is up. The other piece is our behavioral referrals are at an all time low for us and the district.*

LIM principals' and teachers' interviews provide evidence that students' participation in leadership jobs around the school has a direct impact on student confidence. This was more apparent when comparing comments from non-LIM teachers and principals with LIM teachers and principals. While non-LIM educators saw low confidence in their students, LIM educators at all stages of LIM implementation commented that student confidence was the most observable trait in their students, and they attributed this to their students' participation in LIM.

28

## **7 Habits (Private Victory) Summary**

### **Student Survey**

*Confidence:* No differences were seen in items assessing student confidence in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. In 7<sup>th</sup> grade, LIM students were more likely to feel that they have what it takes to do well in school and less likely to feel that if they don't do well in school it's because they are not smart. These differences were relatively small, however.

*Perseverance:* No differences between LIM and non-LIM groups were seen in 4<sup>th</sup> grade or 7<sup>th</sup> grade students.

*Personal effectiveness:* In 4<sup>th</sup> grade, LIM students were more likely to write their goals down, plan out the steps they need to take to achieve their goals, and create a plan to get things done when they have a lot of homework and other activities. One notable counterintuitive finding was that non- and beginning LIM students reported forgetting to turn in their homework on time less frequently than LIM students. Seventh grade LIM students were more likely to plan out the steps they need to take to achieve their goals and were more likely to look for ways to help other students at school without being asked.

### **Teacher Survey**

In contrast to the student survey responses, LIM teachers were more likely to say that their students possessed the skills they need to be independent, including self-confidence, responsibility, organization, and initiative. They also were more likely to agree that their students understand that school is important for their future and understand the attitudes and behaviors that will help them be successful when they finish school. Lastly, they reported that their students more frequently try new and difficult things without their help.

### **Teacher and Principal Interview**

As with the teacher survey, teachers and principals from non-LIM schools felt that confidence was not a trait they saw in their students, whereas LIM educators commented that confidence was a trait they noticed

among their students. In the advanced stages of LIM implementation, teachers and principals commented on how student confidence continues to grow as students take on more leadership jobs and responsibilities.

### Key Findings

- 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in general responded with more agreement to statements about confidence, whereas 7<sup>th</sup> grade LIM students responded with more agreement to statements about confidence than non-LIM students.
- 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in advanced LIM schools were more likely to write their goals down, plan out the steps they need to achieve their goals, and create a plan to get things done when they have a lot of homework and other activities compared to non- and beginning LIM students.
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade students were more likely to look for ways to help other students at school without being asked than non-LIM students.
- Seventh grade LIM students were more likely to plan out the steps they need to achieve their goals.
- LIM teachers responded more positively to all student independence items.
- Teacher and principals from non-LIM schools commented in general that their students were not confident, whereas LIM teachers and principals commented on how student confidence continues to grow as students take on more leadership jobs and responsibilities.

### EVALUATION QUESTION 1b:

**In LIM schools, to what extent are students applying the 7 habits (Public Victory) and how does this differ by level of implementation?**

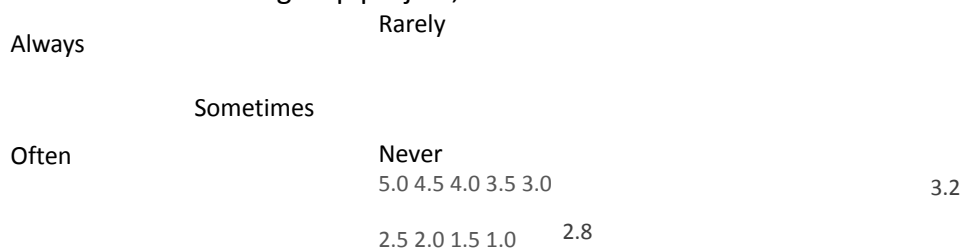
LIM also focuses the “public victory” of abundant thinking, listening, and creative cooperation. We assessed students’ interpersonal effectiveness by looking at their group leadership, ability to work with others, and preparedness for community service.

### Student Survey

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

Students’ perceptions of their own interpersonal effectiveness was measured with five items about their experiences working with other students at school as well as interacting with friends and adults. As the Figure 16 shows, non- and beginning LIM students reported that when they’re working on group projects, other students ask them for ideas *sometimes* to *rarely*, whereas advanced LIM students reported that this occurs on average *often*.

Figure 16. 4th Graders Estimates of the Frequency that "When I'm working on a group project, other students ask me for ideas."



4.3

3.6

Level 2  
Advanced Level 2 Lighthouse

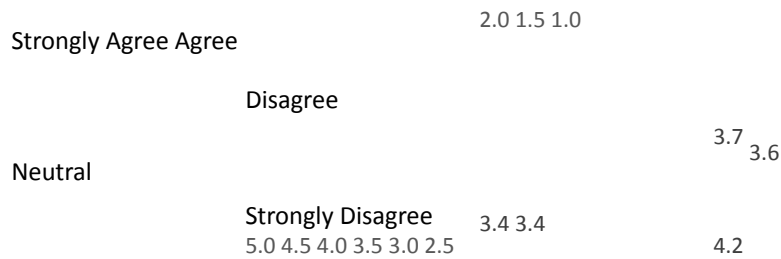
Non-LIM Beginning-Level 1 Implementing

Level of Leader in Me Implementation

30

Similarly, there was a modest increase across LIM levels in students' agreement that they solve problems better when working with others. Overall, students tended to feel *neutral* or *agree*, though at the Lighthouse level students were more likely to *strongly agree* (Figure 17).

Figure 17. 4th Graders' Agreement that "I solve problems better when I work with others."

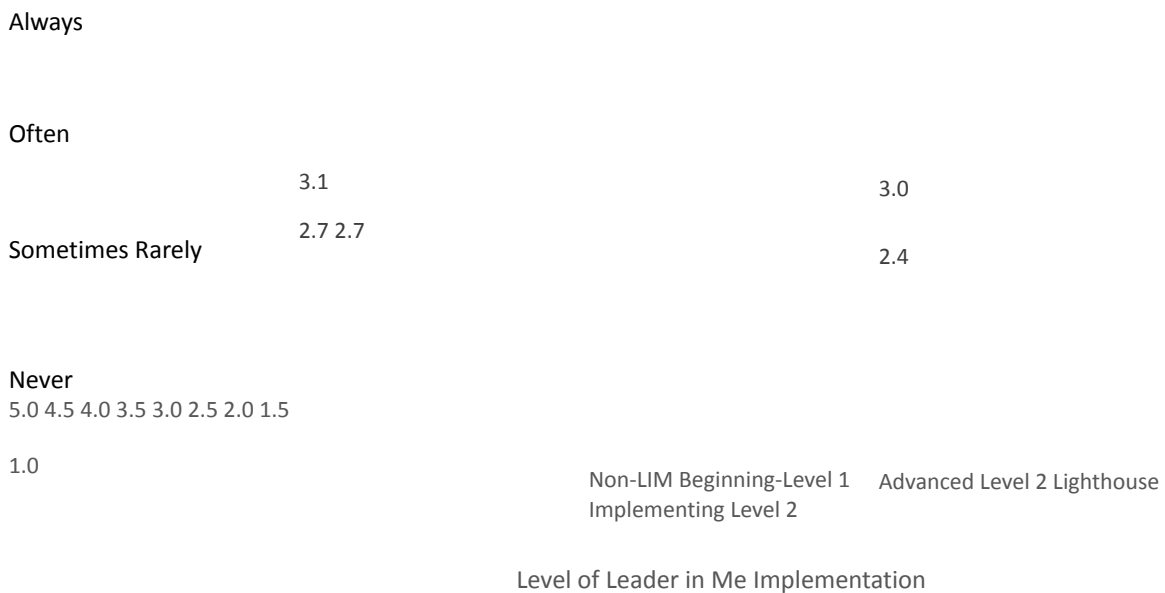


Non-LIM Beginning-Level 1 Implementing

Level of Leader in Me Implementation

Students in LIM schools in general report that they less frequently keep their ideas to themselves when working with others, although all students on average said they did *sometimes* to *rarely* (Figure 18).

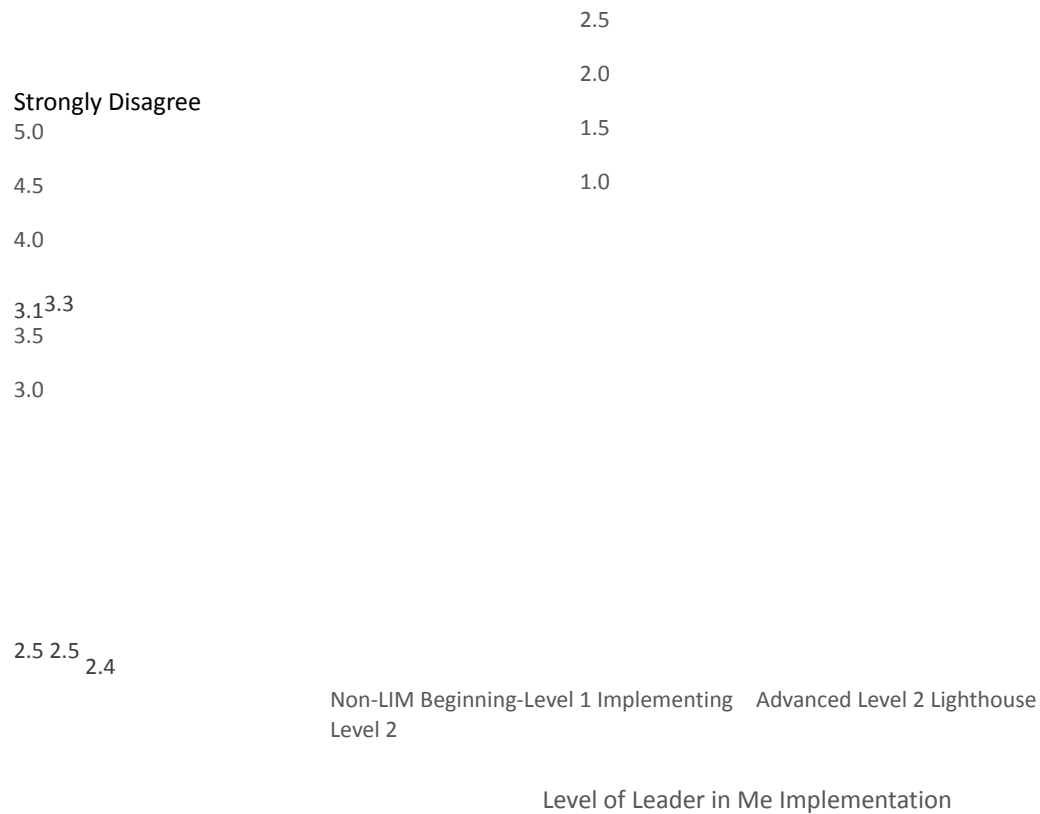
Figure 18. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "I keep my ideas to myself when working with others."



Students were also asked about social interactions with friends and adults. Most students were *neutral* or *disagreed* that when they meet an adult, they are afraid to talk to them. Advanced LIM students were more likely to *disagree* with this statement (Figure 19).

Figure 19. 4th Graders' Agreement that "When I meet an adult, I am afraid to talk to them."



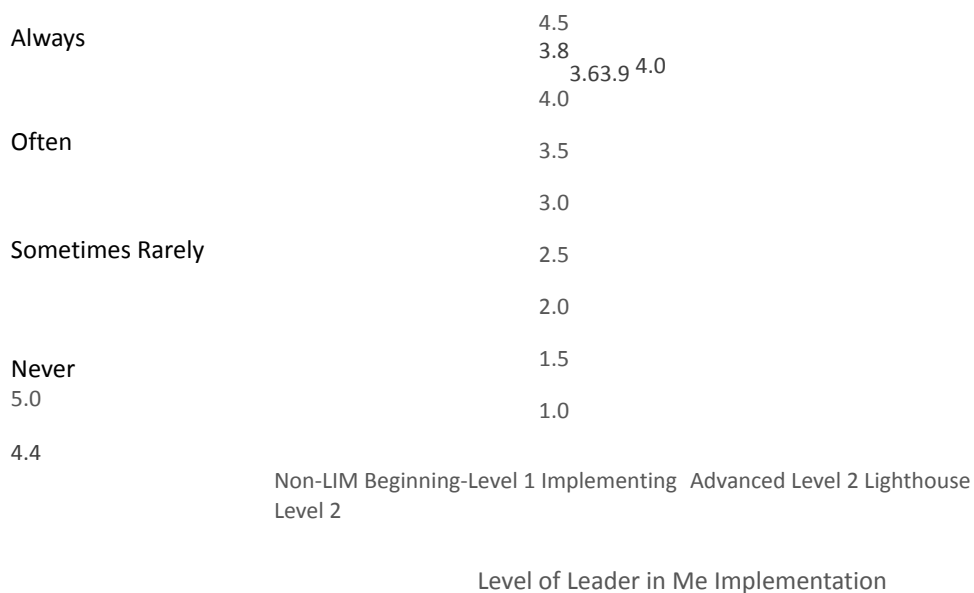


Students on average reported that they *often* ask friends what they want to do, instead of only doing what they (the respondent) want.

All 4<sup>th</sup> graders regardless of LIM level agreed that they were good role models and were good at organizing a group to complete a project.

Students also reported that they *often* encourage others to do their best, though this increased in advanced LIM schools (Figure 20).

Figure 20. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "I encourage others to do their best."

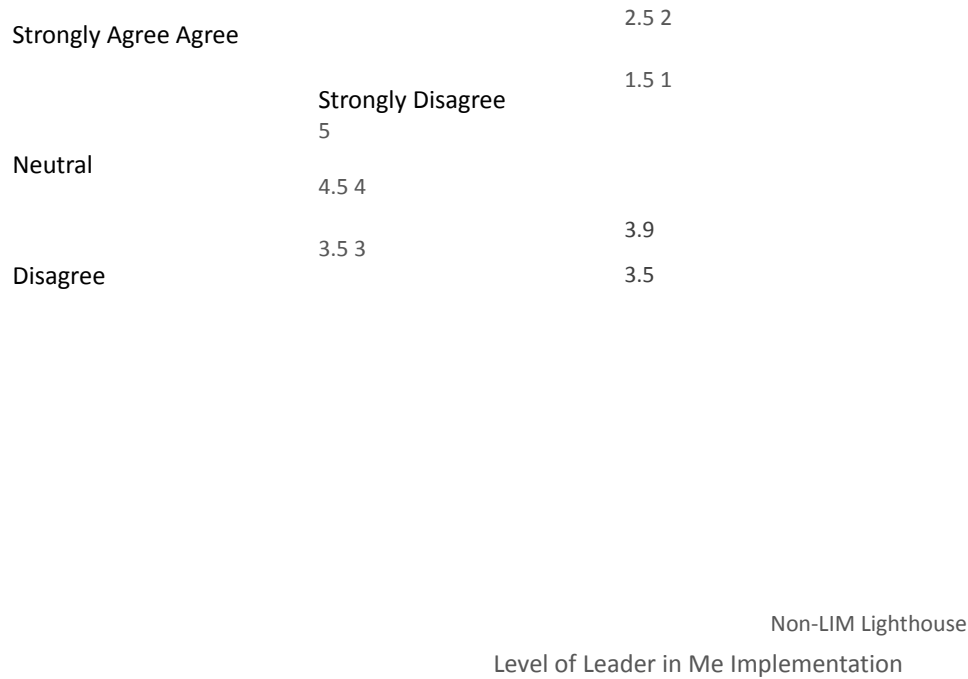




## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

Students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade tended to respond similarly to most of the interdependence items regardless of LIM status. Lighthouse students, however, were more likely to *agree* that they solve problems better when they work with others, although the difference was relatively small (Figure 21).

Figure 21. 7th Graders' Agreement that "I solve problems better when I work with others."



Lighthouse students also reported being less afraid to talk to adults compared to non-LIM students (Figure 22).

Figure 22. 7th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "When I meet an adult, I am afraid to talk to them."



Level of Leader in Me Implementation

Students in both groups reported that when they are working on a group project, other students ask them for ideas *sometimes* to *often*. They also said they keep their ideas to themselves when working with others roughly *sometimes* to *rarely*. Lastly, students in both groups also said they *often* ask friends what they want to do instead of only doing what they (the respondent) want. Students in 7<sup>th</sup> grade also saw themselves as good role models and encouraged others to do their best *sometimes* to *often* on average.

Lighthouse students were more likely to *agree* that they are good at organizing a group to complete a project (Figure 23).

Figure 23. 7th Graders' Agreement that "I am good at organizing a group to complete a project."

Response	Non-LIM Lighthouse	Lighthouse
Strongly Agree	2.5	2
Agree	1.5	1
Neutral	5	4.5
Disagree	4.5	4
Strongly Disagree	3.5	3

Non-LIM Lighthouse

Level of Leader in Me Implementation

**Teacher Survey**

LIM teachers differed from non-LIM teachers on several of the student interdependence items. They felt that their students more frequently work well together when solving problems or completing projects (Figure 24). They were also more likely to *agree* that students at their school are being prepared to help the community and that their students possess the skills they need to be interdependent and work well with others (Figure 25).

Both groups of teachers reported that students at their school *sometimes* rely on each other to solve problems rather than turn to a teacher and utilize positive strategies to resolve conflicts.

Figure 24. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of the Frequency of Student Interdependence (7 Habits--Public)

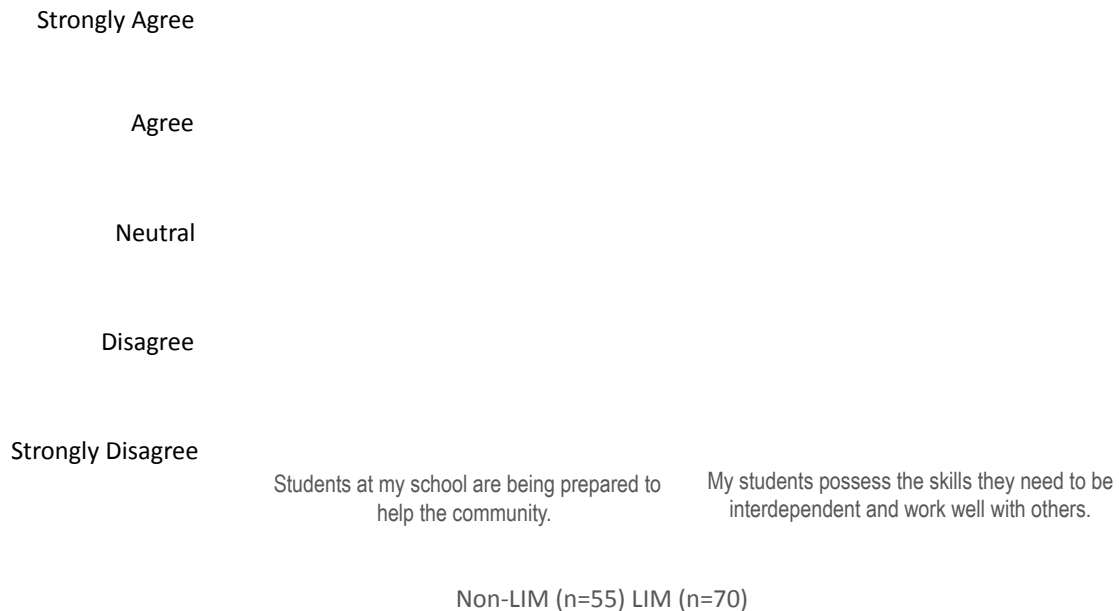
- Always
  
- Often
  
- Sometimes
  
- Rarely
  
- Never

My students work well together when solving problems or completing projects.

Non-LIM (n=55) LIM (n=70)

\

Figure 25. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of Student Interdependence (7 Habits--Public)



### Teacher and Principal Interview

Non-LIM teachers and principals were asked how students resolve interpersonal conflicts with other students and adults, whether their school had any programs or initiatives specifically to address student interpersonal skills, and if their students had strong interpersonal skills.

Non-LIM educators addressed interdependence from a teacher-centered perspective—teachers and principals using programs or incorporating into the curriculum strategies that could alter student behaviors or improve students’ relationships with their peers. They tended to talk about interdependence in terms of correcting undesirable behavior.

#### Non-LIM Teachers and Principals

*We teach problem-solving strategies K-5 so, that's kind of taught with intentionality about how we solve small problems, and we talk with kids about the size of the problem. There are some small problems that really, kids should be resolving amongst themselves without the direction of adults. But as you analyze the size of a problem, then there are definitely problems that go straight to an adult for assistance. So we talk with kids about that. They have visuals in their classrooms that support that. And then when kids make a mistake, we've worked a lot on growth mindset, so then there's just a general of "How do you fix it?" and that we all make mistakes, sometimes in the way we're speaking to others or in the way we're navigating something, how do we fix that. And so we had taught them also what we would call a "restorative apology," so that we are taking some ownership for the mistake and we're thinking about how not to make that mistake again, and we have a plan for success with that, and who's gonna support us.*

*I would say that [programs to address student interpersonal skills] have just been a function of our PBIS*

*encouraging students to be responsible. But that would be kind of the main umbrella I would say, coupled with teacher high expectations.*

*Our counselors and administration are really good at meeting with groups of kids that are having problems and try to teach them the skills as they're going through, trying to work out the problems.*

*There's steps to follow as far as if a student's having an issue, then they go to a timeout, and then a teacher comes over and has a conversation with them, and that gets documented. They write down what's said, and it's kind of scripted out. But as far as students handling it themselves, we don't have anything for that right now.*

On the other hand, LIM teachers, who were asked the same question about conflict resolution in addition to whether they thought LIM had had an effect on students' interpersonal skills, viewed interdependence more broadly to include teamwork and accountability.

LIM teachers and principals commented that they could not conclusively say that LIM has had an impact on students' interdependence. For instance, teachers and principals from schools in the early stages of LIM implementation stated that their students were learning about teamwork and accountability, but remain far from being interdependent.

36

### **Level 1**

*I try to work on basic leader, circle of control. You can only control things that you can control, not outside influences. My best thing is always teaching them about teamwork, working together, that you have to work together no matter what. If you don't get along, you still have to be respectful and there's a way to disagree without getting into a conflict and just think more maturely.*

*It is a slow-moving process. When it comes to dealing with their peers, other students, they don't have great skills right now. I have seen a few more students really using that language of win-win, and so they're starting to think about it.*

*Interpersonal relationships, definitely, I think it helps that because they realize they are in control and they are in charge of how they feel and their confidence builds up a lot too. We do a lot with speaking. There's a lot of students who, probably at the beginning of the year, I would not have thought would have been a public speaker, and they're doing the announcements or they're getting up in front of the whole student body and speaking.*

*Some kids have that skill. I have some kids actually who try to go and mentor other kids [and say]... "Okay, don't get upset, it's not worth it." I do have a few that do that.*

### **Level 2**

*They're good at being partners with someone and sharing ideas and talking about strategy because that's one of the things that we ... try and talk to your partner, or this is your partner for this project. So they're good at that one-to-one with a partner, but then when you add a few more extra people it becomes difficult. Who's going to do the writing, who's responsible, someone checks out. We haven't mastered how do we hold people accountable when there's more than two in a group. We haven't got*

*that skill yet. It's hard for teachers too to figure that out.*

Much like the early stages of implementation, teachers and principals in the more advanced stages of LIM implementation commented that LIM impact on student interdependence is still a work in progress, and that instilling LIM language into students' everyday vocabulary will potentially help students in this process.

### **Advanced Level 2**

*I couldn't say that the LIM program has affected it positively or negatively. There are still some students that prefer to work alone or with just one other and I'm not going to change that just because a program says otherwise. There really are just some students who do better working by themselves. This is quite a process though. In the beginning of the year, I really do try to help them because this is a necessary skill.*

### **Lighthouse**

*I would say that absolutely [LIM has impacted interpersonal skills]. But I think that goes also into combination with the way we just kind of do business. We're a workshop framework. We workshop everything. That lends to lots of collaborating and synergizing. Just because we operate in a workshop framework and we can add the LIM language to that, it's just a nice marriage right there. So it has the potential for them to be more teamwork-based and cooperation-based.*

While interdependence was still work in progress in most LIM schools, LIM educators conceptualized it differently from non-LIM educators. Non-LIM teachers and principals viewed interdependence in terms of

student behavior that needed to be altered, while LIM teachers and principals viewed it in terms such as teamwork and accountability, which could be taught and nurtured.



A number of differences were seen at the 4<sup>th</sup> grade level showing a progression from beginning to advanced LIM. Students in advanced LIM schools reported that when working on group projects, other students more frequently ask them for ideas compared to students in beginning LIM schools. Advanced LIM students were also somewhat more likely to agree that they solve problems better when working with others, and that they keep their ideas to themselves when working with others less frequently than beginning LIM students.

Seventh grade students tended to respond similarly across LIM groups, although LIM students were more likely to agree that they are good at organizing a group to complete a project.

### **Teacher Survey**

Teachers were asked a number of questions about their students and several differences emerged between LIM and non-LIM teachers. LIM teachers were more likely to agree that students at their schools are being prepared to help the community, work well together when solving problems or completing projects, and possess the skills they need to be interdependent and work well with others.

### **Teacher and Principal Interview**

LIM teachers and principals commented that they could not conclusively say that LIM has had an impact on students' interdependence.

While interdependence was still work in progress in most LIM schools, LIM educators conceptualized it differently from non-LIM educators. Non-LIM teachers and principals viewed interdependence in terms of student behavior that needed to be altered, while LIM teachers and principals viewed it in terms such as teamwork and accountability, which could be taught and nurtured.

### **Key Findings:**

- 4<sup>th</sup> grade students in advanced LIM schools reported that when working on group projects, other students more frequently ask them for ideas compared to students in beginning LIM schools.
- Seventh grade students tended to respond similarly across LIM groups, although LIM students were more likely to agree that they are good at organizing a group to complete a project.
- LIM teachers were more likely to agree that students at their schools are being prepared to help the community, work well together when solving problems or completing projects, and possess the skills they need to be interdependent and work well with others compared to non-LIM teachers.
- LIM teachers and principals viewed interdependence in terms of teamwork and accountability, whereas non-LIM respondents viewed it in terms of student behavior that needed to be altered.
- LIM teachers and principals commented that student interdependence was a work in progress and could not conclusively say that LIM has had an impact on it.

## **EVALUATION QUESTION 2:**

**In LIM schools, to what extent are students' gifts and talents being identified and nurtured and how does this differ by level of implementation?**

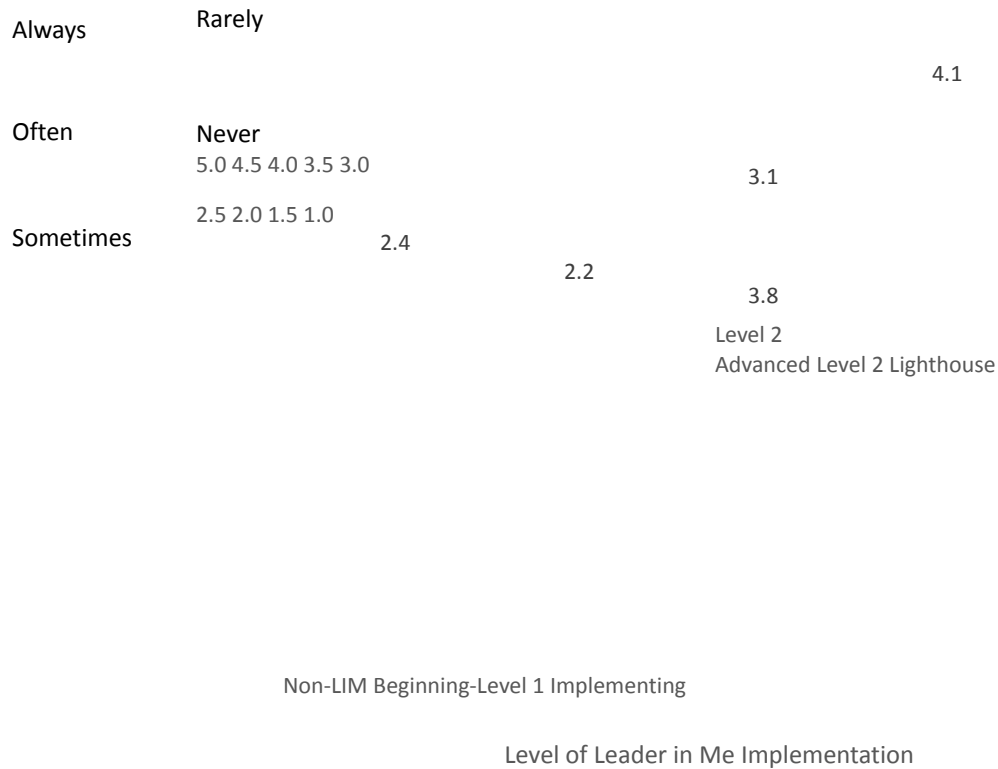


## Student Survey

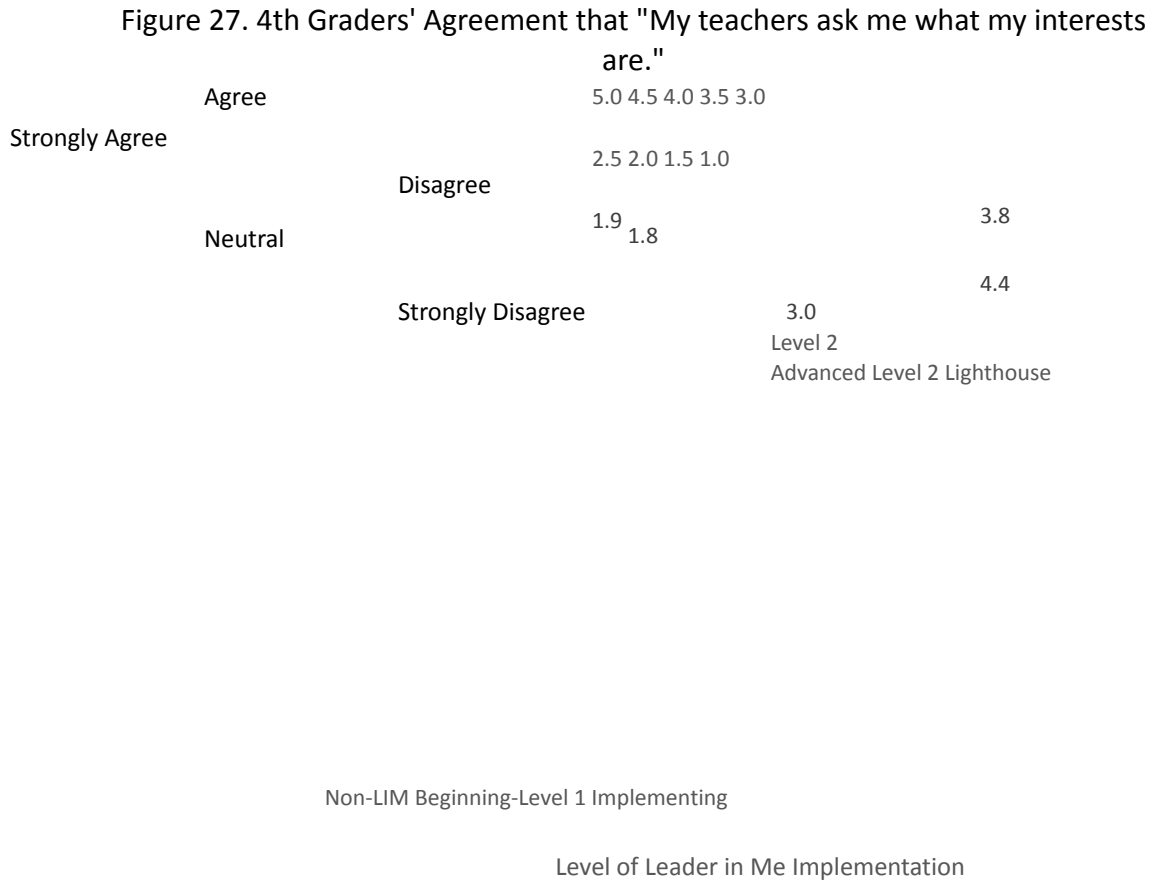
### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

Students were asked several questions about identifying and nurturing gifts and talents as well as an open-ended question asking them to list three gifts or talents they had. In schools beginning LIM implementation, 4<sup>th</sup> grade students reported that their teacher *rarely* lets them spend time learning about things that interest them, compared to students in advanced LIM levels, who reported that they *often* get to do this (Figure 26).

Figure 26. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "My teacher lets me spend time learning about things that interest me."

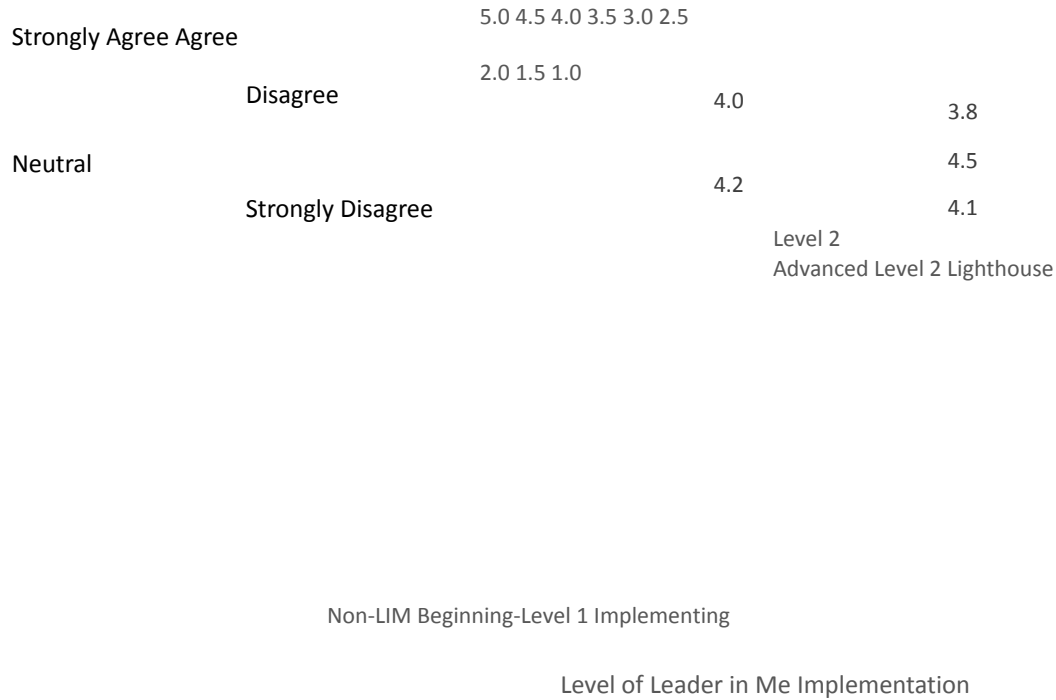


Similarly, students in early LIM implementation schools tended to *disagree* that their teachers ask them what their interests are, compared to students in advanced LIM levels, who tended to *agree* with this statement (Figure 27).



Though most students across all LIM levels of implementation *agreed* that school helps them discover what they're good at, students in more advanced LIM schools tended to more strongly *agree* (Figure 28).

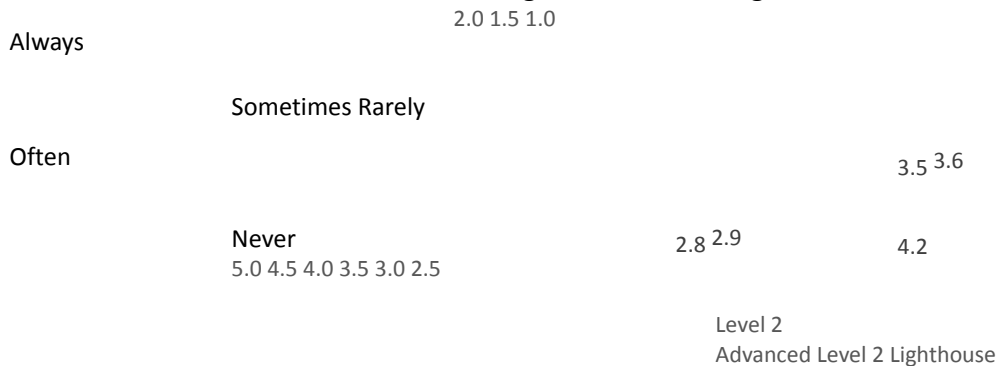
Figure 28. 4th Graders' Agreement that " School helps me discover what I'm good at."



41

Differences were also seen across LIM levels in the frequency that students perceived that “People at school notice when I’m good at something”. Students in beginning LIM schools said that *sometimes* people noticed, compared to advanced LIM students who reported that people *often* noticed (Figure 29).

Figure 29. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "People at school notice when I'm good at something."



One other question asked students if they get a chance to do things at school that show their talents. Most 4<sup>th</sup> grade students *agreed* that they do, but no differences were seen across LIM implementation levels.

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

Unlike 4<sup>th</sup> graders, non-LIM 7<sup>th</sup> graders responded similarly to Lighthouse 7<sup>th</sup> graders on most items. Both groups tended to respond *neutrally* or in *disagreement* with the statement that their teachers ask them what their interests are; both responded in the *neutral-to-agree* zone that they get a chance to do things at school that show their talents; both said they *sometimes* or *slightly less often* get to spend time learning about things that interest them; and both reported that people at school notice when they are good at something *sometimes* or *slightly more often*. There was a marginally significant difference between the two groups of students in their agreement that school helps them discover what they are good at, with Lighthouse students *agreeing* more strongly.

### Open-Ended Student Survey Data

Another way we assessed student gifts and talents development was by asking students to list three gifts or talents they have. Data presented below are from all LIM and non-LIM schools. Students' responses tended to fall within five categories: academics, sports, art, interpersonal (e.g., kind, helpful, respectful), and performance (e.g., dancing, singing) (Figures 30 and 31). A large percentage of both LIM and non-LIM students listed being good academically as a major talent. Sports-related talent was a close second among the 7<sup>th</sup> graders and mentioned by about half of the 4<sup>th</sup> graders. Fourth graders in LIM schools were less likely to identify music/performance talents and more likely to list interpersonal talents; 7<sup>th</sup> graders in LIM schools were less likely to identify artistic talents and more likely to list interpersonal talents. These higher rates of students from LIM schools citing gifts and talents of an interpersonal nature may reflect LIM's emphasis on teamwork, cooperation, and interdependence.

Figure 30. 4th Grade Students' Responses to "List three gifts or talents you have."

Interpersonal

Art

Sports

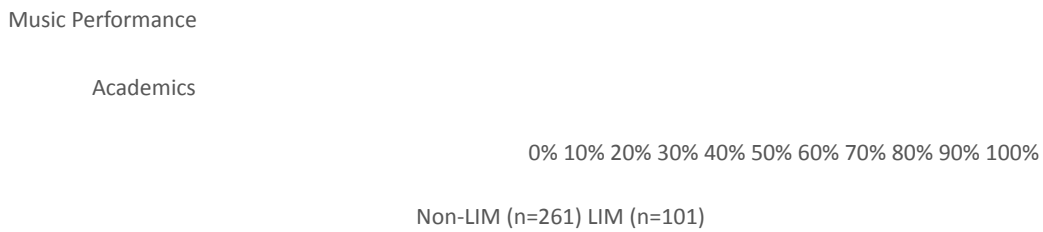


Figure 31. 7th Grade Students' Responses to "List three gifts or talents you have."

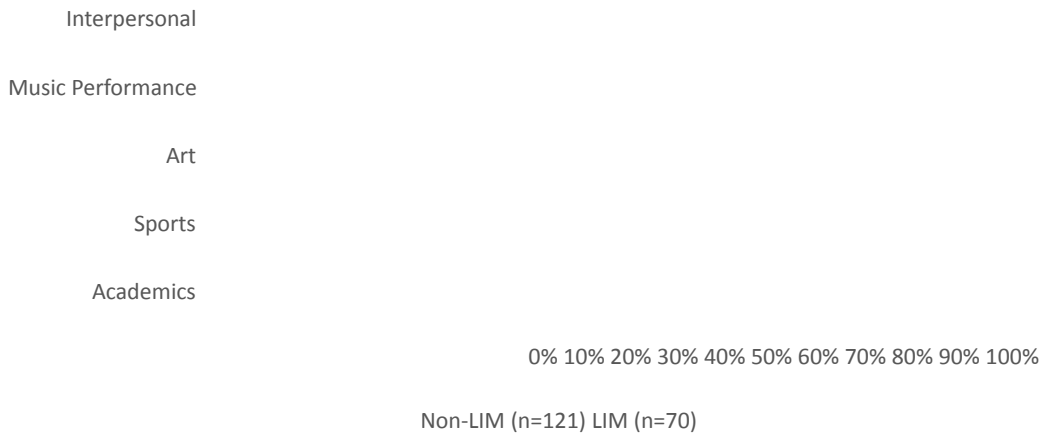


Figure 32. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of Student Talent Development

### Teacher Survey

Teachers were asked three questions pertaining to student talents and gifts that paralleled the student questions. Both LIM and non-LIM teachers reported that they actively seek information about their students' outside interests *often*. LIM teachers reported they more frequently gave students opportunities to do things at school that show their talents and let students spend time learning about things that interest them (Figure 32).

My students have opportunities to do things at school that show their talents.

I let my students spend time learning about things that interest them.

Non-LIM (n=55) LIM (n=70)

44

## Teacher and Principal Interview

Non-LIM teachers and principals were asked how students at their school explored their gifts and talents or learned what they're good at. They stated that exploration of students' gifts and talents was limited. Opportunities for students to explore or identify their gifts and talents were either nonexistent; occurred only at the beginning of the year; were not integrated throughout all classes and were isolated to "specials" such as PE, music, and art class; or were not applicable to students not identified as academically gifted.

### Non-LIM Principals and Teachers

*I would say we don't have a system-wide protocol for that. That may be something that happens within the classroom when teachers do student interest inventories and things like that. I know that in eighth grade they might do career exploring and kind of backtrack to what they might be interested in now. But it's sort of intermittent. So I would say that that's a gap that we have.*

*Our students' skills and talents explored, I think once again, I used the word 'incidentally' a little bit ago. I think that teachers that take that time to build that relationship try to look for interest and skills in students, but I don't think once again that it's an intentional, all-encompassing way to try to say, "No matter how bad today, or how bad the last week is, you are the best at something, and I'm going to keep digging until we find it."*

*Just at the beginning of the year, for me at least, we do an interest inventory for all my kids. What are you interested in? Where are you interested in going with your education? How do you like to learn*

*best? And then I kind of use that to guide them in small groups.*

*A lot of teachers, especially at the beginning of school year, will do different learning style inventories, different surveys to try to get to know the kids and what their interests are and then use those to develop things in the classroom. We also have a very strong PACT program for the gifted and talented, so lots of opportunities for those kids outside, not only during the school day but outside of the school day.*

*I think it just depends on the classroom teacher. If the teacher incorporates the art, music, the technology in the classroom then they can explore their talents through that. Otherwise, I feel like every day they explore their talents when they go to their specials. They go to music, art, media, and PE, so to me that's where they can show their talents.*

*There's specials--music, art, PE, things like that. Outside of that, schoolwide, there's a talent show that we just finished up... We have kids that dance, we had a kid that did magic, and things like that. But outside of that, I don't think there's a whole lot of schoolwide opportunities. In my classroom, I try to give them chances to be creative.*

Educators at LIM schools were asked the same question about how students at their school explored their gifts and talents or learned what they were good at. There was a clear difference between LIM schools and Non-LIM schools in the identification of student gifts and talents and how students' gifts and talents are integrated into classrooms and academic endeavors. While 1<sup>st</sup> year LIM schools identify many similar opportunities for students to explore their gifts and talents, by the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the program, many teachers and principals identify many different ways in which LIM allows for the integration of gifts and talents into multiple school and classroom activities.

45

### **LIM Beginning-Level 1**

*We do a talent show every year so that allows some students to express what they have and we encourage all students to try out so they can find something that they're good at. Then some of our specialists have taken on some morning activities where the kids can express themselves either with art or music or gym. Then in the classroom we try to do a survey at the beginning of the year to find out what kids are interested in and then we try to build some curriculum around that for each classroom and then just doing some different activities throughout the year.*

*I know that at specials ... that's a really big one for our students. They really enjoy exploring their musical talents, their physical abilities, and even their artistic abilities at specials. There are teachers who incorporate those arts into their classroom as well. One of the things that I look forward to at the end of every year ... our students do almost like a science-fair-type project, where they would present what they've learned about the human body system. Every year I always find a student who just is a phenomenal public speaker.*

*I would say, first and foremost, classroom teachers do a really good job of noticing strengths in kids because some people really like to be in front of audiences or that type of speaker/leader role. What I charge our staff to do is, to really notice our kids because we have some great kids that might be really shy or reserved, and helping them, but might be gifted in music, or might be gifted in art. So, really looking at individual children and then helping them develop their gifts.*

### **Level 2**

*Some of that would probably come with some of those leadership jobs, because there's some that are what they're comfortable with or enjoy doing. We have some clubs and things.*

*We have some clubs like Lego League for kids who are interested in that. We have a talent show every year. And then we do a variety of things in the classroom to show their talents and skills.*

*We have a talent show at the end of the year, but not really anything. I guess that's maybe one of the things that we're looking forward to actually.*

*We do provide opportunities. It's not great, but to explore their gifts and talents we have the Student Choir, and they can try out, or just join the choir if they really have a thing for music. And then our music teacher will teach them how to play the guitar, or they'll be performing at our leadership assemblies. They get to apply for jobs so if they want to try out for being a public speaker and they think they might want to do that, they'll be able to experience that. But I would say we don't have some great ways to explore.*

Schools more advanced in their LIM implementation show an expanded understanding of how student gifts and talents related to more expanded and integrated school and classroom activities. These schools describe the ways in which they depart from the standard “specials” of PE, art, and music to explore a more diverse understanding of gifts and talents and how they are incorporated into the school environment and not seen as separate from school and students’ academic work. Many of the opportunities described for students to explore gifts and talents in schools with advanced LIM implementation were related to “jobs” for students. Further, teachers at LIM schools were able to describe how exploration of gifts and talents was an ongoing effort and not something done only once.

## **Advanced Level 2**

*I really have to think about it, anything that's more specific than the December and May WIN clubs. WIN stands for What I Need, which is essentially Tier II time. In December and in May, it turns into an interest club. Exploring what they're good at, it really is going to have to be teacher-to-teacher and classroom-to-classroom because a child shows a particular interest in something and then a teacher finds time or gives them guidance where they can continue their pursuit. Of course, this is still within the boundaries of the classroom and the class times.*

*I think when you try to do some of that in our designated LIM time in the morning, but that's also part of the leadership opportunities. They have to talk about what skills they think they have that would make them good at that job. We also do clubs. We had some students that came up with their own clubs based on strengths. I think the one club that we had girls come up with this last time was Speak Up For Yourself Club or something like that. I can't even remember. They run the club then. These two 4<sup>th</sup>-grade girls are in charge of it. Kids can say what kind of clubs might interest them, and then they're in a club for the year. That's another way, it's like if you think you're really interested in science then you can pursue the science club and maybe come up with ideas to help with that.*

*We have something called clubs, and we do it twice a month. It is kind of designed around staff talents, so staff get the opportunity to, whatever their talent is or whatever they enjoy doing, their hobby. They get to do a club and kids get a list of all the different clubs that are options for them. Everybody participates and they get to sign up and learn a new trade, or learn how to bake, or learn some problem solving if they like the logistics and that kind of thing. They get the opportunity to try new things and we*



*rotate them once a year, so about halfway through the school year, they get to try out a different club. The kids get so excited for it.*

*Only since we started LIM, we have December clubs and May clubs, where students and staff align their gifts.*

### **Lighthouse**

*One piece right now is the leadership roles that we provide. We have quite a range of roles that kids can get involved in and lots of them will pick them because they're super passionate. So for example, I've got three 5<sup>th</sup> graders that are really passionate about recycling.*

*I have K club and different things, so they get to choose. There's arts and crafts and drama and sports, so we work on that a little bit. Then we have speakers, but do things so there's kids that get to do that. That's a kind of work in progress.*

*We're a work in progress. I guess we start at the very beginning of the school year. We each bring something per se to the table or to the classroom and so it's a lot of things like talking and sharing. And then within the special areas too, the kids are finding themselves, for example art or music, the opportunities then that display. We've got opportunities for them to rise up, like if they want to share something at an assembly they've got that. So that's an opportunity to develop. We've got a variety show coming up, which will have an opportunity too for them to share maybe not a gift that we would see here, but maybe a gift too that they're bringing from outside.*

While LIM schools show a progression of increased opportunities for students to explore their gifts and talents and integration of gifts and talents within school and classroom settings as they advance through LIM implementation, there is still room for schools to grow and integrate gifts and talents. 47

## **Gifts and Talents Summary**

### **Student Survey**

Among 4<sup>th</sup> graders, students in non- and beginning LIM schools report that they seldom get to spend time learning about things that interest them, whereas advanced LIM students report they often do. Similarly, advanced LIM students agree that their teachers ask them what their interests are, while beginning LIM students disagree with this statement. Advanced LIM students also report that people at school frequently notice when they're good at something, compared to beginning LIM students who report that this occurs sometimes. Most 4<sup>th</sup> graders agreed, however, that school helps them discover what they're good at and that they get chances at school to do things that show their talents.

Among 7<sup>th</sup> graders, LIM students were more likely to agree that school helps them discover what they are good at.

When asked to identify three gifts they had, students most often named academics and sports, but in both grades, LIM students mentioned interpersonal gifts more often than non-LIM students.

### **Teacher Survey**

LIM and non-LIM teachers responded similarly the questions about student talent development.

### **Teacher and Principal Interview**

There is a clear difference between LIM schools and non-LIM schools when it comes to identification and integration of students' gifts and talents. Non-LIM teachers and principals stated that exploration of students'

gifts and talents was limited. While 1<sup>st</sup> year LIM schools identify many similar opportunities for students to explore their gifts and talents, by the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the program, schools are identifying many different ways in which LIM allows for the integration of gifts and talents into multiple school and classroom activities.

Schools more advanced in their LIM implementation show an expanded understanding of how student gifts and talents related to more expanded and integrated school and classroom activities. These schools depart from the standard “specials” of PE, art, and music to explore a more diverse understanding of gifts and talents and how they are incorporated into the school environment. Many of the opportunities described for students to explore gifts and talents in schools with advanced LIM implementation were related to “jobs” for students.

**Key Findings:**

- 4<sup>th</sup> graders in advanced LIM schools report that they get to spend time learning about things that interest them and that people at school notice when they’re good at something more frequently than non- and beginning LIM students.
- 4<sup>th</sup> graders in advanced LIM schools agree that their teachers ask them what their interests are, while non- and beginning LIM students disagree with this statement.
- LIM students mentioned having interpersonal gifts more often compared to non-LIM students.
- Schools more advanced in their LIM implementation show an expanded understanding of how student gifts and talents related to more expanded and integrated school and classroom activities.
- Many of the opportunities described for students to explore gifts and talents in schools with advanced LIM implementation were related to “jobs” for students.

**EVALUATION QUESTION 3:**

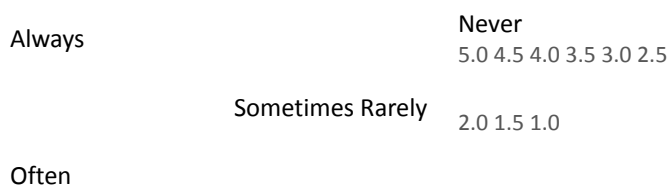
**In LIM schools, to what extent are students participating in authentic leadership opportunities and how does this differ by level of implementation?**

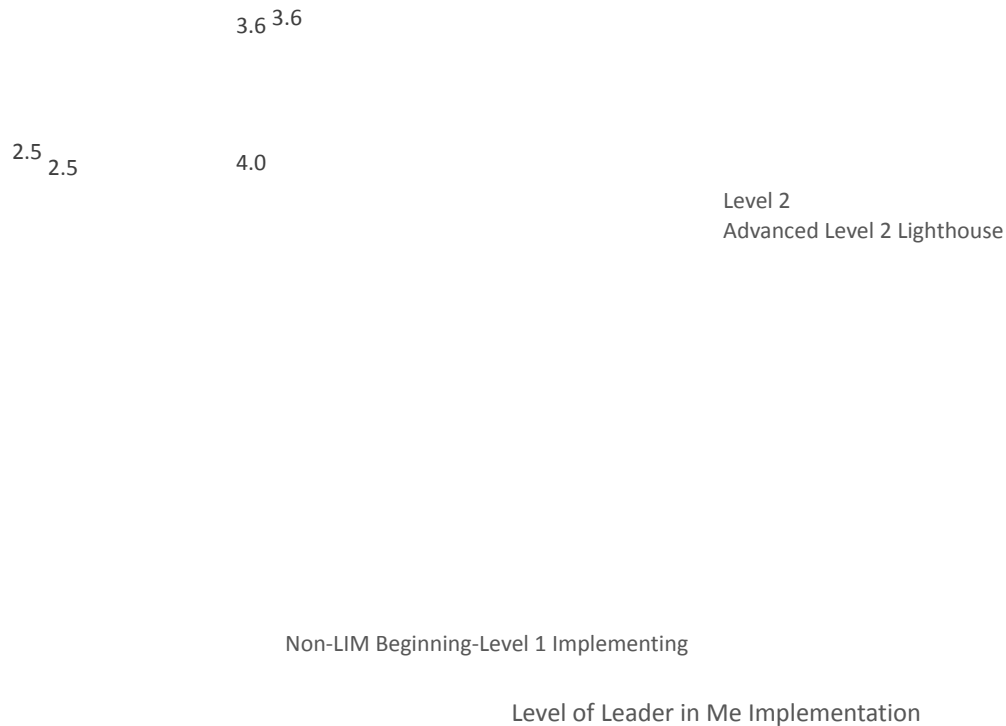
**Student Survey**

**4<sup>th</sup> Grade Students**

Students were asked several questions pertaining to leadership opportunities at school. First, they were asked how often they get to help make decisions at their school. At the 4<sup>th</sup> grade level, students in the non-LIM and beginning LIM schools reported that they *rarely to sometimes* got to help make decisions. As Figure 33 shows, these estimates increased at each level, with Lighthouse students reporting they *often* got to help make decisions.

Figure 33. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "Students get to help make decisions at my school."





At the 7<sup>th</sup> grade level, both LIM and non-LIM students reported they *sometimes* got to help make decisions.

To find out how students conceptualized leadership, on the student survey they were asked to list three things that make someone a leader. (These responses do not sum to 100% because some students' responses covered more than one theme, and only the most common themes are represented in Figures 34 and 35.) Both 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> graders' responses clustered on the same concepts, whether the students were from non-LIM or LIM schools: being helpful, respectful, caring/kind, and a good listener. However, almost half of the 4<sup>th</sup> graders from LIM schools (47%) and more than half of the 7<sup>th</sup> graders from LIM schools (53%) mentioned being caring/kind as a key attribute of a leader, whereas 4<sup>th</sup> graders from non-LIM schools were more likely to feel that being a leader meant being helpful (42%) and fewer 7<sup>th</sup> graders from non-LIM schools (36%) felt that to be a leader was to be caring/kind.

Figure 34. 4th Grade Students' Responses to "What makes

someone a leader?"

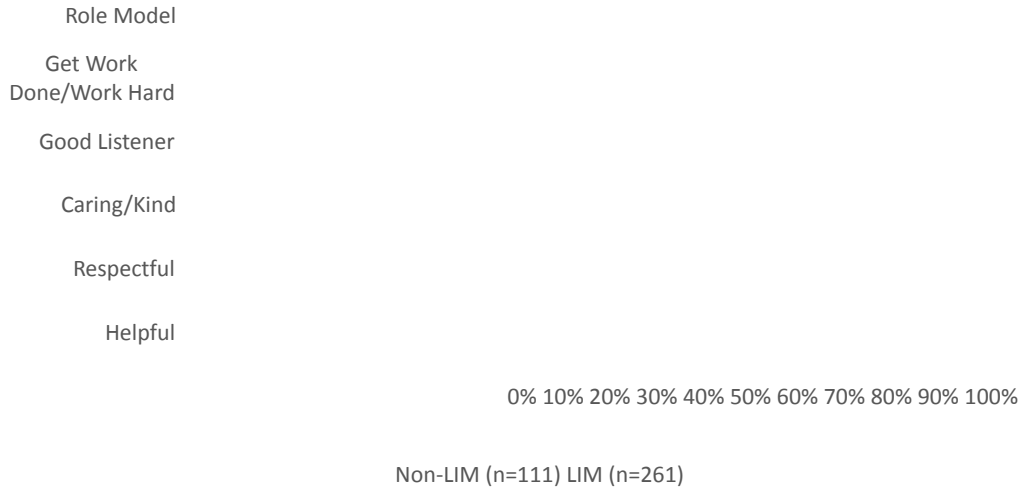
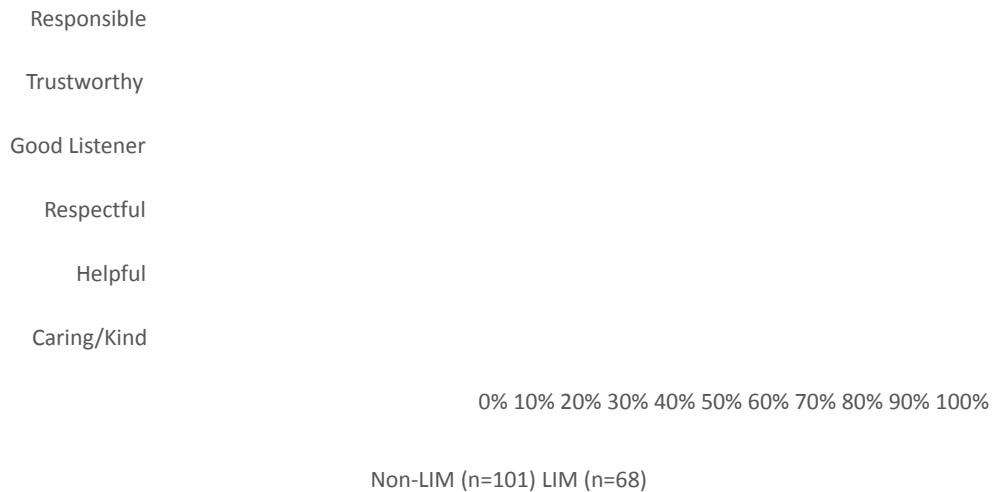


Figure 35. 7th Grade Students' Responses to "What makes someone a leader?"



Lastly, on the student survey, students were asked to describe how they are a leader at their school. (These responses also do not sum to 100% because some students' responses covered more than one theme, and only the most common themes are represented in Figures 36 and 37.) Again, similar themes surfaced across 4<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade and across non-LIM and LIM schools: helping others, getting work done/doing your best, being respectful, being kind to others, and listening/paying attention. Among the 4<sup>th</sup> graders, the same themes occurred in the same order of prevalence, with "helping others" being most commonly identified among both non-LIM and LIM students, accounting for over one-third of each group. Seventh graders at both non-LIM and LIM schools were even more likely to name "helping others" as a way in which they were a leader, with about 50% of each group stating this. Seventh graders at LIM schools were also likely to feel that "getting my work done/doing my best" was something that made them a leader at their school.

Figure 36. 4th Grade Students' Responses to "How are you a leader at your school?"

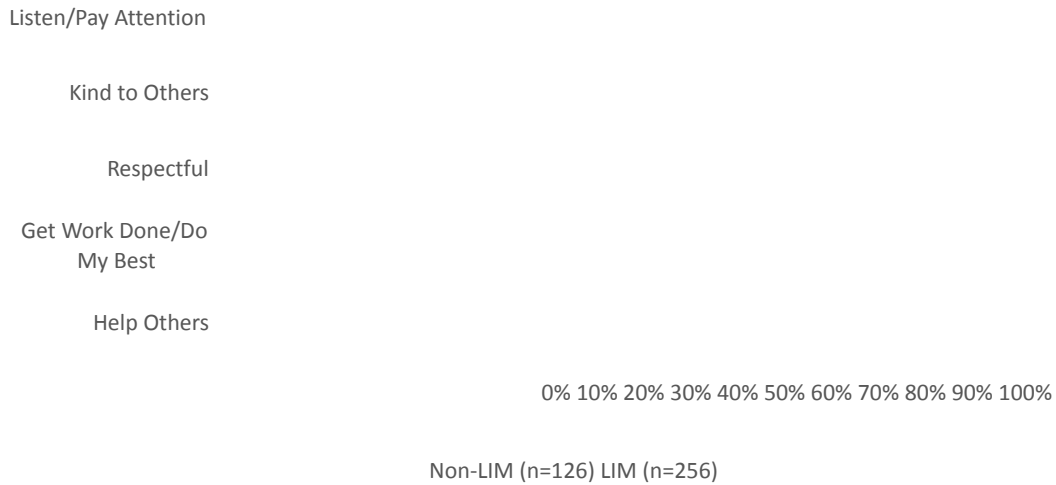
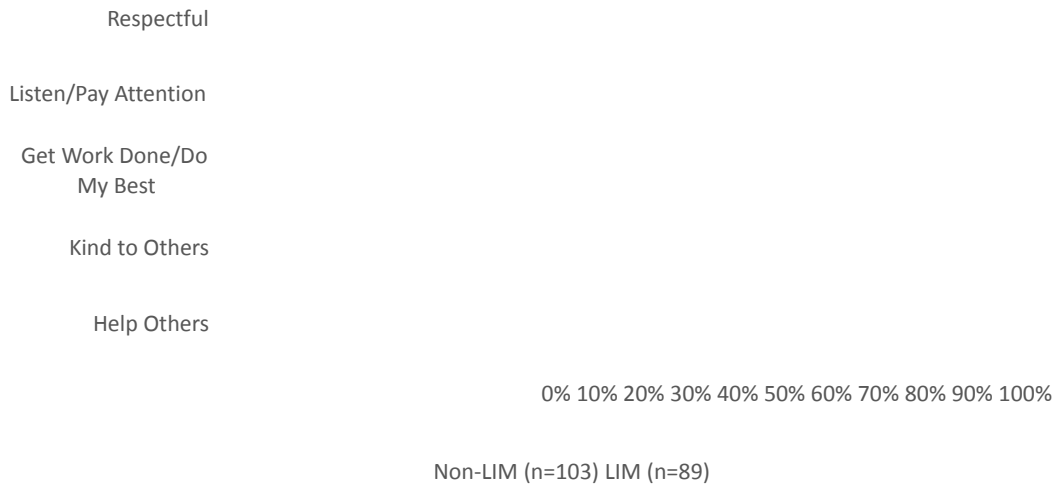


Figure 37. 7th Grade Students' Responses to "How are you a leader at your school?"



**Student Focus Group**

In the focus groups, students first were asked to talk about what it means to be a leader. Students in both LIM and non-LIM schools defined leadership in terms such as caring, behaving appropriately, and being helpful, respectful, and responsible.

*[Being a leader is] like not talking back, being caring, and listening to what others have to say (non-LIM student).*

*A leader is being kind (non-LIM student).*

*I think treating people the way you want to be treated and respecting others with the same respect you would give to anybody else (non-LIM student).*

*Everybody should be respectful, responsible, and everything, even classroom, classes, home, playground (non-LIM student).*

*Leadership is you just have to be your best, and you have to help others and show them that you can work with them (LIM student).*

*Some of the leaders show the characteristics of helping each other a lot (LIM student).*

*This is how you can be a leader. By being respectful, being kind, and always doing your job and this is how you cannot be a leader. By being disrespectful, bad, and just rude (LIM student).*

*We get partners and someone helps me and I help the other person or something like that and we get different partners (LIM student).*

*Well you can be a leader by doing these stars, expectations which is S—stay safe, T—take responsibility, A—accept others, R—respect all, and S—success will follow (LIM student).*

Second, LIM students also defined leadership as having self-control, doing your best, and setting goals.

*[As a leader] you have to make sure you're in charge of yourself and that you're not trying to control other people and make them do what you want to do. You need to make sure you listen to both points of view, and not just think 'oh, I want to do this' ..., you have to listen to [others' viewpoints] (LIM student).*

*You have to show that you can do something that you think you can't. You have to do whatever it takes to get up there to the highest point that you want, so make goals every day (LIM student).*

Students were then asked if everyone in their classroom gets opportunities to be leaders. The overwhelming majority of LIM students explained that all students get opportunities to be leaders, but some students lose the opportunities because they misbehave.

*I think they all do, but some of the students in our classroom don't take that chance, and they don't show that they can help. And so, when they get the chance they don't like, use it. And I think all of us get the chance if we work hard enough (LIM student).*

*Everyone gets a chance to be a leader, but it's up to them if they choose to be a leader, or if they just choose to not follow the rules and not be a leader (LIM student).*

*...our class is mostly good and we're mostly all leaders. But some people just don't like to be leaders in our classroom because they get frustrated (LIM student).*

52

In contrast, non-LIM students commented that not all students get opportunities to be leaders because there are too many students. Similar to the LIM students, they reported that some students lose opportunities to be leaders because they misbehave.

*Most people in my class don't get the chance to be leaders because they're always getting in trouble or they're always getting sent out of the classroom (non-LIM student).*

*I think there's too many kids. It would be hard to have everybody be a leader because there's so many kids in the building and not enough, like, one-on-one time for everybody to have experienced that (non LIM student).*

*Why people do not get a chance to be leaders in my class is because they're always talking when the teacher is and they're always off task, or looking at someone else and making faces and stuff. And*

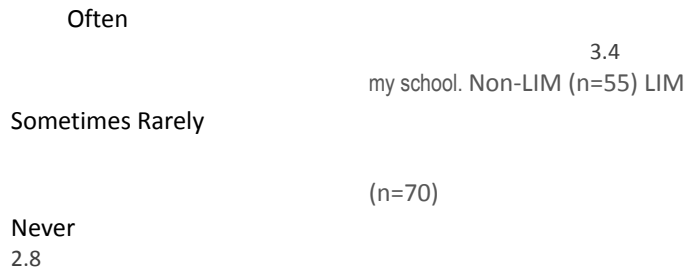
*they're always getting sent out of the room (non-LIM student).*

## Teacher Survey

Teachers were asked to respond to four items about student leadership opportunities at their school. Significant differences were seen between LIM and non-LIM teachers on all four items. On the whole, LIM teachers reported that students get to help make decisions at their school more frequently than non-LIM teachers (Figure 38). LIM teachers also *agreed* that their school provides leadership opportunities for all students, that students have opportunities to be leaders in their own special ways, and that their professional development is adequately training them to foster student leadership (Figure 39). In contrast, non-LIM teachers were on average *neutral* in response to these three items.

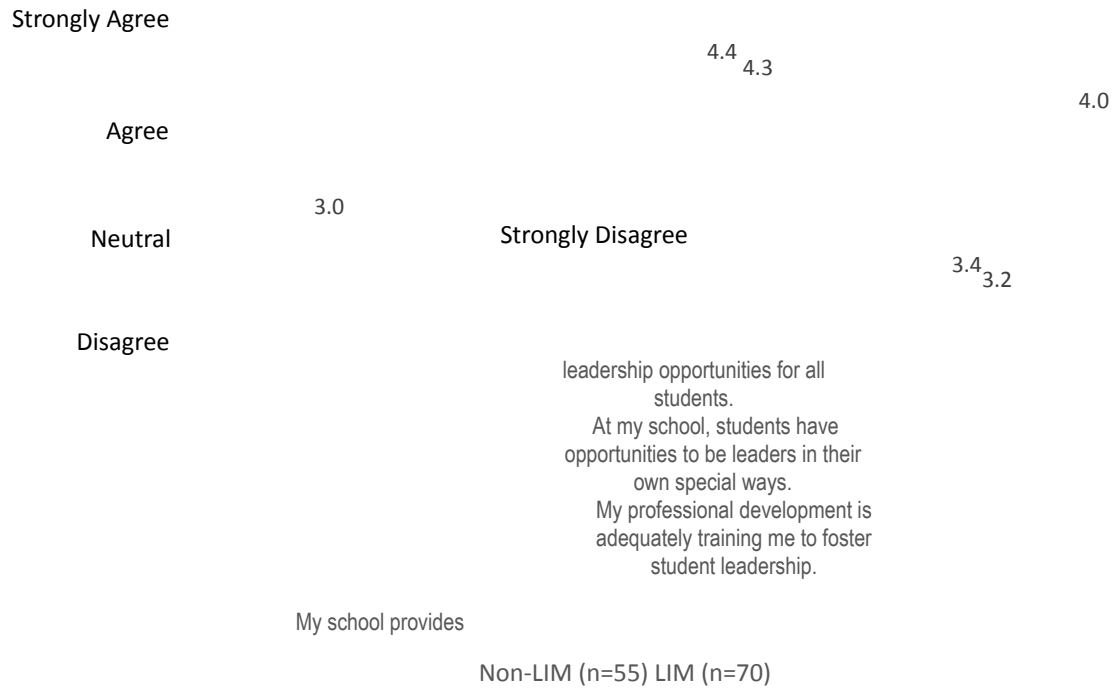
Figure 38. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of Student Leadership Opportunities (Voice)

Always



Students get to help make decisions at

Figure 39. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of Student Leadership Opportunities



Teachers also responded to an open-ended question asking them to list student leadership opportunities at their school. An overwhelming majority of 41 responding non-LIM teachers commented that student leadership opportunities were centered around helping other students (peer helpers, tutors, mentors, reading buddies, etc.), helping in the classroom (pass papers, answer phones, take attendance, etc.), assisting staff with announcements in the assemblies, and working as student aides in the media center. Non-LIM teachers also listed serving in student council and clubs as well as participation in extracurricular activities as some of the leadership opportunities available to students in their school. As suggested by the quotes, some students do get these leadership opportunities.



*We have a small group of students that participate in organizing social activities, some help in the office, some help in certain classrooms.*

*We have students who do the morning announcements and help put books away in the library.*

*We have student council, and students have advocated for rule changes and succeeded.*

*Students are able to mentor and read to students who are younger than themselves and to share their knowledge with community members and parents.*

Sixty-two LIM teachers responded to the same open-ended question. A sizable percentage (28%) of them listed helping other students and helping in the classroom as leadership opportunities available to students at their schools. However, unlike in the non-LIM schools, teachers in LIM schools commented that these leadership roles were based on students' interests. LIM teachers also mentioned that students had jobs in the classroom and around the school, and that each child had a leadership job. For example, students serve on building committees and hiring committees, participate in LIM lesson planning sessions, and serve in classroom and schoolwide leadership positions of their choice.

*There are upper-grade-level leaders who help the lower grade levels.*

*In my classroom, students have taken on jobs around the room on their own which has helped me with some of the "little" things getting done: passing out lunch cards, handing out the blue folders and food bags to students.*

*Students have leadership jobs, they are on committees that decide events and activities for our school. Students are represented in building committees, campus jobs, and classroom positions.*

## **Teacher and Principal Interview**

Principals and teachers were asked if all students had leadership opportunities and how students were selected for them. Students' leadership opportunities were different between LIM and non-LIM schools, according to both teachers and principals. Non-LIM principals and teachers explained that students' leadership opportunities were limited to student councils, ambassador clubs, and teacher-selected classroom leaders.

*Right now there are quite a few teachers who have taken on the notion of assigning classroom leadership roles. And then we have sort of some schoolwide roles. We have student PBIS leaders. I have a communications leader. I have a marketing leader. So we do have kind of a handful, maybe five or*

*seven kids in each grade, that step up and do some building-wide leadership.*

*[Student leadership opportunities is] one thing that we're looking at, wanting to expand. Because we've got a really good, really strong PBIS program going. But, we don't have as many of the leadership components in it. We do have kids that work as office runners. And they do morning announcements. And in the classroom, they'll take care of passing out and picking up and things like that. But, we are looking at coming up with more opportunities for them.*

*Leadership opportunities they have are monthly PARRT awards where as teachers we nominate certain students based off of whether or not they're doing their PARRT and PARRT being personal best.*

*What's happening at [my school] right now, unfortunately like many schools that do not have LIM it's a little bit of a hodgepodge in order to try to meet those 21<sup>st</sup>-century leadership skills....[W]e do very limited amounts of small-group counseling sessions that help with leadership skills, but normally the leadership skills that we're working on developing are because there is already an issue or a problem.*

LIM teachers and principals explained leadership opportunities in terms of students' ownership of their learning process and having responsibilities around the school.

*Students definitely feel connected, that they feel like they have some ownership and say over their learning.*

*We literally let our kids do everything that they can because we want them to be owners of the school. We're even doing a thing that we now are not moving managerial roles, but also creating student tutors. So we're now doing academic leaders where they're going down to the elementary and doing tutoring, and tutoring other kids across the building, so we've actually gone into a new phase where we're doing academic leaders.*

*[The school is] more student centered. They take more ownership in the school.*

*Really the kids have to take ownership of their [learning]. I guess trying to give them a sense of ownership of their learning. Of their environment, that they are the ones that create what they need.*

*Our kids are on our hiring committees. We're doing an interview for different teaching positions. Our kids are sitting in the interviews, they're part of the process, they give feedback on who we should hire. Everything from that down to taking the trash out at lunch. They have every aspect of it ... They get ownership in and we're able to teach them actual skills on why it's important to take ownership of things and how you also have to use discourse and disagree and not always get along in terms of the final decision that will be made.*

*[Students] got to choose what body system they wanted to work with. Then as a group, they came up with how they wanted to present to others what they learned. Some people did a slideshow. Some people made a model out of clay. Some people did a skit. They were able to take charge of their own learning with that.*

*We do a government unit and within that government unit, they talk about what a citizen is and volunteerism. They got together in my class, I kind of stepped out (not stepped out literally). They took over what they wanted to do for volunteering and they picked the Humane Society. They got into teams and they had a group that did advertising, they had a group that was going to make toys ... They had a group that was going to do fundraising, and we did this for about a month. They contacted the Humane*

*Society. I don't think I've done this activity before I've ever done LIM, and as a teacher I was the one doing all the work. These students did all the work. They got in their committees, they did their work, and they had a list. "We've got to do this before we can do this, we've got to do this before" ... It was very successful.*

LIM principals and teachers also reported that they provided specific leadership opportunities designed to teach 21<sup>st</sup>-century leadership and life skills to students. In addition, the educators mentioned that all students had chances to participate in these leadership opportunities.

*Well, I think here is we try to give them as many opportunities in a couple ways. One, opportunities to serve, whether it's service projects school-wide or class-wide or grade-wide or be a part of goal. And we try to have career fairs a couple times a year, that kind of thing where they can kind of explore.*

*All [students] have the opportunity. We go through a process at the beginning of the year. We tell them all about the building-wide leadership roles and they have the opportunity to apply for those roles and then interview for them. Anybody who interviews usually gets a leadership job, a school-wide leadership job. Then we have leadership jobs in the classroom. So, I would say, yeah, 100% of, at least my students, had leadership jobs.*

*Yeah, every student is given a job...probably some help from the other people on the leadership team, at least all the fourth and fifth graders have a leadership job throughout the school. It could be helping with kindergarten or first graders. It could be helping with the grounds. It could be helping with the Partner in Ed meetings or something. They usually are doing something in fourth and fifth grade that's visible.*

*Current status is that every student has a leadership binder and they track goals and they set goals and they record successes. We implement student-led conferences. Both in the fall and the spring the students are leading their conference, where they're telling their families how they are doing so far in school. And they use their leadership binders to guide that conference.*

## **Leadership Opportunities Summary**

### **Student Survey and Focus Group**

When we asked 4<sup>th</sup> grade students how often they get to help make decisions at their school, we found that at one end of the LIM spectrum, students reported that they *rarely* to *sometimes* got to, and at the other end of the spectrum, they reported that they *often* got to help make decisions. At the 7<sup>th</sup> grade level, students in both the Lighthouse and non-LIM schools both said they *sometimes* got to help make decisions at school.

Students tended to conceptualize leadership in the same way across grade levels and LIM status. Similarly, when they described how they were leaders at their schools, both LIM and non-LIM students tended to focus

on similar behaviors with one exception: compared to non-LIM students, more LIM 7<sup>th</sup> graders tended to think that getting their work done or doing their best was a way that they were leaders.

The majority of LIM students reported that all students in their school get opportunities to be leaders but that some lose the privilege because they misbehave. Non-LIM students reported that there were too many students for everyone to get opportunities to be leaders and that misbehavior resulted in losing this privilege.

### **Teacher Survey**

LIM teachers also reported that students more frequently got to help make decisions and were more likely to agree that their school provides leadership opportunities for all students, that students have opportunities to be leaders in their own special ways, and that their professional development has adequately trained them to foster student leadership.

LIM and non-LIM teachers identified similar ways in which students served as leaders in their schools: students helping other students and helping in the classroom. However, LIM teachers reported that the leadership roles were based on students' interests. LIM teachers report that every student had a leadership job.

### **Teacher and Principal Interview**

LIM teachers and principals explained leadership opportunities in terms of students' ownership of their learning process and having responsibilities around the school. Students' leadership opportunities were different between LIM and non-LIM schools. Non-LIM principals and teachers explained that students' leadership opportunities were limited to student councils, ambassador clubs, and teacher-selected classroom leaders. In contrast, LIM principals and teachers provided specific leadership opportunities designed to teach 21<sup>st</sup>-century leadership and life skills to students, in which all students had chances to participate.

### **Key Findings:**

- LIM teachers overwhelmingly believe that their school provides leadership opportunities for all students and that the opportunities provided are tailored to students' interests.
- Elementary students in LIM schools with advanced implementation get to help make decisions more often than non-LIM students and early implementation LIM students.
- Students who misbehave lose leadership opportunities in both LIM and non-LIM schools. • Leadership opportunities in LIM schools are designed to teach 21<sup>st</sup> century and life skills to students and encompass a broader range of activities compared to non-LIM schools.

#### **EVALUATION QUESTION 4:**

**How do LIM schools at different levels of implementation differ from non-LIM schools in student engagement?**

#### **EVALUATION QUESTION 5:**

**How do LIM schools at different levels of implementation differ from non-LIM schools in academic performance?**

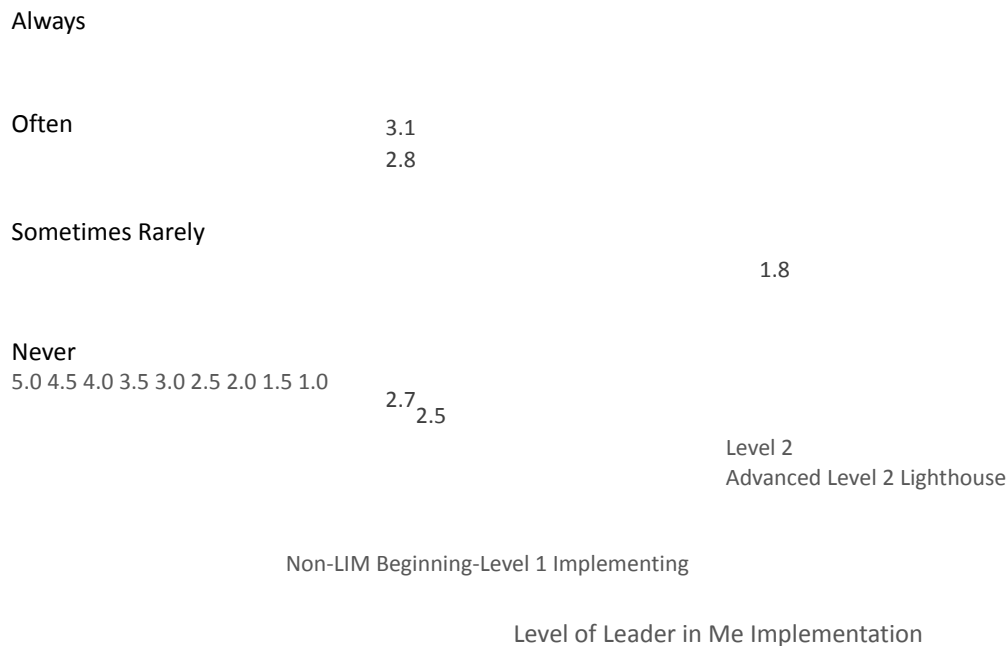
Findings of these two evaluation questions are reported together due to their relatedness.

## Student Survey

### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

Students were asked four questions pertaining to their engagement in school. As the Figure 40 shows, non- and beginning LIM students report that they *sometimes* don't like school, compared to Lighthouse students who report they *rarely* dislike school.

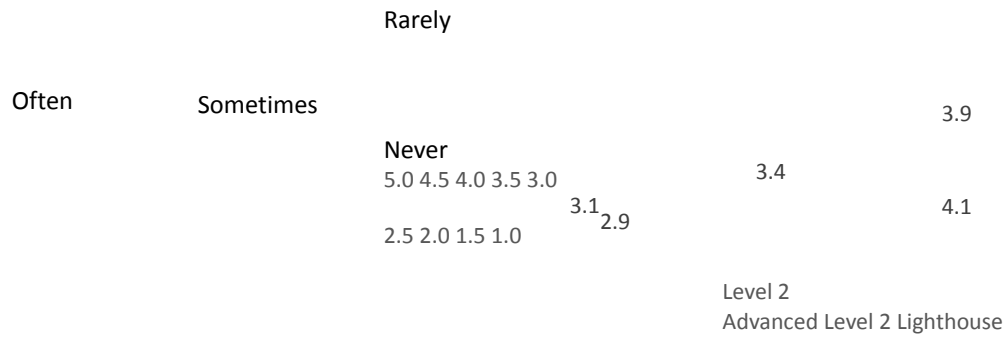
Figure 40. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "I don't like school."



Conversely, non- and beginning LIM students reported that they are *sometimes* interested in the work at school, compared to advanced LIM students who reported that they *often* are interested (Figure 41).

Figure 41. 4th Graders' Estimates of the Frequency that "I am interested in the work at school."

Always



Non-LIM Beginning-Level 1 Implementing

Level of Leader in Me Implementation

Students in general reported that they *sometimes* to *often* review their schoolwork for mistakes and that they *rarely* don't pay attention during class.

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Students

Lighthouse and non-LIM 7<sup>th</sup> grade students responded similarly on all four questions. Students reported they *rarely* don't pay attention during class, *sometimes* don't like school, and *sometimes* are interested in the work at school. Similarly, they *sometimes* review their schoolwork for mistakes, although Lighthouse students responded on average midway between *sometimes* and *often*.

### Student Focus Group

Students at non-LIM schools were asked what would help them be better students. Student focus groups at

non-LIM schools identified behavior and following directions as key components of academic improvement for themselves and others at their school. The students specifically cited their inability to self-regulate their own learning by saying repeatedly that they need to “focus” more in class and school to be a better student.

*I get distracted a lot, like I get distracted easily. I'll be in class, just like, doing whatever, probably coloring or doodling, or something. Just because like, I just get distracted and I don't like the class anyway.*

*I just think I need to like, focus in more, and stop talking and calm myself down to know like, to really focus, really--so I understand and get what they're trying to say. It's harder for me to focus because everybody is always making a lot of noises around me.*

*I think, coming to class, do your work, always listen to the teacher's directions because that's gonna help you move on to another grade and when you feel uncomfortable always tell them, when you have a question always ask them so you understand it better, and it doesn't have to go on like every single grade following you.*

Students at LIM schools were asked if LIM made them better students. An overwhelming majority of them affirmed this, mainly because they behaved better as a result of their participation in LIM.

*From like, by following directions and by like helping people. LIM helped me be a better student by minding my own business.*

*Well, I think because sometimes all ... Like when I was in third or second, I was a lot picky, like I wasn't a follower. I wasn't a leader...I used to pick on and hit people and I used to get me sent out to the office and everything. That's like this year, but some days I changed my ways. Today, I'm going to my way and through the whole year because the year is coming down and the school year is coming to be over and I'm going to be in fifth grade, so I'm going to keep to try my best to help others.*

*I don't talk a lot, as much as I used to and blurt and get into a lot of fights. And I don't go down to intervention anymore.*

Students from schools in Level 1 of LIM felt that the program had had an impact on their engagement by making them more focused on what they are supposed to do--they behave and treat others appropriately. Students at Beginning LIM schools were very similar to students at non-LIM schools by identifying behavior as having a key impact on engagement and academic performance.

*I'm not getting in as many fights in the class as I used to do during reading. I follow directions and I do my work when it's time.*

*It's made me a better student since in class I wouldn't focus a lot and I'm doing a little bit better in class.*

*It's making me a better student of what I am supposed to be and I am supposed to be a leader every day, so I do LIM a lot.*

*I know it has affected me because normally I used to not do my homework.*

*It has because I have been very, very respectful since we've talked about LIM, but some days, I am disrespectful before we talked about LIM. Very.*

*I think LIM has made me a better student because ever since we've been talking about LIM, I've been being a role model to others.*

*It's made me a better student since in class I wouldn't focus a lot and I'm doing a little bit better in class.*

*It does better for me because I never get in trouble. Because I used to get in trouble, and now I don't.*

As students spend more time in LIM they see a greater range of impacts on academic performance and how LIM affects their achievement. Level 2 students identified cooperation and ownership over actions as key aspects of LIM that have improved their academic performance in addition to identifying desirable behaviors.

### **Beginning Level 2**

*And it shows you like how you act and stuff, and like even if you're still good you could work even better. It's kind of teaching you that.*

*It showed me kind of how like, how to be responsible. Because there's younger kids all around you with that. And they always like come up to you. My partner, like, she's on the same bus, she'll wait for me when she comes off the bus. And they'll hug me, and it really makes me feel good. But it also shows me that I have to be a good role model, or they'll turn out to be a bad role model when they get older, so ...*

*Yeah. I think that like, LIM helped me realize that what I do affects all the other people around me, and doesn't just affect me. It can affect my whole community.*

*It teaches you kind of to work with others.*

*When we first started LIM, I didn't know what to do or anything. So now I realize that working together makes me and other people happier.*

Students at more advanced LIM schools described that LIM has not only helped them to be more focused in their schoolwork, but that they take ownership of their learning through goal setting and expressing their opinions. Advanced level 2 schools and Lighthouse schools show further expansion of LIM principles, and student comments regarding academic performance begin to mirror comments made by teachers and principals. Most notably, students begin to identify how cooperation and self-regulation impact engagement and academic performance. Lighthouse students noted that a major impact of LIM on engagement and academic performance was the ability of LIM to allow students to explore their gifts and talents in school.

### **Advanced Level 2**

*Well, I think it does because it's ... When we learn about it, it usually gets more fun and the more fun it is, it makes it easier to learn about, and so then you can listen more.*

*It helps me because when I'm not focused it helps me get right back on task.*

*Yes because if you think about it, LIM is to help you achieve your goals and help you to get more friends and help you to learn the basics of being nice, being trustworthy, being all the kind words, and it happens to some people, some people not. But they're trying to make a goal to get there.*

*Yes because I feel like now that we know that everyone has their own necessary actions and it's making them feel better, and it's making us feel better about sharing all of our feelings, and we did this today and it made me feel good.*

*Yes because how it feels now since there's no bringing people down now, kind of right now, it makes me feel like a part of the group, and it makes me feel like I'm the person who is in the group now, and it feels like that they're paying more attention to me now since they're paying attention to their-selves or*



*other people.*

*You can't leave somebody out if let's say you were doing a project and you ask a person or a friend to help, and they said no. Then that would, like she said, be dragging you down and leaving the other person kind of reach their goal instead of you reaching your goal.*

*The 7 Habits have helped with our learning because it helps us make sure that we have all of our work done and then later, if someone's struggling, we can help them with their work, but the 7 Habits has helped us get our work done and helped us manage our time wisely so that we can get our work done and help others with their work to make sure that everything gets done.*

### **Lighthouse**

*I've learned more because I've become more focused. Stuff like that.*

*For once, we get a chance to explain and have that time for us to say what we enjoy doing, not just sitting there listening to a book that we do not enjoy and just end up putting our head down and drifting away.*

*I feel like, at least for me, maybe some other kids that being a LIM school pushes me to be a better student to show the people outside of the school that we are a good school.*

*Basically everyone. It just helps you be a better person. Helps you learn more.*

*Yeah. I've learned more because I've become more focused. Stuff like that.*

*So in LIM class right now we're just going through our hobbies and I've gotten to learn more about my friends and more about other people in my class and they've gotten to learn about me.*

*I like the hobbies part because I feel like it actually lets us talk about who we really are and what we like to do and I like that part of LIM.*

In the focus groups, students reported that LIM had made them better students because they were behaving better and were more likely to be engaged in their schoolwork, but only the 4<sup>th</sup> graders in Lighthouse schools were significantly more likely to *agree* with any of the “engagement” items on the student survey. This may be due to the survey questions being more specific than the focus group questions—there were many possible affirmative responses to the focus group questions, which nonetheless clustered around the theme of behavior. In addition, there were no survey questions specifically examining the relationship between LIM, engagement, and behavior.

### **Teacher Survey**

LIM and non-LIM teachers responded similarly on three of the four survey items about student engagement. Teachers from both groups *agreed* that their students were usually engaged in their learning and that all their

students participated in class discussions regularly. Both groups also reported that they *sometimes* ask their students for input on the topics they study. LIM teachers were more likely to say that they give their students options about how they want to demonstrate their learning (Figure 42). LIM is not a curricular intervention, but its emphasis on student initiative, choice, and responsibility lends itself to student choice in the classroom—which in turn fosters student engagement in learning.

Figure 42. Teacher Differences in Perceptions of Student Engagement

Always	Never
Ofte	3.6
Sometime Rarely	3.2

I give my students options about how they want to demonstrate their learning.

Non-LIM (n=55) LIM (n=70)

When describing initiatives at their school meant to impact students' engagement and academic performance, non-LIM teachers and principals described strategies, such as the use of technology, that were teacher centered and focused solely on the actions of teachers, how teachers were structuring their classrooms, and how teachers were implementing curriculum. In addition, they cited attendance and participation in extracurricular activities as an evidence of student engagement.

*Engagement is something that we've worked really hard on. I would say my measure of that is what my instructional coach and I do, weekly observations and co-planning with every teacher. We have intentionally focused on looking at what's the purpose of a lesson, and what is the success criteria for students, so that's explicit in every classroom, so there's a purpose statement and success criteria. When we go into classrooms, we are asking students to articulate that, and we are observing what percentage of students are engaged with the material and what are not. We are well above, close to 90%, at that area.*

*That would probably be more just that eighth hour MTSS homeroom time, that rotational. Every subject teacher knows they have a certain day to work with kids that need work to get to that next level. The guidance counselors at points in a quarter will pull up a list of kids and where they're out and if they have multiple failing grades, they start doing intervention with them during eighth hour instead of with us.*

*As far as student engagement, we have chromebooks in every classroom from 3rd through 5th, it's one to-one. And that's helped a lot with engagement. We're using some different programs. We're doing large-group lessons, and students can follow along on their Chromebooks and then respond. So instead of getting one hand raised, you get responses from all 26 kids in the classroom.*

*We have an RTI block or a period so that response to intervention during that time, and that's once a day. Each teacher in the building is assigned a group of kids. That's our advisory group, and we try to meet with individual students on a weekly basis to go over grades, what's going well, what do they need help on. But that's also a time for us to pull students to work on any remediation, any areas where they're struggling.*

*A lot of our stuff right now is through PBIS, just through our [mascot name], which is our mascot and being ... We don't have the 7 Habits like you guys have but we're just doing being respectful and those type of things. Just trying to get our kids to be more observant of behaviors and in being just a better all-around student.*

*We don't necessarily have a program. I would say that's more what we have at the end of the day, we have what's called our MTSS time period 8, whatever you want to call it, and that's a time when students who are struggling academically, behaviorally can ask for a pass to go talk to a teacher, go talk to a counselor and go get additional support in areas that they might be struggling in. It encourages kids to take some of that ownership.*

*There's a number of district initiatives, but here specifically, one thing that we're trying to do is, we're trying to use our PLC times more effectively. So, we're trying to spend our time actually analyzing data, because in the past... We'd come and we'd actually put the data in, and then we'd talk about it a little bit, but no one had looked at it yet. So now, we're trying to get more prepared with, what do we ... We already have our data in, and then come to the meeting planning on discussing individual students or*

*individual strategies that have worked, or "I tried this strategy and it didn't work, what did you try?" And then, grouping students that way. We haven't got, yet, to where we're actually using flexible*

*groupings just within our own classrooms. Instead of grade, we're gonna try doing flexible grouping, as far as a grade level. So in fourth grade, all of the students will be put together and, say, the students who need extension, one teacher might teach students who seem like they're just missing one little piece that another teacher might teach. And then, students who might be a little further away will be taught by another teacher. We're trying to get to that next year...*

Specifically, teachers and principals of non-LIM schools identified the use of MTSS (Multi-Tiered Systems of Support), RTI (Response to Intervention), and PLC (Professional Learning Communities) as key initiatives they saw impacting student engagement and academic performance. Moreover, PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions & Supports) was one key initiative that non-LIM educators used to try to improve student engagement and academic performance. These initiatives focus primarily on interventions which are responsive to student performance, but rarely involve student participation in the genesis of the intervention. Additionally, these initiatives were seen as things that sometimes occur outside of “normal” class.

Teachers and principals at LIM schools were asked whether they felt LIM had affected student engagement and/or academics. These teachers and principals identified that LIM’s most significant engagement and academic impact was the way in which the program improved students’ ability to set academic goals, plan, and self-regulate their learning. A key distinction between LIM schools and non-LIM schools is the student centered nature of LIM’s impact on engagement and academic performance in the eyes of teachers and principals. They described student ownership over their engagement and academic progress and performance; these descriptions moved from “goal setting” to descriptions of student self-regulation of learning as schools moved through LIM implementation. Beginning and level 2 implementation schools regularly described the impact of goal setting on academic performance.

### **Beginning**

*As far as academically, students will have access to see, "These are my goals." I know for 4th grade, we plan to have those goals and success criteria listed in their data binders, where they would then go in and reflect, maybe mid-unit or something like that, to really see, "Okay. How am I doing? What do I need to improve on in order to be successful when the unit test comes around?"*

*I think so. Even the LIM lesson where we were just kind of going over each of the habits and rolling them out and explaining what they are and doing activities, they were very engaged with that and very open to this kind of new idea. They're very engaged in the fact that it's all about them and them becoming leaders and that kind of thing. Honestly I had more engagement with the LIM lesson than I probably did with my other academic lessons.*

*I just feel there's more leadership. Again, we do a lot of graphing, or looking at scores, more ... Not competition within the whole class, but they just see like ...for instance, I meet with that student once a week, but we just quietly graph their scores each week. I first say, "What's your goal this week?" "Oh, I'm going to get 81 words." Then we look at it, and we shade it in, and talk about it together, so kind of more self-assessing themselves, and I could ... I don't know, at least that would be the example that I noticed was definitely a growth.*

### **Level 2**

*I definitely see it in the academics because the students graph their process and they set goals ahead of*

*time so each time we start a new unit, especially Math, they see what the criteria is, how to get a 1, 2, 3, or 4. Then they set their goals, and halfway through we kind of stop and talk about, "How far are you with your goal? What do we need to continue working on?" Then they graph their scores between pre and posttest. Academic, I see it because kids really try to push themselves and they try to challenge each other, too.*

*Using those leadership habits to really focus on goal setting and focus on monitoring their progress, developing plans really help kids be successful academically, because we're behind. A lot of kids were behind and the only way they're going to get caught up to the expectations is by accelerated growth. So we feel like if we can focus on acceleration and having our kids be involved in their own learning, then we would have a greater impact.*

*Yeah, just the way [students] talk, they act, class discussions, more involvement. Just their ideas, in their talk...You hear a little bit more about win-win, or put first things first, just their language, really.*

*I think it's a combination using LIM and the formative assessment process...When you peel back and you look at our students that are full academic year, they're with us year after year, we have made some significant gains. Particularly in African-American groups...So I feel like we do have evidence. If we could keep them longer, we could really have a greater impact on kids.*

Advanced Level 2 schools and Lighthouse schools also described how goal setting improved engagement and academic performance, but expanded further on how goal setting was a part of students' self-evaluation and self-regulation. Student ownership of academic performance is a major distinction between Lighthouse and Advanced Level 2 schools and other LIM and non-LIM schools. Specifically, because every student has a leadership binder to track their own goals, student engagement has increased overall. Further, Lighthouse schools identified the importance of continuing improvement in integrating LIM with academics.

## **Advanced Level 2**

*I would say that we always had 'I Can' statements or at least it was always recommended to have 'I Can' statements. I would say that there's probably more ownership of the education or at least more ownership of the education results...for the lower end. [I would say "You do understand that this is entirely within your control?" I would say that they're more likely now to accept that that is true.*

*I think absolutely, yeah. We do a lot with teamwork and we always go back to a win-win situation or if they're doing a team activity, they set up their goals: what do we want to do, what do we want to do next. Yeah, it does a lot with engagement.*

*I do think it actually has contributed to academic success here, for sure, for students. Again, I think it is the ownership of the learning. Students realize that they have a part in it, that they can influence it as well.*

*We've had some extra time for science and social studies. We just got done with the body systems. They get to choose what body system they want to work with. Then as a group, they came up with how they wanted to present to others what they learned. Some people did a slideshow. Some people made a model out of clay. Some people did a skit. They were able to take charge of their own learning with that.*

## **Lighthouse**

*I feel like it, because it's the way they process. It's the way they process through a situation or the way that they talk themselves through it and I feel like the student empowerment piece in leadership really*

*does a nice job because the one band, if I can call it a band of the LIM vision, is academic success, alignment with academics, and everything that you do in that academic band is all about student ownership of their learning, student ownership of their successes, student ownership of their failures and their goal setting, and that really leads to fostering student empowerment and leadership that's different from ... if we want to talk about a program that's for the social and emotional, there's no other program out there that really has the academic piece embedded in it the way that LIM does.*

*I would say the goal setting that happens with leadership notebooks, probably is our engagement tie that makes the most difference. ...what teachers talk about is when in the leadership notebooks, they track their own data, how it increases the engagement, tenfold, rather than if we just showed them a graph.*

*We do have every student that has a leadership binder and they track goals and they set goals and they record successes. We do implement student-led conferences. Both in the fall and the spring the students are leading out their conference, where they're telling their families how they are doing so far in school. And they use their leadership binders to guide that conference. Those practices are in place, but what I'm learning is that those practices are a place at a very surface level. We could be a lot more strategic and intentional and deeper with those practices that's going to help kids with their 21<sup>st</sup>-century skills even better. The kinds of goals that we're setting, the way that we are tracking, are we reflecting or not about why we did succeed or did not succeed and what's going to be our next step afterwards. All of that kind of stuff in each content area. How are we doing that in reading, how are we doing that in math and in writing?*

*Students' engagement definitely is different because how much they own their own learning.*

*Current status is that every student has a leadership binder and they track goals and they set goals and they record successes. We implement student-led conferences. Both in the fall and the spring the students are leading out their conference, where they're telling their families how they are doing so far in school.*

Overall, student, teacher, and principal interviews showed a clear difference in the use of student-centered, student-focused, and student-driven engagement and academic improvement between Non-LIM and LIM schools. Students in LIM schools were seen as key players in engagement and academic performance and opportunities to improve students' academics were always centered on their empowerment and ownership. Further, there was a clear progression in LIM schools based on the level of LIM implementation, with more advanced schools identifying student self-regulation and cooperation as integral parts of LIM that improve student engagement and academic performance.

## **District Administrative Data**

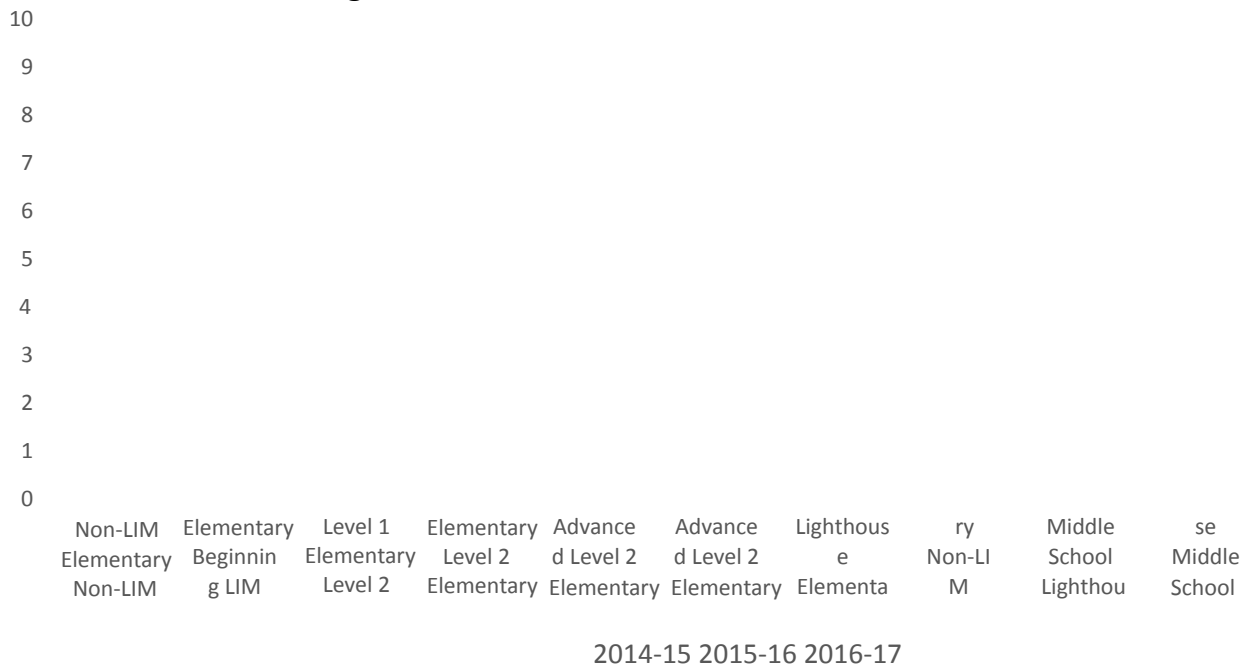
In addition to survey and interview data, we used district records to assess student engagement and achievement. Student engagement is often operationalized as or reflected in student attendance and behavioral referrals. We used district attendance and behavioral referral records as measures of student

engagement and looked only at within-school trends during the last three years because we were not controlling for other potentially confounding variables. We also examined state assessment scores to examine achievement trends within each school and follow-up 9<sup>th</sup> grade course credits and GPA of students who had attended three years at a Lighthouse middle school versus a non-LIM middle school.

**Attendance**

First, as Figure 43 shows, the median number of student absences has been decreasing over the last several years for many of the elementary schools in this study, including those that have not implemented LIM. At the middle school level there appears to be little change in attendance within each of the participating schools.

Figure 43. Median Number of Student Absences

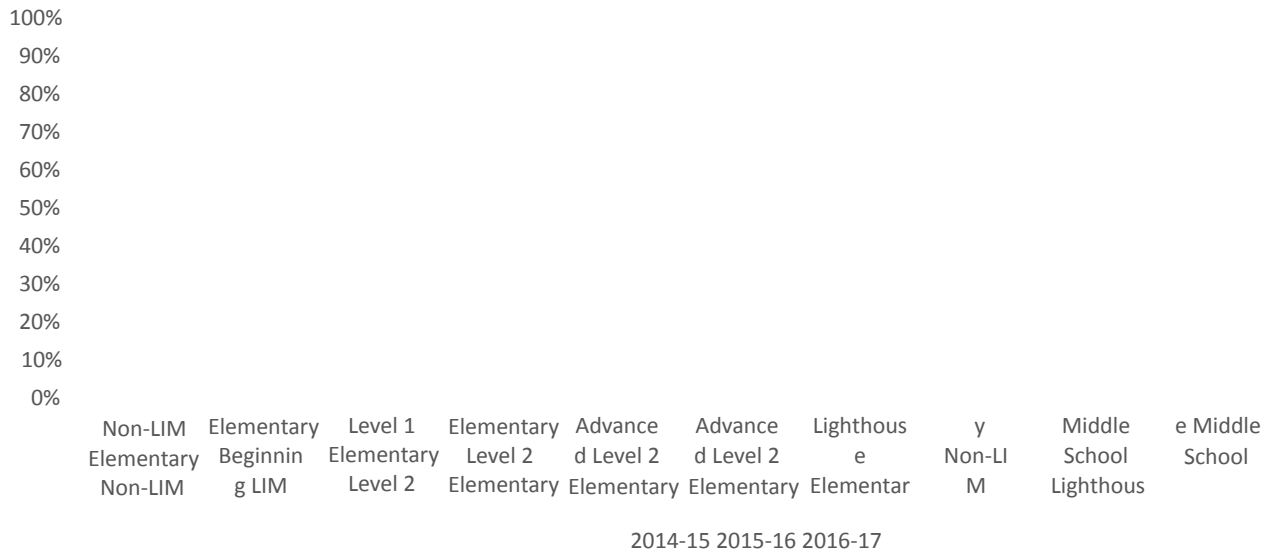


**Behavioral Referrals**

In addition to attendance records, behavioral referrals were examined within each school. This data should be cautiously interpreted as schools had different criteria for referring students and three elementary schools have programs designed for students with behavioral difficulties thus elevating the referral rates for these

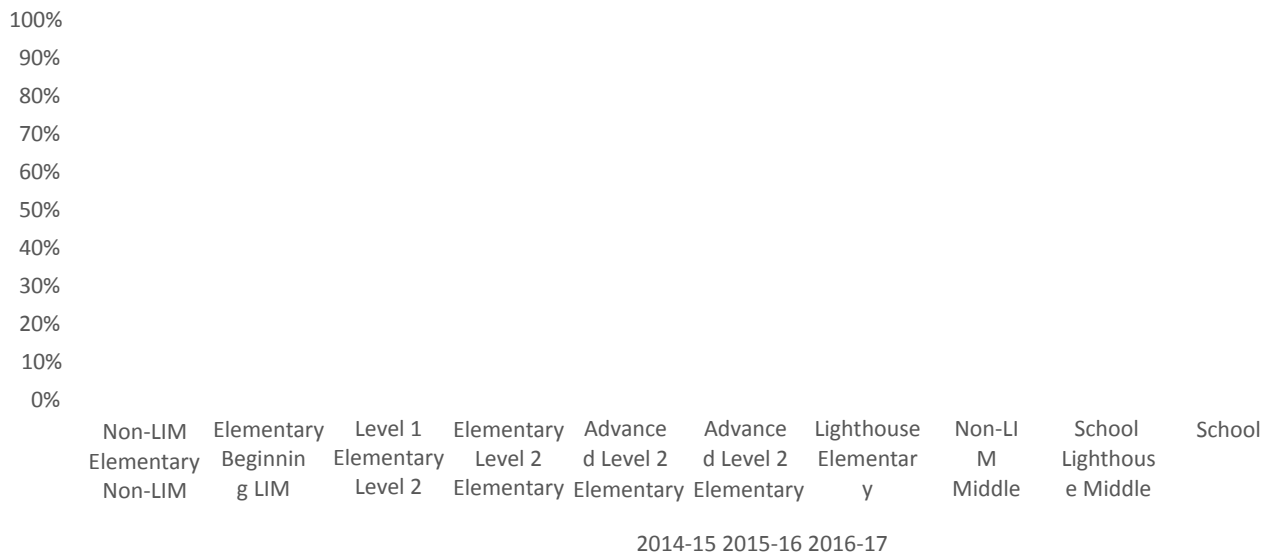
schools. As Figure 44 shows, only two LIM schools (Lighthouse middle school and an elementary school implementing Level 2) showed consecutive reductions in the percent of students with at least one major referral over the last two years.

Figure 44. Percent of Students with At Least One Major Referral



A similar pattern was seen with the percent of students with at least one minor referral (Figure 45).

Figure 45. Percent of Students with At Least One Minor Referral

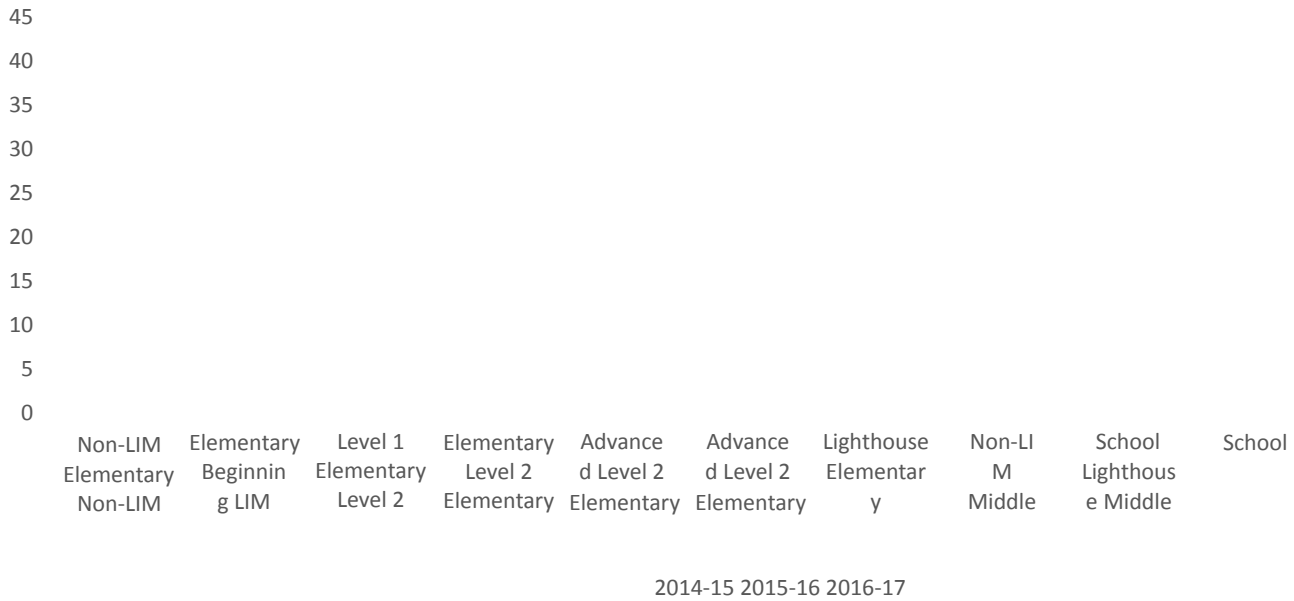


**Suspensions**

The frequency of three types of suspensions were also examined. As Figure 46 shows, bus suspensions have decreased over the last two years at several elementary schools including two LIM schools implementing Level 2. One non-LIM elementary school also saw substantial drops in this type of suspension.



Figure 46. Total Number of Bus Suspensions



In-school suspensions were more common than bus suspensions. Only one elementary LIM school (implementing level 2) and the Lighthouse middle school showed reductions in in-school suspensions over the last two years (Figure 47).

Figure 47. Total Number of In-School Suspensions

