



## Executive Summary

Leader Valley is a talent development initiative of the Greater Cedar Valley Alliance and Chamber, located in three communities- Waterloo, Cedar Falls, and Waverly, Iowa. Leader Valley prepares Pre-K-12 students for life by providing them the essential soft skills needed for a life of effectiveness and a competitive advantage in the workforce. To accomplish this, Leader Valley champions believe that ALL students in the Cedar Valley deserve authentic learning and leadership opportunities in a rich leadership school culture. The first priority of Leader Valley is the implementation of *Leader in Me* in Cedar Valley schools.

*Leader in Me* is an international initiative sponsored by FranklinCovey based on the seminal work of Dr. Steven Covey's *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. *Leader in Me* is a school-wide process dedicated to transforming the leadership culture and performance at the schools. *Leader in Me* works in concert with the academic, behavioral, and culture-based initiatives common in today's schools. *Leader in Me* has 4 principle focuses: *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, an intentional focus on identifying and cultivating their special gifts and talents for all students, authentic learning and leadership opportunities, and the development of essential soft skills.

In cooperation with local businesses, Leader Valley proudly provides financial and administrative support to *Leader in Me* schools in five districts within three communities- Waterloo Community Schools, Cedar Falls Community Schools, Cedar Valley Catholic Schools, St. Patrick's School, and St. Paul's Lutheran School. *Leader in Me* is currently implemented in 17 schools- twelve elementary schools, two K-8 buildings, and three middle schools.

This interim report reflects the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data including (1) demographic data, (2) fidelity of implementation data, (3) school culture data, (4) academic data, (5) student application data, and (6) testimonials. Data was then analyzed by a team of education researchers from the University of Northern Iowa and Hawkeye Community College, which led to the conclusions that will be found in this report.

The findings of this interim report reflect typical results reported in *Leader in Me* schools with regard to the acquisition and application of essential soft skills, improvements within the school culture of *Leader in Me* buildings, and academics. Findings worth highlighting include the improvement of chronic absenteeism in *Leader in Me schools*, the reduction of bullying and harassment in schools, the enhancement of the school cultures, and the application of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* within students and school staff alike.

A description of the data can be found on page 20. Please note that while the results and successes of the *Leader in Me* schools shared in this report certainly may have been impacted by other factors, the results are encouraging that *Leader in Me* can have a positive impact on a school culture. In future reports, additional data will be accessed, analyzed, and reported on.