

February 22, 2023

Davenport School of the Arts announced recently the school has been certified as a Leader in Me Lighthouse School by FranklinCovey Education. This recognition is evidence of the extraordinary impact the school is having on staff, students, parents, and the greater community. The school has been recognized in the past as a Music Demonstration School and a Fine Arts Model School in the state of Florida, and now certified as a Leader in Me Lighthouse School through this nationally recognized organization. Davenport School of the Arts is a K through 8 public school in the Polk County, Florida school system.

Leader in Me is an evidence-based PK-12 model, developed in partnership with educators, designed to grow leadership skills in student and staff, create a high-trust culture, and help improve academic achievement. This model equips students, educators, and families with the leadership and life skills needed to thrive, adapt, and contribute in a dynamic world. Lighthouse Certification is a highly regarded standard that is attainable by every *Leader in Me* School. Schools that achieve the certification are great examples of a strong leadership model and process. They have experienced significant measurable results, aligned to their goals, through implementation of the principles and practices in *Leader in Me*.

Davenport School of the Arts is one of the 650 schools worldwide that have achieved the prestigious Lighthouse Certification. It is earned by schools that demonstrate the following:

- The school administration and staff engage in ongoing learning and develop as leaders, while championing leadership for the school.
- Leadership principles are effectively taught to all students through direct lessons and staff modeling. Students are able to think critically about, and apply, leadership principles.
- Families and the school partner together in learning about *The 7 Habits* and leadership principles through effective communication and mutual respect.
- The school community is able to see leadership in the physical environment, hear leadership through a common language, and feel leadership through a culture of caring, relationships, and affirmation.
- Leadership is shared with students through a variety of leadership roles. Student voice leads to innovations within the school.
- Schoolwide, classroom, family, and community leadership events provide authentic environments to celebrate leadership, build culture, and allow students to practice leadership skills.
- The school utilizes the 4DX® process (*The 4 Disciplines of Execution*) to identify and track progress toward Wildly Important Goals® (WIGs) for the school, classroom, and staff.
- Students lead their own learning with the skills to assess their needs, set appropriate goals, and carry out action plans. They track progress toward goals in Leadership Portfolios and share these notebooks with their families in Student-Led Conferences twice a year.
- Teacher planning and reflection, trusting relationships, and student-led learning combine to create environments for highly engaged learning.

Davenport School of the Arts began the journey towards becoming a Lighthouse school in 2009 when then Assistant Principal Cindy Braaten selected 10 middle school students to begin a study of the book 7 Habits of Highly Effective Teens by Stephen Covey. While studying the book, this leadership group participated in community involvement by serving at the Ronald McDonald house and passing out food at a local mission. Because of the evident effectiveness of the development of these leaders, the group grew to 40 students in a few short years.

After attending their first *Leader in Me* Symposium in 2014, Mr. Kier, principal at that time, Mrs. Braaten and their staff decided that the *Leader in Me* initiatives could benefit the entire student culture. They wrote a grant from which funds allowed the expansion of the program with curriculum and training for all teachers and staff. DSA officially became a *Leader in Me* school in 2018, beginning the focus of teaching the 7 Habits to all students and creating a culture of student leadership and responsibility.

Davenport School of the Arts has developed both middle school and elementary Student Leadership Teams whose roles are to model the 7 Habits, lead school wide events, and promote the concepts of student responsibility. However, the teams do not function autonomously. All K-8 students have worked within their classrooms to develop mission statements, set academic and personal goals, lead community service projects, and understand the *Leader in Me* model.

An important outcome of this training is the Student Led Conference that takes the place of the typical Open House and Teacher-Parent conference. Students create an ongoing portfolio of their scores and goals and learn to present it effectively to their parents in order to maintain communication and promote engagement within the family. Other outcomes include a positive school culture, participation in school and community service, consistent goal setting, and academic growth.

Cindy Braaten, principal of Davenport School of the Arts said, "We are honored to have been certified as a *Leader in Me* Lighthouse School. We have seen amazing things from implementing the *Leader in Me* process at our school, such as students knowing and understanding their data, setting goals to improve their data, setting action steps (lead measures) to improve their data and being accountable to a classmate with their goals and lead measures."

FranklinCovey Education has designed the Lighthouse Rubric to establish high standards for quality and, ultimately, school outcomes. Schools use the Lighthouse Rubric to measure outcomes in three areas: teaching leadership principles, creating a leadership culture, and aligning academic systems. "Being named a LIGHTHOUSE school means that we are doing great things surrounding Leadership, Academics and Culture," said Mrs. Braaten.

Beth Nave, Acting Regional Assistant Superintendent for Polk County Schools added, "DSA exhibits all three in a stellar fashion and is now the first school within the Polk County Public Schools to receive this prestigious award! We are so proud of DSA and the amazing administration and teacher leaders who are truly "synergized!"

Sean Covey, President, FranklinCovey Education, said, "We are thrilled to recognize Davenport School of the Arts as a *Leader in Me* Lighthouse School. Schools who achieve this Lighthouse Certification are great examples of a strong leadership model, and of what it means to be a *Leader in Me* school. This school has experienced incredible results by implementing the principles and practices related to *Leader in Me*. And we are so pleased and honored to be their partner and to celebrate the success they are experiencing."