





Comparing the winter of 2014 to the winter 2015, there was a 46% improvement in the number of students meeting the overall benchmark goals and the students began the year 6 percentage points more at risk in Fall of 2014 than in the comparison year of 2013. No other previous year has ever seen anywhere near that increase. In the past two years only 54% of children reached the Winter benchmark. Seventy-nine percent (79%) of Kindergarten students met the Winter benchmark goals this year. What an increase! Thank you Bethlehem teachers!

Lincoln Elementary was designated a Focus School by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. As a Title I school, Lincoln Elementary received the Focus School designation based on the objective of “closing the achievement gap of historically under-performing students; economically disadvantaged, and English language learners who score below proficient on the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) exams, Keystone exams, and the PASA by 50% over a six-year period.”

Lincoln Elementary, with a large minority and poor student population of struggling English language learners, has exceeded its mid-year goals for K-1, which happened through the integration of a highly collaborative, structured, and a customized intervention response program. With approximately 215 students in the school, the student population is predominantly Hispanic (54%) compared to other schools in the district that average around 30%. Over 60% of Lincoln Elementary’s students are eligible for free or reduced lunch.

In the fall of 2014, Lincoln Elementary School in the Bethlehem Area School District engaged Step By Step Learning® to help improve the literacy skills for students in Kindergarten through 2nd grade. The Bethlehem Area School District is the sixth largest in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania with 16 neighborhood elementary schools serving grades K-5. Step By Step Learning®, designed and implemented an innovative, evidence-supported MTSS methodology that significantly and permanently improves teacher effectiveness and student performance for even the most at-risk children.

With nearly 15 years of in-classroom experience with teachers, Step By Step Learning® is recognized as the preeminent educational and literacy organization that achieves positive sustainable results in schools, benefiting every child. Utilizing proven evidence-based methodologies, the joint Step By Step Learning® and Colonial I.U. team was tasked to:

- *Design and implement a data review process that includes collection, analysis, evaluation, and interpretation of student data to identify students at risk for reading failure*
- *Plan the instructional support that is needed to improve students’ reading skills.*
- *Provide professional development to teachers that would deepen their knowledge in the science of teaching reading and enhance teachers’ instructional techniques to promote more active student learning.*

Since September of the 2014 school-year, the team has been working with kindergarten, first grade, and second grade teachers to increase their knowl-edge and understanding surrounding the science of teaching reading to young children, and how to collect, interpret, and understand student data. Teachers are benefiting from customized lesson plans and classroom engagement techniques that help strengthen their instruction and effectiveness, as well as from consistent and frequent in-person, side-by-side follow-up support.

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**For more information about a comprehensive MTSS Implementation, contact Step By Step Learning® at 610.398.1231 or [info@sbsl.org](mailto:info@sbsl.org)**

