Summary of Findings from the Evaluation of the 2009-2010 Step By Step Learning® Implementation of Services in the Hazleton Area School District

Purpose of Evaluation
- The purpose of this evaluation was to determine whether the Step By Step Learning® (SBSL) comprehensive approach to literacy was effective in improving the literacy skills of kindergarten and first grade children in the Hazleton Area School District (HASD)
- The evaluation examined the outcomes of students in the HASD (the intervention group) as compared to students in a school district that did not receive the same level of services (the comparison group)

Evaluation Question 1: Were the trainings implemented with fidelity?
- Overall, the observed sessions were conducted with fidelity, indicating that the intervention was implemented as intended

Evaluation Question 2: Did the groups have differences in DIBELS scores in kindergarten and first grade?
- Kindergarten
  - The intervention group demonstrated significantly higher skills in Initial Sound Fluency, Phoneme Segmentation Fluency, and Letter Naming Fluency over time.
  - There were no significant differences in Nonsense Word Fluency at the end of the year.
- First grade
  - The intervention group demonstrated significantly higher skills in Phoneme Segmentation Fluency and Nonsense Word Fluency over time.
  - There were no significant differences in Oral Reading Fluency across the year.

Evaluation Question 3: Did the groups have differences in instructional recommendations in kindergarten and first grade?
- Intervention group students had a higher percentage of students at Benchmark and a lower percentage of students at Intensive levels

Conclusions
- The results suggest that with one year of intervention, students gained significantly higher skills in selected literacy areas
  - Kindergarten students demonstrated higher skills in phonological awareness, letter-sound correspondence and letter naming fluency
  - Students in first grade displayed higher skills in letter-sound correspondence and phonological awareness
- Students also experienced less risk related to their literacy skills with one year of intervention
- These results support the effectiveness of the SBSL comprehensive approach to literacy in enhancing the literacy skills of children in kindergarten and first grade

Center for Promoting Research to Practice
Lehigh University