



Majority of Easton's Kindergarten hit benchmarks, regardless of which school they go to



'This is proof everybody can do it':

Majority of Easton's kindergartners hit benchmarks, regardless of which school they go to

Merlin, Michelle - The Morning Call. 25, June 2019.

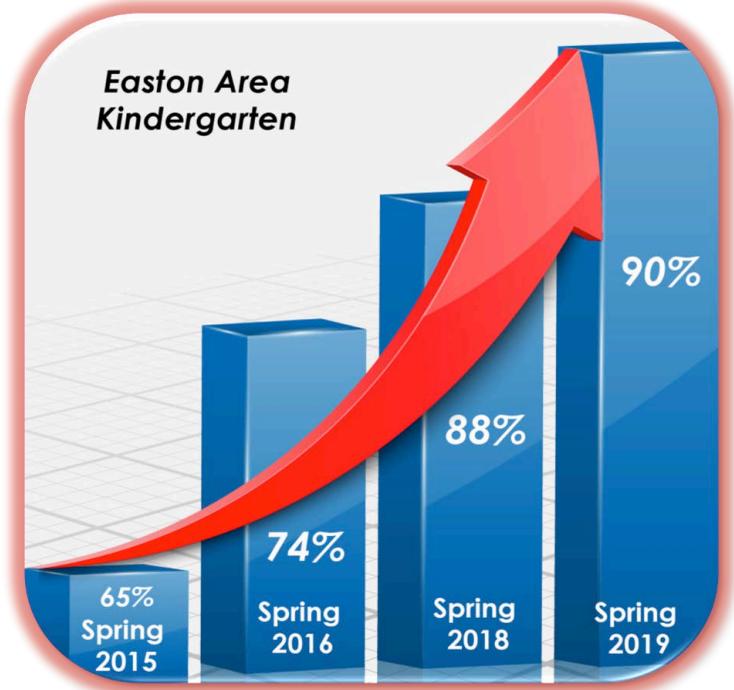
At the end of the school year, Stephanie Frederickson's kindergartners could read at an average of 6.9 words per minute.

That's faster than she's seen before in her 24 years of teaching kindergarten, nearly all of them in Easton's Paxinosa Elementary School, and far better than the goal of one word per minute.

"When one did it and then the next one did it, that was so gratifying," she said. "Seeing their excitement to do it, I think they surprised themselves."

Easton Area School District's youngest students excelled this year, with 91% hitting their benchmarks at the end of the year, a growth of 40% from the beginning of the year. Last year, 88% of students hit their benchmarks by the end of the year, compared with 73% the prior year. No school was below the 85% mark this year.

Tracy Piazza, the district's director for teaching and learning for kindergarten through fifth grade, said the growth could be attributed to a number of factors, including the staggered rollout of full-day kindergarten starting in 2015 and intensive training and professional development with a consulting firm to personalize learning for students.



The district isn't the only one to see its kindergartners' scores grow in leaps and bounds. In Bethlehem Area School District, 88% of kindergartners were reading at or above grade level.

Piazza hopes the trend will continue in first and second grade. While first grade achievement has grown in the last three years, from 59% proficient or better at the end of the 2016-2017 year to 71% at the end of this year, the growth hasn't matched that of kindergartners'.

Piazza said the first and second grade teachers received half of the Step by Step guidance in one year and the other half the next, while kindergarten teachers received it all in the first year.

She said first grade teachers also have to adjust their instruction based on the fact that more pupils are coming to them already proficient.



If you are ready to implement a comprehensive MTSS process that significantly raises achievement for ALL students, contact Step By Step Learning® at info@sbsl.org.