



## **PLN Professional Development & Test Results**

The goal of The Penn Literacy Network is to nurture and improve the quality of instruction for all students. In addition, we ask whether focused professional development tailored to the needs of individual schools and districts can have a positive impact on measurable student achievement. Evidence suggests that it does. The following test results were compiled by a sampling of former and current schools and districts that have partnered with PLN.

### **Northern York County School District (2012-2018):** **Why did we choose PLN?**

In 2012-2013, we conducted an internal analysis of our instructional program. This effort provided us with building-specific instructional focus areas. With these improvement areas in mind, we researched a variety of professional development options. The University of Pennsylvania's Literacy Network (PLN) unequivocally aligned best with our needs.

The Penn Literacy Network has provided us a system-wide learning framework through which we are successfully implementing research-based and targeted instructional strategies in a consistent, pervasive, **supportive**, and perennial manner. Because of PLN, our students are more engaged in their learning and they are being challenged to think at higher levels during their lessons.

### **Why has PLN been successful?**

We know student learning is catalyzed when teachers facilitate learning activities that require students to summarize frequently and use higher level thinking skills.

As a result of PLN, our students are utilizing these two powerful learning strategies through writing, explaining, building support for an argument, and solving problems, all within a co-constructivist learning atmosphere.

Teachers have flourished because this professional development is relevant, authentic, and purposefully job-embedded, providing a climate that incorporates both high expectations and high support.

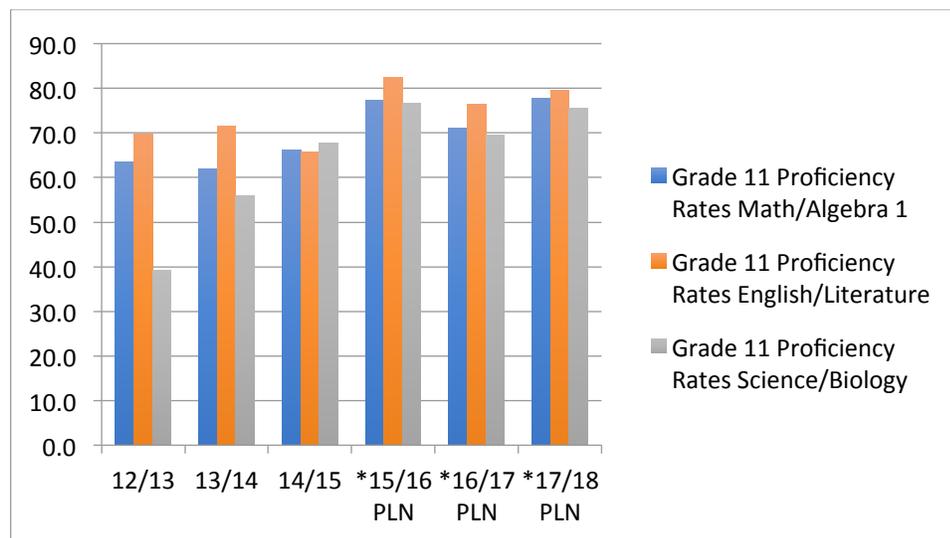
The Penn Literacy Network, through its coursework and instructional coaching support, embodies the above and has made a positive difference in our teaching and learning. It has been one of the most successful professional development initiatives with which I have been associated in my 21 years in public education.

Matt LaBuda, Assistant to the Superintendent, Northern York County School District

**Northern York County School District data:**

The proficiency rates (over 6 school years) achieved by grade 11 Northern York County School District students on the Pennsylvania State Assessments before and during the district’s involvement with PLN notes the importance of a common literacy framework for the high school:

Grade 11 Proficiency Rates			
School Year	Math/Algebra 1	English/Literature	Science/Biology
12/13	63.6	69.7	39.3
13/14	62.0	71.6	56.0
14/15	66.2	65.8	67.7
*15/16			
PLN	77.3	82.4	76.6
*16/17			
PLN	71.1	76.5	69.6
*17/18			
PLN	77.8	79.5	75.5



**Williamsport Area School District, Pennsylvania (2011-2012):**

Williamsport Area School District (WASD), located in central Pennsylvania with over 5000 students, has partnered with PLN for 2 years and has had approximately 80 secondary educators participate in one or more courses including: PLN’s foundational

courses in literacy and math literacy, engaging students in digital learning and helping students needing learning support. In 2012, Williamsport Area High School met AYP for the first time in the school's history. Below are PSSA data highlights.

“I wanted to personally take a moment to thank you for helping to significantly improve three schools where I have worked over the past 13 years. I wouldn't be where I am without you.”

Michael Reed, Former Principal, Williamsport High School, Williamsport, PA, 2014

**Reading Proficient or Advanced:**

Demographic	%2011	%2012	%+/-
All Students	60	67	+11
African American	29	34.2	+18
White	68.2	77	+13
Economically Disadvantaged	47	52.5	+12
Special Ed	21.9	29.4	+34

**Math Proficient or Advanced**

Demographic	%2011	%2012	%+/-
All Students	52.6	61.4	+17
African American	19.4	38.2	+97
White	61.4	68.5	+12
Economically Disadvantaged	40.6	47.5	+17
Special Ed*	19.2	19.6	2010: 8.1% 2010-2012: +100

**Writing Exam:**

Demographic	%2010	%2012	Passing Rate
All Students	73.5	82.9	2 <sup>nd</sup> highest in district

### **Springfield School District, Vermont (2010-2012):**

Situated in rural southeastern Vermont, Springfield School District (SSD) serves over 1500 students. In 2011-2012, all educators from Springfield High School participated in PLN's foundational PLN 1 course. The results show that there has been considerable improvement in standardized test scores, and district administrators say that their PLN partnership was essential to this success. Due to the successful partnership in the first year, SSD expanded participation in PLN professional development district wide in 2012-2013 to include over 140 educators K-12. Below are highlights from Springfield High School's state standardized test data:

#### **Reading Proficient:**

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>%2010</b>	<b>%2012</b>	<b>Comments</b>
All Students	65	74	Equaled state average for the first time in history.

#### **Math Proficient**

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>%2010</b>	<b>%2012</b>
All Students	24	33

#### **Writing Proficient**

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>%2010</b>	<b>%2012</b>
All Students	25	44

### **Gloucester City Schools, Gloucester City, NJ (2002-2008):**

Source: "The Philadelphia Inquirer", February 5, 2009 as reported by Dr. Mary Stansky, former superintendent, Gloucester City Schools, Gloucester City, NJ:

"The Gloucester City Public Schools are proud to announce that the March 2004 High School Proficiency Assessment (HSPA) administered by the state of New Jersey indicated that 93.8% of Gloucester City's general education high school juniors passed the language arts section of the exam.

These percentages have risen steadily over the last three years. Specifically, our students' pass rates are up 17.7% from March 2002 when this version of the test was first offered. We firmly believe that this marked and dramatic improvement in our

students' assessment performance can be linked to the extensive work that we have done with The Penn Literacy Network.

Our district has been working with The Penn Literacy Network since the late 1990's. PLN has worked as a professional development partner across all grades and content areas, encouraging the entire faculty and staff to work as a collegial and reflective learning community. Our partnership has supported administrators and teachers as they have worked to create positive classroom and school environments for teachers and students.”

“The percentage of advanced and proficient students in 2007-08 was 78.3%, up 10.6% from 2006- 07 and 25.6% from 2002-03.”

### **Harrisburg School District, Harrisburg, PA: SciTech High School (2005-2008):**

In 2005-06 SciTech High School began to make significant gains in reading, writing and mathematics. In prior years, its assessment scores were below the state average in all measurable areas. The major variable responsible for this increase was SciTech’s participation in The Pennsylvania High School Coaching Initiative. (PAHSCI). Through this initiative, The Penn Literacy Network, one of the lead partners for PAHSCI, provided instructional professional development for participating schools and districts including SciTech HS. The entire faculty embraced PLN’s work and the principal at that time (Michael Reed) was actively involved.

The results were that SciTech High School went from 37% Proficient and Advanced in Math in 2007 to a 70% passage rate in Math in 2009. With the 2009 scores, the district reported an 80% passage rate in reading and a perfect 100% passage rate in writing.

Source: PSSA scores reported in the Harrisburg newspaper, Fall 2009

### **2008 SciTech Data Summary:**

- 99% of 11th grade students scored Proficient or Advanced on the PSSA Writing Assessment, up from 50% two years earlier.
- Set new school records for the number of students scoring Advanced on the PSSA Reading, Writing and Math exams.
- SciTech’s economically disadvantaged proficiency rate in reading is 16% higher than the state average. SciTech’s 58% proficient rate compared to Pennsylvania’s 42% proficient rate.
- SciTech's African American proficient rate in reading is 19% higher than the state average. (SciTech 55% proficient rate compared to PA 36% proficient).
- SciTech's Hispanic proficient rate in reading is 36% higher than the state average. (SciTech 73% proficient compared to PA’s 37% proficient).

- SciTech High earned AYP meeting all state and federal guidelines.
- The 2008-09 4Sight Data indicates that over 70% of SciTech's 11th grade students are now at the Proficient or Advanced level in Reading and Mathematics.
- SciTech: 100% of graduates have been accepted to college.

### **Springfield, Delaware County School District, Springfield, PA:**

After working with PLN for at least three years the district's 2004 standardized test scores in elementary schools showed:

- 99%+ of students were reading at grade level.
- 3rd grade students were 2nd across the region.
- 99% of 4th grade students achieved the standard in reading analysis and interpretation compared with 77% nationally.
- The improvements brought Springfield attention from other districts, including those that are top performers on state assessments.

### **Colonial Schools, Delaware (2001):**

In 2001, The Colonial School District achieved outstanding results in the state's first-ever rating of schools based on student achievement. This is in a district with a diverse population and in which seven of its schools reported over 30% of its students as "low income". PLN was a primary provider of professional development during the time period noted and is cited by the former superintendent (Dr. David Campbell) as having a major influence on student learning and achievement.

Colonial's 14 schools ranked #1 in Delaware in both the number and percentage of superior ratings. Colonial's ratings compare favorably to state averages:

- 50% were awarded a superior rating compared to a state average of 23%.
- 86% earned a rating of superior or commendable compared to the state average of 70%.

Source: The Delaware State Department of Education 2001

### **New Jersey:**

In a New Jersey urban district, one elementary school saw its scores on the Grade 4 Elementary School Proficiency Assessment (ESPA) rise dramatically in only one year, from 67% of its general education population scoring Proficient or Advanced Proficient in 2000, to 100% of its general education AND special education students scoring

Proficient or Advanced Proficient in 2001.” This increase followed the first two years of an ongoing partnership with The Penn Literacy Network.

Source: New Jersey Department of Education

**Baltimore City, Maryland (1997-2000):**

Cold Stream Park Elementary School achieved outstanding growth as measured by the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP) after a two-year partnership with PLN. In 2000, the % of students meeting or surpassing the MSPAP requirements by grade and content area and as compared to other Baltimore Schools earned Cold Stream Park an Outstanding Achievement Award.

Grade 3	1997	2000
Reading	23.4	32.8
Writing	9.1	40.5
Language	26.0	35.5
Science	13.0	51.9
Social Studies	7.8	62

Source: Maryland School Performance Report 2000