

# Evidence of Excellence



Early literacy gap shrinks, dropping intervention needs to

**37%**



MOLINE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL • ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI



LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN DO TOGETHER



295 STUDENTS / 100% FREE AND REDUCED LUNCH / 12.5% SPECIAL EDUCATION

98.6% BLACK / 1.4% WHITE

# From underperforming to ranking 6th in math growth

## CHALLENGE

Like many other schools facing systemic challenges, Moline Elementary School’s journey toward improvement began from a place of struggle. Designated as a Targeted School in Missouri and ranked among the lowest-performing in the state, by 2022, the school was under a district mandate to improve student outcomes. However, Moline lacked the foundational knowledge to effectively implement the Professional Learning Communities (PLC) at Work® process, making meaningful progress difficult.

Moline serves a predominantly Black student population, and Principal Amber White faced the task of reviving a faculty used to the status quo. Professional development and district initiatives changed often, lacking a foundation in evidence-based practices.

Persistent underperformance had become the norm. While the school’s climate was positive, Moline’s culture lacked high expectations for teaching and learning, with students continuing to perform below grade level.

## IMPLEMENTATION

During the 2022–2023 school year, Moline Elementary began its Accelerated Learning journey with job-embedded coaching from Kristi S. Langley. While this initial year was primarily focused on professional development for teachers, a schoolwide literacy block was also implemented.

In the summer of 2023, Principal white and her guiding coalition attended a PLC at Work Institute in June. This conference, coupled

with ongoing support from district-level principal coach Clara Sale-Davis, provided the foundation for a more focused approach to PLC implementation.

## MILESTONES

- Job-embedded coaching
- PLC at Work Institute
- District-level principal coaching with Clara Sale-Davis
- Book study: *The Big Book of Tools for Collaborative Teams in a PLC at Work®*
- Content coaching in math and ELA with Dr. Taylor B. Wenzel and Dr. Brian Buckhalter
- Book study: *The 15-Day Challenge*
- RTI at Work Institute
- Book study: *Training Teacher Leaders in a PLC at Work®*

Returning with renewed enthusiasm and a solidified vision, the team dove into *The Big Book of Tools for Collaborative Teams in a PLC at Work®* by William M. Ferriter, Mike Mattos, and Rob J. Meyer. Adding two content coaches, Dr. Taylor B. Wenzel for English language arts (ELA) and Dr. Brian Buckhalter for math, along with new job-embedded coaching from Michael McWilliams, further strengthened the school’s capacity for growth.



*Our PLC journey truly gained momentum when we shifted to a shared vision. What began as a simple conference takeaway from our collective experience at the PLC at Work Conference became the heartbeat of our school. ‘Together, Everyone Achieves Mastery’ is more than a theme—it’s our daily commitment to collaboration, high expectations, and ensuring success for every student.*

—AMBER WHITE / PRINCIPAL

While grades 3–5 received specialized ELA coaching to enhance their understanding of priority standards and effective instructional strategies, K–2 concentrated on bolstering early literacy skills. In math, a structured system for Tier 2 intervention emerged, ensuring timely assessment and support within 10 days. Motivated by *The 15-Day Challenge* by Maria Nielsen, the guiding coalition developed a structured process for math learning cycles, including quick checks and data trackers.

The school’s commitment to continuous improvement led them to an RTI at Work Institute in March 2024, further refining their approach to intervention. White, inspired by the conference, began utilizing *Training Teacher Leaders in a PLC at Work®* by Jasmine K. Kullar to guide her efforts and further develop teacher leaders.

## RESULTS

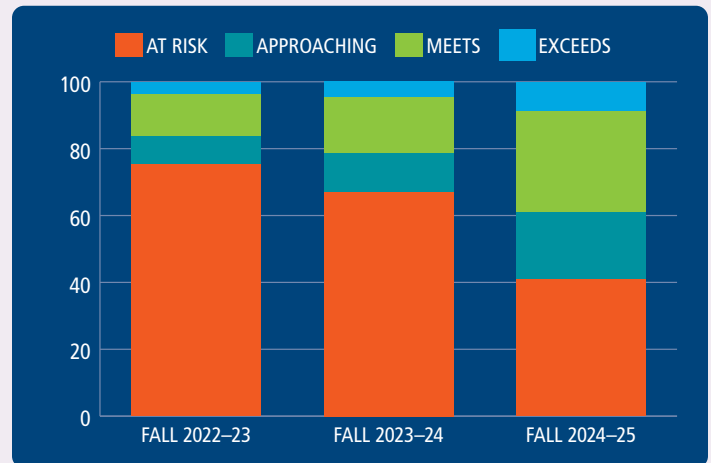
Moline Elementary has seen tremendous growth due to its consistent implementation of Accelerated Learning. Results such as:

- The percentage of students who struggle in early literacy has decreased from 75% to 37%, while proficiency has increased from 16.3% to 51.5%.
- Students scoring below basic have decreased from 62.4% in 2022–2023 to 41.4% in 2024–2025, while proficiency has increased from 15.5% to 28.8%.
- Students scoring below basic have decreased from 67.1% to 51.8%, while proficiency has increased from 12.6% to 21.2%.

## AWARDS

- Beating the Odds ELA Award (2022–2023)
- Beating the Odds Math Award (2023–2024)
- 6th Statewide in Mathematics Growth (2023–2024)

## STAR EARLY LITERACY PROFICIENCY RATE (DISTRICT BENCHMARK)



Percent of students at or above the district benchmark on the Star Early Literacy assessment. Uses the most recent score in the given district screening window.

# Start your success story



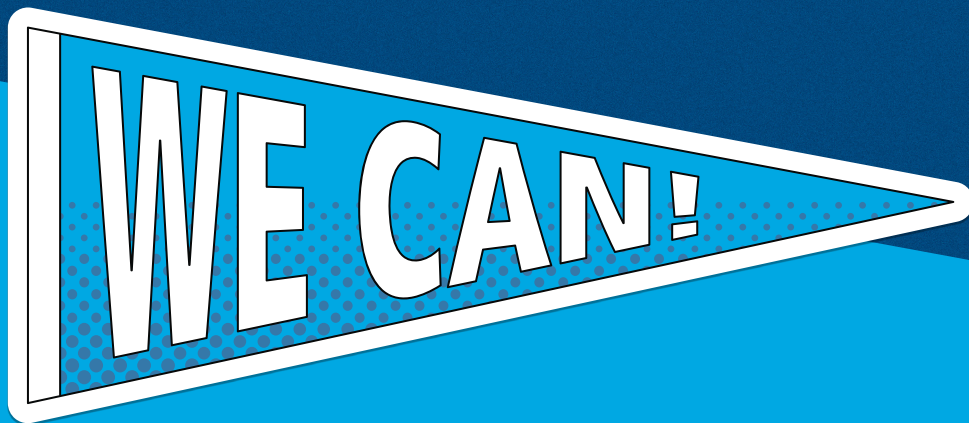
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