



# **LANGUAGE! Live Boosts Literacy Skills and Confidence—and Scores—at Pennsylvania's North Hills Elementary School**

## **THE CHALLENGE**

**Find a cost-effective solution to address the needs of struggling readers**

With a dedication to addressing the varied needs of every student, staff members at North Hills Elementary School sought a systematic way to help their struggling readers. The Pennsylvania school's socioeconomically diverse student population includes special education students and other learners who were struggling to meet grade-level benchmarks and expectations. In 2015, the staff began exploring ways to better help these students achieve their full potential.

Megan Clemens, a learning support teacher for grades 4–6 at North Hills Elementary, said the school had not previously used a “program” in the special education setting, but educators knew it was time to take the leap into a robust and evidence-based literacy solution.

“We began looking for a systematic and research-based program that could check all of the boxes we needed to help our learners be more fluent and comprehensive readers,” Clemens said.



*“Most of our learners have grown between 150 to 200 Lexile points per year since we’ve been using LANGUAGE! Live®. Additionally, in all the years we have used it, we have consistently seen that all learners in the program grow and improve. We have not had a single learner who has not shown growth. We’re hitting big literacy goals every day in our learning, and that makes me confident in knowing that we are delivering sound and comprehensive instruction.”*



**—Megan Clemens,  
Learning Support Teacher,  
North Hills Elementary  
School**

# THE SOLUTION

## A student- and teacher-friendly program that engages and inspires

*LANGUAGE! Live*® quickly rose to the top on the school's short list of potential programs, Clemens said.

"We really liked Voyager Sopris Learning's products overall," she added.

While *LANGUAGE! Live* is a comprehensive literacy intervention for struggling students in grades 5–12, Voyager Sopris Learning® also offers Voyager Passport®, a reading intervention program for grades K–5. The continuity of approach offered by Voyager Sopris Learning was important, Clemens said.

"We knew that a precursor program like Voyager Passport could help build the foundational reading blocks for our fourth and fifth grade learners and then prepare them for *LANGUAGE! Live* in sixth grade," she said.

Voyager Passport gave North Hills Elementary students explicit instruction, corrective feedback, and more time on task to master critical reading skills before moving on to *LANGUAGE! Live*. Both Voyager Passport and *LANGUAGE! Live* are remote ready, making them ideal blended-learning tools for literacy intervention.

Additionally, the cost effectiveness of *LANGUAGE! Live* allowed educators to reach twice as many learners as before—both in special and general education settings, Clemens said. Finally, the program's emphasis on writing made it the right fit for North Hills Elementary.

"Many reading programs that we looked at glossed over writing components," Clemens said. "But *LANGUAGE! Live* makes it a priority in the teacher training, which we have seen help dramatically with our learners' writing in the regular education classroom."

*"As someone who is a first-year teacher, LANGUAGE! Live makes life so much easier! The program is easy to follow and a great tool for struggling learners. I love that the program includes all aspects of literacy; from reading comprehension to reading fluency, writing, grammar, vocabulary, and more. The program is tailored to meet my students' needs, while also being fun and interesting, and I could not ask for more! I am glad we have a program like this at our school—and that it has proven to be successful here."*

—Hannah Reichard,  
Learning Support Teacher, North Hills Elementary School



# THE RESULTS

## Competency, confidence, and boosted Lexile levels

Today, educators at North Hills Elementary use *LANGUAGE! Live* with their sixth grade students. The difference it has made is notable, not just in building student proficiency, but in preparing students for the next stage in learning.

"We have seen tremendous success for our learners as they prepare for middle school expectations and reading," Clemens said. "The *LANGUAGE! Live* program helps to bridge those gaps as it pushes our students' limits in terms of their reading abilities. It means they're now better prepared to make that secondary-level jump."

## Instilling confidence, inspiring curiosity

By building proficiency, *LANGUAGE! Live* gives students

newfound confidence, Clemens said. Successes are marked every step of the way—even small goals—with motivating rewards, badges, and certificates that motivate students to fully engage with the program. Students are also encouraged to participate in conversations through peer-to-peer collaboration and engagement in high-interest stories that prompt learners to seek additional information. Students read texts featuring topics they care about—such as music, environmental pollution, censorship, and more.

"Students enjoy the real-life topics," Clemens said. "In fact, we've had learners seek out more information after a reading is complete. For example, we had several learners choose to do research on extreme weather after reading about hurricanes in *LANGUAGE! Live*."

The students themselves are well aware of the strides





they're making with *LANGUAGE! Live*, Clemens said. Each year, learners establish goals and many set their sights on reading better and more confidently.

"Our learners using *LANGUAGE! Live* continually come back to me and say, 'This reading program really helped me with my textbook reading.' Or, 'I really think *LANGUAGE! Live* helped me become a better reader,'" Clemens said.

### Proof is in the data

While student engagement is one measure of the program's success, data also speaks to the program's evidence-based approach.

"Most of our learners have grown between 150 to 200 Lexile points per year since we've been using *LANGUAGE! Live*," Clemens said. "Additionally, in all the years we have used it, we have consistently seen that all learners in the program grow and improve."

*LANGUAGE! Live's* user-friendly interface meets students where they are and builds from there. Its blended solution weaves together foundational skills and complex text with strategic thinking to build the necessary skills to get learners where they need to be.

"Each benchmark assessment shows our learners they have accomplished something and highlights how they have grown as a learner," Clemens said.



"This is essential in changing a special education or traditional learner's mindset from fixed to growth."

When asked: Would she recommend *LANGUAGE! Live* to a peer? Clemens does not hesitate with her answer.

"It encompasses everything you need to effectively teach reading," she said. "Plus, it's cost effective, which is important for a Title I school like ours. Beyond that, we especially like the program because of its strong emphasis on both reading and writing. We were looking for a program that had both, and *LANGUAGE! Live* does it."



**Contact Us to Schedule a Consultation:**  
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