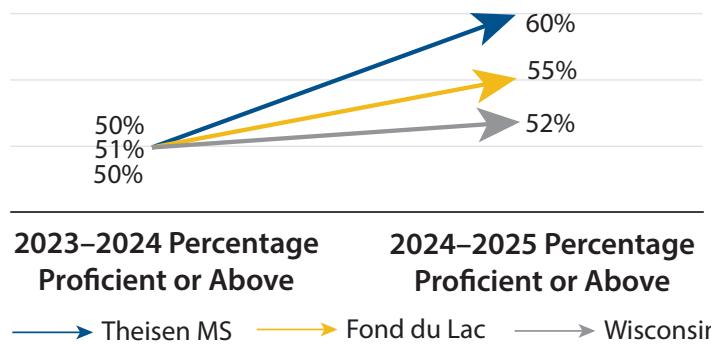


Fond du Lac's Winning Approach to Personalized Learning

Explore how a Wisconsin district increased reading and mathematics proficiency for their middle schoolers with *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* and a strong data culture.

Grades 6–8 Students Scoring Proficient or Above on the 2025 Wisconsin Forward English Language Arts (ELA) Exam



Fond du Lac School District, and its Theisen Middle School (MS), achieved measurable ELA gains on the Forward exam, outpacing the state average. Of the district's four schools serving Grades 6–8, Theisen's ELA proficiency grew by a striking 10 percentage points, from 50 to 60 percent in just one year.

Fond du Lac's Formula for Success: Leading the Way with *i-Ready Personalized Instruction*

Two years ago, Fond du Lac School District in Wisconsin was at a crossroads. Achievement in Grades 6–8 was declining, and district leaders knew they needed a new approach.

By implementing *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* for Reading and for Mathematics and fostering a culture of collaboration and data-driven decision making, the district set out to reverse the trend.

"We'd been using the *i-Ready Diagnostic* for several years, but Personalized Instruction for just two," said Brad Nerat, principal of Theisen Middle School. "I'm so excited about what it's done for us . . . these last two years really were difference makers for us."

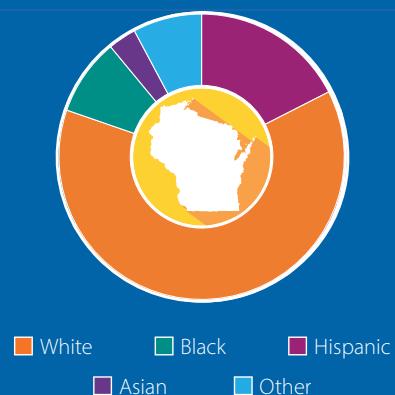
This impact quickly became clear in the district's Wisconsin Forward Exam results, with ELA and mathematics proficiency rising significantly across Grades 6–8.

¹Source

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Fond du Lac School District
Fond du Lac, Wisconsin

Grades Pre-K–12
6,603 Students¹



34% Students with Socioeconomic Disadvantages

FONDULAC
—SCHOOL DISTRICT—

"Our students are engaging with *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* really well and I think that's because their lessons are really tailored to their needs. With the right supports, they're seeing and feeling success weekly while still being challenged."

—Principal Brad Nerat

A Spotlight on Theisen MS

Theisen MS is a bright example of Fond du Lac's commitment to deeply embedding *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* into daily practice.

Principal Nerat and his assistant principal, Allison Birschbach, committed to meeting with teachers every week for two years, making *i-Ready* data a staple in mathematics and reading instruction.

"Six meetings a week, reviewing *i-Ready* data . . . that gave us an opportunity to sit in the work with teachers," Nerat said. "It didn't take long before those *i-Ready* data chats became a fixture, helping us celebrate successes and address challenges."

Teachers Driving Growth through Data

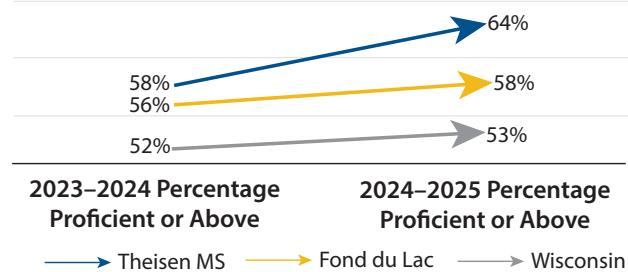
Teachers at Theisen fully embraced personalized learning, setting new goals and reviewing results after every lesson. "Week to week, we either celebrated the data we saw or had rich conversations about why results might be different per section," Nerat shared.

By leveraging *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* with fidelity—ensuring at least 30–45 minutes of weekly lesson time per subject and maintaining a 70 percent or higher pass rate²—teachers were able to target and support each student's needs.

Growing through Professional Learning

Professional learning (PL) was another key to Theisen's success, with Nerat noting: "Our relationship with the PL team at Curriculum Associates has been paramount. Leaders met with them twice a year to review data and learn, and teachers built on that foundation to deepen their practice and explore new strategies."

Grades 6–8 Students Scoring Proficient or Above on the 2025 Wisconsin Forward Mathematics Exam



Theisen MS grew from 58 to 64 percent on the Wisconsin Forward mathematics exam in a single year, far outperforming the state's one-point growth.

Students as Partners in Progress

Collaboration extended to students, who became active participants in their own learning.

"We invited students to sit down with a small group of teachers and myself, and we either celebrated their data or very safely talked about why their scores might be a little bit lower," Nerat shared. "It was exciting and fun to include students in that way at a bigger level."

Reflecting on the District's Success

Theisen's journey reflects Fond du Lac's broader success, showing how a committed implementation of *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* can transform learning outcomes.

"We've got a great team right now, both in our school and district," said Nerat. "Our work with *i-Ready* isn't a one-and-done—it's something we're excited to keep building."



Explore how *i-Ready* can best support your classroom.

²Implementing *i-Ready Personalized Instruction* as recommended is shown to be associated with higher state test scores and an increased likelihood of proficiency. Read the efficacy research [here](#).