

CASE STUDY

# Michigan District Uses Lexia Core5 To Get a Handle on Its Reading Data

Waterford School District, Waterford, Michigan



In 2018, Waterford School District leaders sought a technology platform to support young readers while also providing accurate data the district was lacking.

“We were generating a lot of data, but the interventions we were using with students weren’t accelerating their foundational skills,” said Christine Cyporyn, the district’s Title I Coordinator.

In other words, the district’s teachers were relying on data that did not clearly show which skills the students needed the most in their large- and small-group instruction. “We had just come off a re-rollout of guided reading, but it really wasn’t showing solid results,” Cyporyn said. “We were so focused on using a reading workshop structure and balanced literacy to teach our readers, but we just honestly didn’t know all the shifts we needed to make.”

Educators use data in various ways to improve student learning outcomes, teacher effectiveness, and overall school performance. From student performance monitoring to curriculum to school improvement planning, data helps teachers improve student learning outcomes, school performance, and effectiveness. In the absence of good data, these and other key performance metrics are often left up to guesswork. Guesswork does not deliver reliable results.

Knowing this and wanting to improve reading intervention data, district leaders went in search of a new supplementary literacy program. Ultimately, Lexia® Core5® Reading caught their attention.



## Piloting Lexia

For the 2018–2019 school year, district leaders decided to pilot Core5 with a small group of students at one elementary school. The pilot went well and the district slowly expanded its use of the reading platform. In spring 2020, the district obtained unlimited licenses (which Lexia® was offering at no charge at the time, due to the pandemic) and began using it with all elementary students.

Because teachers were already using Core5 in their physical classrooms, the switch to remote-only instruction was supported by Lexia. Students could access the program at home while teachers were able to use Lexia resources to support students remotely. The district also began using Core5 in its summer program, which was revamped in 2021. “We kept Lexia Core5 as one of the important, daily parts of the literacy acceleration block in our summer program,” Cyporyn said. “We have steadily increased enrollment every summer.” For 2023, she added, they had 350 students registered for the summer program.

## The Gateway to Structured Literacy

District teachers recently implemented a new Tier 1 Structured Literacy program which works well with Core5. “Lexia really was our gateway into Structured Literacy,” Cyporyn said.

“I never dreamed that there would be acceleration support for kids like what we have now with Lexia,” she explained.

Cyporyn is pleased with the results of her district’s multiyear approach to improving literacy and extracting the data it needs for good decision-making and performance monitoring. For example, if usage numbers don’t meet teachers’ expectations, those instructors can quickly gain an understanding of how students are using the program and intervene accordingly.


“That was a big shift for us because we can now get our hands on some great data pretty quickly utilizing the online programs that students are using consistently,” Cyporyn said.

## Improvements Abound

For the 2022–2023 school year, 65% of Waterford School District’s students met Lexia usage expectations. During the same period, 90% of students who used Core5 with fidelity and 82% of all students advanced at least one grade level of material. Furthermore, 69% of all students and 82% of students who used Core5 with fidelity ended the year working on at- or above-grade-level material.

The district recently completed its NWEA testing, which is given three times each year. Students' RIT scores also improved—to the point where the district's median RIT percentile was much higher than usual. In fact, a comparison of NWEA Reading test results from SY 2019–2020 to SY 2022–2023 showed K–5 students went from 37% at or above norms of growth rate to 93%. Similar results were gained on the NWEA Language Usage test for students in grades 3–5, where students went from 37% at or above norms of growth rate to 96%.

"We just had our winter test and we had growth data like we've never seen before," Cyporyn said. "We tend to have some good growth data because we have a lot of students who do show growth over the year, but typically not from fall to winter. The solid growth we saw this past year was almost crazy."

**82%** 

**of students who used Core5 with fidelity ended the year working on at-or above-grade-level material.**

*The percentage of students working at or above-grade level increased from 26% to 82% in one school year with recommended program usage.*

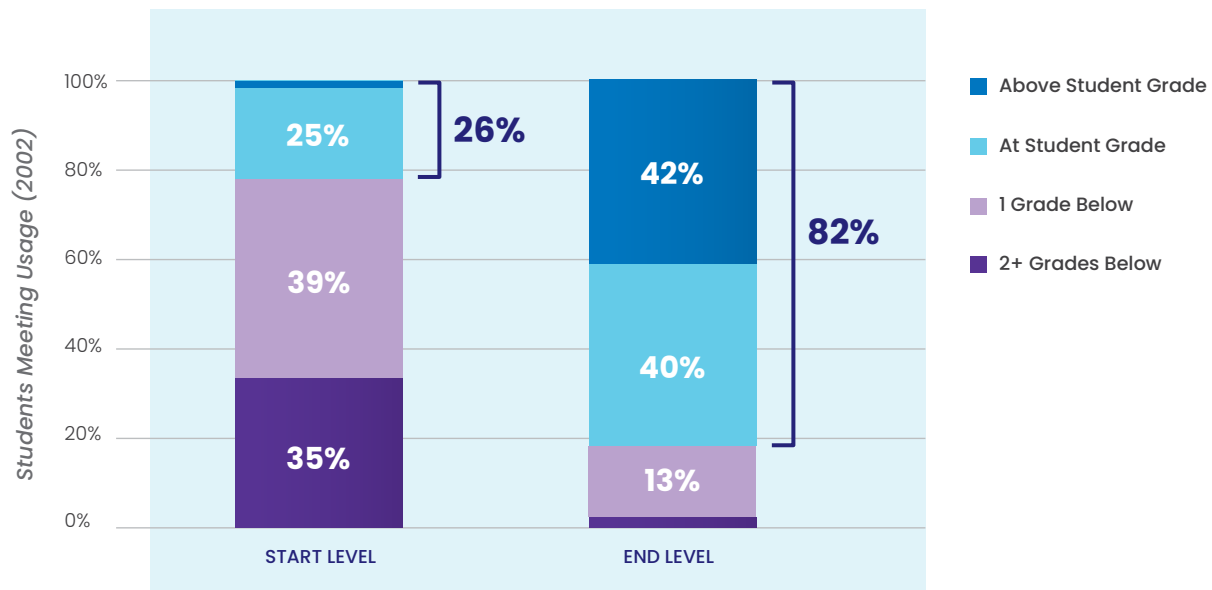


Figure 1. Progress in Core5 during 2022–2023 for meeting-usage students (N=2002)

## Teacher Feedback = Positive

The more Waterford School District's teachers and students use Core5, the more they like it. The positive momentum gets going in a building and spreads throughout the traditional school year and into the summer months. "Teacher feedback has continued to be positive. They understand the Core5 program and have deepened their understanding of the data that it produces," Cyporyn said.

"Teachers get excited because they see kids making progress in Core5 and they see that as a direct connection to their literacy progress they are making overall," said Cyporyn, who enjoys being able to access the data from a variety of lenses. For example, building interventionists can have an admin view and quickly see what their caseload students are doing, but they can also see grade levels and classes.

"Lexia's resources are top-notch; they're constantly updating the lessons and the slide decks, the decodable texts, and everything else," said Cyporyn, who also likes having a Lexia customer support specialist in her corner, ready to help when called upon. "They're always teaching me something new, answering questions, or helping me better understand how we can optimize our use of Core5 in the classroom."

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