

Personal Reading Plans and Early Literacy: Fall 2026

TO: Board of Education, Waunakee Community School District

FROM: Amy Fassbender, Director of Elementary Curriculum and Instruction

DATE: October 7, 2026

DATA: Act 20 Personal Reading Plan (PRP) rosters, fall 2024 to fall 2026; aimswebPlus benchmarks 2024-25, 2025-26 and fall 2026; fall 2026 i-Ready reading (as of Oct. 7)

BOTTOM LINE

Waunakee has **166 students on Personal Reading Plans** this fall, 9% of K-5 enrollment, and the underlying reading skills of our primary students are holding steady. Fewer students qualify for plans than two years ago mainly because the state screener was renormed in 2025, not because more students read well.

- **The count.** 101 plans in K-3 come from fall screening; 65 in grades 4-5 continue because those students have not yet scored proficient on the Forward Exam. Fall to fall on the same norms, K-3 plans went from 116 to 101.
- **The renorming.** Pearson's 2025 norms lowered the raw score that marks the 25th percentile. Scored against one fixed yardstick, the share of second and third graders below the fluency bar has been flat for two years and is slightly better this fall.
- **Progressing off plans.** Few students leave a plan within a school year (about 1 in 10 per window). Most exits come at the next fall screening and depend on the starting point: 67% of students just under the line exit, against 9% of those far below it.
- **Persistence.** 85% of this fall's plans are continuing plans. About half of the students identified in 2024-25 still have one, concentrated among students with IEPs and economically disadvantaged students.
- **i-Ready agrees.** Plan students sit at the 23rd national percentile on fall i-Ready reading, and 58% of K-3 plan students carry i-Ready's reading difficulty flag. About 50 K-3 students without a plan are two or more grade levels below.

1. WHERE PLANS STAND THIS FALL

Grades 2, 3 and 5 carry the most plans, at 12-13% of enrollment each; kindergarten and grade 1 are near 5%.

Table 1. Personal Reading Plans by grade and school, fall 2026

Grade	Plans	% enrolled	Arboretum	Heritage	Prairie	Intermediate
K	11	4%	2	9	0	—
1	15	5%	4	3	8	—
2	34	12%	6	12	16	—
3	41	13%	5	26	10	—
4	24	7%	4	10	10	—
5	41	13%	—	—	—	41
K-5 total	166	9%	21	60	44	41

K-3 plans: fall aimswebPlus below the 25th percentile (early literacy composite in K-1, oral reading fluency in grades 2-3). Grades 4-5: plan in grade 3 and not yet proficient on Forward. Grade 5 includes 8 students whose plans were closed last year but whom the state platform still lists as needing a plan (see Next steps); 158 of the 166 plans are active. A dash means the school does not serve that grade.

Who holds plans. Students with IEPs are 13% of K-5 enrollment and 25% of plan holders; economically disadvantaged students are 7% of enrollment and 23% of plan holders. Sixteen of the 101 K-3 plan holders are multilingual learners, 12 of them at English proficiency levels 1-2.

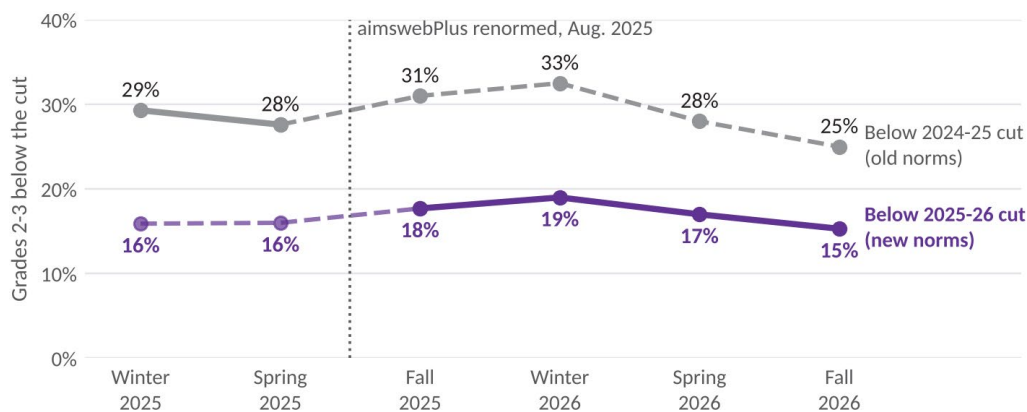
Where. Heritage holds 60 of the 125 elementary plans. Its K-3 rate is 13% of students tested, against 9% at Prairie and 5% at Arboretum, and 26 of its 114 third graders (23%) have a plan. Heritage enrolls most of the district's economically disadvantaged elementary students, so a large part of this difference correlates with demographics. Prairie grade 2 (16 plans, 17% of those tested) is the other cluster.

2. READING THE TREND THROUGH THE 2025 RENORMING

The drop in plan counts since 2024-25 is mostly a change in the measuring stick. K-3 students on a plan at any point in the year fell from 265 in 2024-25 to 193 in 2025-26, but DPI states that the two years "cannot be directly compared." Act 20 places a K-3 student on a plan below the 25th percentile. In August 2025 Pearson replaced aimswebPlus's 2015 national norms with a newer, lower-scoring national sample, so the raw score at that percentile dropped: the grade 3 fall fluency cut fell from 67 to 45 words correct per minute. The law did not change; the bar under it did.

Raw scores are unaffected, so Figure 1 scores every second and third grader in each window against **both** cuts. Under either yardstick the share below the bar has held steady, with a small improvement this fall. Median fluency agrees: third graders read 92 words correct per minute in fall 2025 and 94 this fall; second graders 60 and 74.

Figure 1. Grades 2-3: share of students below the oral reading fluency cut, scored against the 2024-25 and 2025-26 cuts



Solid line = the cut in force when plans were written; dashed = the same students against the other cut. Fall 2024 is omitted because screening that fall was not universal.

Table 2. Data for Figure 1: grades 2-3 below each cut (students and percent)

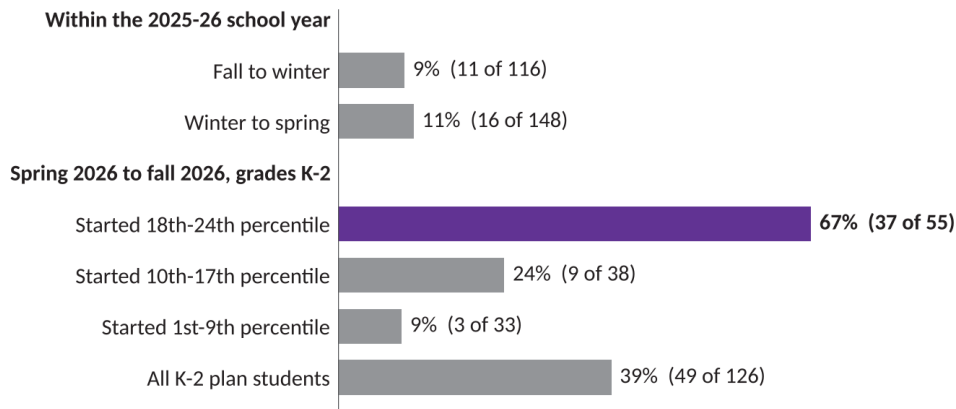
Screening window	Students tested	Below 2024-25 cut	Below 2025-26 cut
Winter 2025	621	182 (29%)	99 (16%)
Spring 2025	619	171 (28%)	99 (16%)
Fall 2025	616	191 (31%)	109 (18%)
Winter 2026	615	200 (33%)	117 (19%)
Spring 2026	617	173 (28%)	105 (17%)
Fall 2026	561	140 (25%)	86 (15%)

About 55 second and third graders this fall read at a level that would have triggered a plan in 2024-25 but not today. They are not legally required to have a plan, but most still need close monitoring. Fall 2025 to fall 2026 is the first clean year-over-year comparison on the new norms, and staff recommend treating **2025-26 as the new baseline**.

3. HOW STUDENTS PROGRESS OFF PLANS

Students leave plans slowly within a year and mostly at the next fall screening, and their starting point predicts whether they leave. Everything in this section uses the 2025 norms, so the renorming does not affect it.

Figure 2. Share of plan students who scored at or above the 25th percentile at the next screening



Each bar is labeled with its percent and count (the chart's data). Spring-to-fall excludes 12 students not tested this fall and 31 third graders whose plans now follow Forward results. Students just under the line can cross it on ordinary score variation alone, so the gradient describes who exits; it is not by itself evidence of what the interventions did.

Exiting takes catch-up growth, not typical growth. Typical growth keeps a student at the same percentile. Of the 116 students on a plan in fall 2025, 13 (11%) were above the line by spring. Their median growth percentile was 55 in grade 3 and 45 in grade 2, about typical, but 25 in kindergarten and grade 1: the youngest plan students lost ground against national peers who started where they did. In grade 2, plan students gained 20 words correct per minute over the year, against 35 for classmates; in grade 3 they kept pace (33 against 29).

Kindergarten and grade 1 move in opposite directions. Kindergarten plans rise through the year (7 in fall 2025, 40 by spring) as the spring benchmark gets harder; then most clear, with 26 of 38 (68%) above the line as first graders this fall. The move from grade 1 to grade 2 is the hardest: 7 of 34 (21%) exited.

Plans persist into the upper grades. Of 2025-26 third graders on a plan who are still enrolled, 24 of 42 (57%) carry it into grade 4 because they did not score proficient (meeting) on the grade 3 Forward Exam; of 2024-25 third graders, 41 of 72 (57%) still have one in grade 5. Of all students first identified in 2024-25 and still enrolled, 109 of 228 (48%) are on a plan this fall. Only 25 of this fall's 166 plans are new, and 22 of Heritage's 26 third-grade plan holders have had a plan in each of the last three years.

4. I-READY CROSS-CHECK

Fall i-Ready reading, a separate test that was not renormed, confirms that the students on plans are the right students and flags a group just above the line.

Table 3. Fall 2026 i-Ready reading by plan status

Fall 2026 group	Students	Median national percentile	2+ grade levels below	Reading difficulty flag
K-3, on a plan	101	23rd	58%	58%
K-3, aimswebPlus 25th-39th (no plan)	111	37th	21%	21%
K-3, all other students	872	74th	3%	3%
Grades 4-5, on a plan	65	24th	72%	K-3 only
Grades 4-5, no plan	557	69th	11%	K-3 only

No K-3 plan student placed on grade level, and the two tests agree on who is furthest behind. About 50 K-3 students without a plan are two or more grade levels below on i-Ready; 23 of them scored between the 25th and 39th percentile on aimswebPlus, the band the renorming moved above the line. Fall i-Ready placements are measured against end-of-year standards, so the "2 or more below" column is the meaningful one.

5. NEXT STEPS AND QUESTIONS FOR THE DISTRICT

Staff next steps

- 1. Reconcile the rosters this month.** Sixteen K-3 students screened below the 25th percentile do not appear on the plan export; 15 have IEPs, so their reading goals may already be documented there, and staff will confirm each. The state platform also flags 8 fifth graders as needing a plan: their plans closed last year when skills reached grade level, but they did not score proficient on the spring 2026 Forward Exam.
- 2. Keep a local watch band above the line.** Monitor the 111 K-3 students between the 25th and 39th percentiles, starting with the 23 whom i-Ready places two or more grade levels below.
- 3. Increase intensity where students are not catching up.** Review intervention time, group size and program fit first for students below the 10th percentile and for kindergarten and grade 1 plan students.
- 4. Look closely at two clusters:** Heritage grade 3 and the grade 1 to grade 2 transition.

Measures the District may want to monitor (each stays comparable across future norm changes)

- The share of K-3 students below the line, fall to fall, from the 2025-26 baseline.
- The share of plan students making more than typical growth, the growth that ends a plan.
- Grade 3 Forward Exam proficiency among plan students, the point at which plans end or follow a student into grade 4.

DATA NOTES

- Plan rosters come from the state Act 20 platform; no 2025-26 grade 4 roster was available. Grade 4-5 students were matched to earlier rosters by name, all others by district ID.
- aimswebPlus fall 2026 scores were exported through September 30. In 2024-25, grade 1 risk used oral reading fluency alone and the old kindergarten composite cuts are unpublished, so the fixed-yardstick comparison covers grades 2-3 only. Growth percentiles are aimswebPlus fall-to-spring values for 2025-26 (50 = typical), reported in bands of ten; kindergarten (7 students) and grade 1 (22) groups are small. "Still enrolled" means the student tested on i-Ready or aimswebPlus this fall.
- i-Ready: fall 2026 reading diagnostic as of October 7 (1,706 K-5 students); its reading difficulty indicator is reported for K-3 only. Economic disadvantage counts a flag in 2025-26 or 2026-27 because fall meal-status data are incomplete. All figures are aggregates; no individual student information appears in this brief.

AI DISCLOSURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This brief was drafted with AI assistance (Claude, Anthropic) and reviewed and approved by Amy Fassbender and Tim Schell. Estimated environmental impact of the AI analysis and drafting behind this brief and its companion slides: roughly 0.35 kWh of electricity, comparable to about 4.5 hours of Netflix streaming, or to the emissions from driving about four-tenths of a mile in a car that gets 30 mpg. This is an order-of-magnitude estimate, not a measurement.