

Kyle Thayse

4k-12 Instructional Coach Luxembourg-Casco School District

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[00:00:00] Representative Joel Kitchens; R-Sturgeon Bay: . Okay. So we have, um, we do have districts in Wisconsin I think that are already doing a, a good job with implementing the science of reading. We have a number of others that are, that are in the process of, of transitioning to that. So I asked, uh, um, Kyle Thayse who's the essentially reading coach at Luxembourg Casco School District, and they, the reason I picked him is they've been doing it much longer than most districts, probably in Wisconsin, and I think they have more results to show for that.

[00:00:27] So thanks for coming in, Kyle, and thanks for sitting through. You bet. **Kyle Thayse:** Thank you guys for the great conversations today. I've, I've learned a lot here about the progress we're making and really hopeful to, um, you know, hear everybody at the table working together, which is great. My name is Kyle FAEs. I've worked for Luxemburg Casco School District here, um, for 17 years now.

[00:00:45] **Kyle Thayse:** And, um, I started off in the classroom, um, turned into a literacy coach in the district, did some intervention work and I'm now actually, I'm considered the district instructional coach, 4K 12, which is a big overtaking, but I kind of cover, I cover a lot of areas, do a lot of different things there. [00:01:00] But, uh, I came today to talk a little bit about, um, some of the things that we, we've done over the last, uh, quite a few years here.

[00:01:06] **Kyle Thayse:** Um, and some of the results that we've, we've gotten from that and, and, um, in education, like everybody else has talked about, it's, it's messy. So we've, we've learned from our mistakes along the way, but we've tried to ground ourselves in research and I just, um, you know, I'm, I'm here today to tell a little bit about our story and, uh, and a lot of the things that I'm gonna talk about today actually align to a lot of the conversations.

[00:01:24] **Kyle Thayse:** The experts at the table, um, brought. So, uh, first of all, data is important and I think, you know, that's, this is kind of where it all started for us at Luxemburg Casco. Um, back in our, around the 2010 to 2014 range, we started having a lot of conversations about literacy in our district and some of the outcomes we were having on, on our state assessments.

[00:01:43] **Kyle Thayse:** At that point, we averaged around 39% proficiency on our, on our state assessments. And, uh, we weren't happy about that. And, and we, we knew we could do better for our students and for our. . And, um, at that point we, we got together and had to do some of our own digging, uh, do our own research and look at the national reading [00:02:00] panel.

[00:02:00] **Kyle Thayse:** Um, you know, what, what suggestions were out there. And, um, and we, we really went through, I would say a first stage shift, um, in our district that led to some pretty good outcomes, I would say, and in big changes for us. Um, currently from that 2005 school year after that, uh, up until to now, um, we average, we average 62% proficiency in our district.

[00:02:21] **Kyle Thayse:** And that, and. Third grade through sixth grade assessment at intermediate school, um, which is assessing, again, the state, the state assessment. And we think that's a, a pretty good indication and that shift is an indication of our literacy program below that as well. Um, so just talking on what that kind of looked like for us at that, at that time, uh, early on, um, our initial shifts, one of the things that was crucial for us was our screening process that we did put into.

[00:02:45] **Kyle Thayse:** Um, and we heard that talked about here today. Um, and we, we put in a screening process that did screen students three times a year on multiple screeners at not just our primary levels, but we now, today do this all the way up to our eighth grade level. Um, and at our [00:03:00] younger levels, we're making sure we're covering all the, the, the main pillars of literacy.

[00:03:04] **Kyle Thayse:** Uh, in order to allow that screener then to give us information. And then we also, I work with our teachers as the district coach to look at that data and, and determine what we need to do with some of those students who not only are at risk, but, um, we also in, in those, those meetings afterwards, um, discuss students that aren't proficient.

[00:03:21] **Kyle Thayse:** So not just the students that are below the 20th percentile, but the students that are, that are, um, not proficient readers. And, and we assign our experts to those students with a plan. Uh, and, and the students that, that aren't proficient but aren't at. Um, we, we talk to our classroom teachers about what we can do, to improve their literacy and what those students need as well.

[00:03:39] **Kyle Thayse:** So we think that that, that has been a, a, a very big, um, had caused some very great outcomes for us and for our students. Um, the other thing that we did is we shifted. Um, we had a phonics curriculum, but it wasn't great and, um, it, it was more sing-songy and didn't have a lot of research. And we really dove into, um, finding a good curriculum and, and that I think was one of [00:04:00] our very large, uh, we saw great gains because of that.

[00:04:03] **Kyle Thayse:** So we shifted over to a fines curriculum. The, there's, there's good ones out there, but the ones that we went to was a, was, was called Foundations. And the reason we went in that direction of the foundation's curriculum is there was coaching support that went with it. And the coaching support was phenomenal.

[00:04:16] **Kyle Thayse:** We had a great coach and, and so much can be said. Um, and they also allowed for, and you spoke of, um, uh, interventions, opportunities for tier two and tier three interventions. So kids who didn't learn their phonics had opportunities to get taught it again. And then even at the higher levels from grades third

grade and above, we have, um, there's interventions in place that those students can get taught it even again.

[00:04:38] **Kyle Thayse:** So there, it, it gets, and it's all in a system, which was really great for us. So, so that was a, was a, a great, um, something that really helped move the needle. Uh, the next thing that we did is, is we, um, examined our, our reading curriculum, which was all over the board. Every grade level was doing different things and we really needed to hone it, in which today's world we called that guaranteed Bible curriculum.

[00:04:57] **Kyle Thayse:** We needed to create that system. And so, [00:05:00] um, we, we sat down and we piloted a number of curriculums and we went with what today is now considered a pretty controversial curriculum, the units of study. And, um, at the time, the good things it did for us was bring everybody together and it unified us and we, we could see what the next grade.

[00:05:15] **Kyle Thayse:** Was gonna, what, what we had to get kids to. We knew what was coming from behind us, and, and we created PLCs that were very strong in our district. Um, and, and we felt like that also, you know, created a, a, a coaching model for me to go in and have common conversations with teachers, create professional development, and it really boosted up our conversations we were having professionally.

[00:05:35] **Kyle Thayse:** So those were all great things. And all of that included, you know, coaching and development. It first started outside the district, but then eventually, um, the district saw such value in it that they created my. And, um, and I moved into that position and now I, I'm, I'm doing it across grade levels. It started 4K five and, and now it's all the way up to 12th grade.

[00:05:51] **Kyle Thayse:** So that was kind of shift number one. And we felt pretty good. We were flying high and our scores were good and, and community was happy and the kids were reading. Um, but I, [00:06:00] I, I attended a, a, a conference, another reading conference, and I, I came across another professional, uh, at the DC Evers School. Um, she was their director of curriculum literary literacy assessments and el down there.

[00:06:12] **Kyle Thayse:** And, um, we had a lot of really great conversations about all this stuff. And, um, she came up to visit our district with some, with like we all we do in our, in our field. We, we collaborate and they brought, uh, professionals up there and, um, they wanted to see our phonics program. Little did I know I was, they were gonna leave with also me having a deeper understanding of what the science of reading was.

[00:06:31] **Kyle Thayse:** And that was really, that's when it started. Um, to understand, um, the, the, the components of it and some of the things that we had ha that were happening in our, our curriculum right under my nose that I wasn't recognizing were

not great practices. So, um, you know, that led to us leaders sitting around, around the table and saying, we need to do something different.

[00:06:51] **Kyle Thaysse:** At our, our primary levels we're, we're seeing good outcomes, but our kids still are, are getting conflicting curriculum when they're learning how to learn to, to, to read words with [00:07:00] pH. , but then in a reading curriculum where they're reading texts are being taught to, to read words using other methods that are not backed by research.

[00:07:09] **Kyle Thaysse:** So, um, that, that overtaking, you know, we, it, it led to, it led to some, some problems for us that we had to solve. So as a district, the, the two, I'd say main ones were that, and we also didn't have a pmic awareness curriculum. And um, so the first easy one was we needed to get a phonemic awareness. So, so we, uh, found one, um, collaborating again with DC Everest.

[00:07:28] **Kyle Thaysse:** And, and looking out there at the national reading panel suggestions, we, we found what we felt was a strong one and we implemented that and that was an easy fix. Within a year we had that out there enrolling, and we saw the benefits of that working along with our finance curriculum. The larger overtaking was, um, the, the curriculum.

[00:07:44] **Kyle Thaysse:** Um, we did feel like the curriculum had a lot of really great things for us, but we, we did want to change some things at the lower level. So we took a leap of faith and we did purchase the new units. Um, in hopes that there was going to have some of these things in there because the revamped units of study [00:08:00] with a promise was going to make some of these big changes.

[00:08:02] **Kyle Thaysse:** And we piloted that at first, and, um, happy to say after receiving it, and we're in the middle of this transition right now, uh, in our, in our district, um, that there are a lot of very large changes in, in that new reading curriculum. Um, altering the lessons are altered and the bad word solving practices such as, um, and I, it was referenced a little bit before.

[00:08:22] **Kyle Thaysse:** I'll give you an example of, you know, a, a kindergartner expecting to read the word caterpillar, which is a multis, sylv like word, um, in a, in a text. The only way they can do that is by looking at the picture. They're not gonna be able to use phonics to sound that word out. Uh, in, in our curriculum, we were teaching kids, when we get to those words, look at the picture, don't worry, don't attend to the sound.

[00:08:40] **Kyle Thaysse:** Um, and, and just to kind of figure it out, um, What was part of the curriculum, right? Um, we also had pattern, uh, books that, that relied on patterns in there where kids were memorizing more of the pattern at those lower levels of the text and, and, and not really actually reading the words. Um, and, and so there were some issues that we had in inside the text and, [00:09:00] um, which you've, you've heard the science of reading, uh, experts talk about.

[00:09:03] **Kyle Thayse:** And, and so we were hopeful that those switches were gonna be made and, and they have been made in there and we're, we're very happy about that. Now we, uh, we have the over. kind of re professionally developing our, our teachers. Again, in this new way of thinking, which it's come up here before, not everybody is on board right away.

[00:09:19] **Kyle Thayse:** And that's a challenge, you know, from a teacher's perspective because change is hard. Um, but, but we're going through right now and, um, you know, working, working through that new curriculum to make those changes. The other thing I think that hasn't been talked about today, and I haven't heard anybody mention, but something that I really would like to see added, um, to the conversation is the use of decodable texts in.

[00:09:40] **Kyle Thayse:** Lower level, um, schools. So a decodable text is basically following the phonics concepts a student is taught in phonics. Uh, uh, it's a, it's a book that then the students are able to read that has those same phonics concepts in it, and that connected texts and that fluency is all part of the reading pillars.

[00:09:57] **Kyle Thayse:** And, and if we don't have those [00:10:00] texts in the hand, the hands of our, our children we're kind of falling back on the chance that we might be putting some of the wrong texts with words that they cannot. With, with some of the skills that that we have in there, and knowing that we're no longer gonna teach those skills anymore.

[00:10:14] **Kyle Thayse:** So those kids are not g, they're gonna come across a word in there that they don't have the phonic skills to read anymore and not be able to read the word. And in our case right now, with what we're currently dealing with, we're telling our teachers, just tell them the word because we don't want them, they don't have those skills to do that at that time.

[00:10:27] **Kyle Thayse:** They'll get 'em eventually. But, um, but I think decodable text is something. Should be earmarked in this conversation if we are going to be chasing good curriculums and chasing, um, you know, good practices. Uh, there should be a conversation about the resources that are in the hands of those kids and those teachers to be able to do what they need to do.

[00:10:45] **Kyle Thayse:** Um, and the other part of the process here that we're in the middle of right now, and is rather messy, and I I refer to this before, is we're moving some of the texts that students would have in their hands. don't, that, that have to be read using bad practices. And, and those exist. They're they're in our, they're in our [00:11:00] classrooms right now.

[00:11:01] **Kyle Thayse:** But the problem is, is we can't just take them all out because we have, we don't have other texts to replace them. Um, so we, it, part of our curriculum is kids need books to read. Um, so, so right now, and, and it's, it's an initiative. Ours is, we go forward in the summer here is, is to revamp our book room,

look at our libraries and, and look through some of those texts to determine what needs to come out in this process.

[00:11:20] **Kyle Thayse:** Cause not everything needs to come out, but there are certain texts that we need to take out. So that, that, um, you know, that's a, that's part of the, the, uh, the big picture problems. The other thing, I think it was referenced, the, the Fontus of Pinnell curriculum was referenced here before, but I, um, another thing, you know, with the screeners being brought to the table here, we, we also are facing a problem with our screening system.

[00:11:41] **Kyle Thayse:** And that currently, right now in our district, one of our early literacy screeners, uh, or one of the screeners, one of the three that we use at our primary level is, um, Fontis Van's Benchmark. And, um, in order to progress through that benchmark system, students need to read texts that, um, are developed [00:12:00] with the wrong practices that students would need, and we're no longer gonna teach that.

[00:12:05] **Kyle Thayse:** Um, so now if we're judging whether or not students are at risk or not with this screener, it's not. not good to work. So, um, we are going to have to, you know, we're gonna, we're gonna have to spend some time digging into that screener as well, um, because it's not aligning to the practices we're gonna be using in the classroom.

[00:12:20] **Kyle Thayse:** And, and, and best and best practice. Um, and I'm not saying by any, by any means, sitting down with a student, which is what that that assessment system does, and listening to them read is bad. I just don't, at this point, at our district, we're having conversations that we don't feel, and they're starting.

[00:12:34] **Kyle Thayse:** Some, some research gathered on this that it's a great, it's a, it's a good universal screening system. It's a, it may be something to be used in the classroom, sit down with a student, you need to listen to them read, but not to judge a student as far as whether or not they're at risk or not, especially with some of the texts that are in there.

[00:12:48] **Kyle Thayse:** So, um, so we're gonna take that on after we figure out what early literacy screener is going to replace our pale screener, which is no longer gonna be relevant either. So we, we have a lot of work to do at Luxembourg and we keep. Um, [00:13:00] you know, moving along, but that's kind of our story. Um, and I think, you know, one of the things you guys have been asking as, as, uh, you know, I would, I guess I'll call this a team here, having the conversation is what, what is needed?

[00:13:10] **Kyle Thayse:** And from my perspective, I am not an expert by any means, but being in the school district, um, and, and continuing to read the papers about school districts battling through this, I think one thing that is essential is that we have to find a way to gather data from school districts on what curriculums they're using.

[00:13:29] **Kyle Thayse:** to cover the, the most important pillars of literacy. And so I, you know, I'm, I'm reading more and more in the newspaper about districts that don't have phonics curriculums or I know of districts because of the coaching that we've received through foundations that only have a foundations curriculum, but don't have a reading curriculum.

[00:13:44] **Kyle Thayse:** And I think that's, that's a really big problem. So we, we need to make sure that we are covering, I mean, if, if you don't have a phonics curriculum, you're not teaching kids. , you're just putting books in front of them, right? So, so we need to have a, to find a way to gather that information. And I think we can put the process together, [00:14:00] which gets to, you know, number, my, my second point here where if we can gather that information and know that districts don't have those, uh, a phonic curriculum, for example, well then what process and what people can we put in front of them to get the right resources in front of them?

[00:14:12] **Kyle Thayse:** And then a process that involves coaching, that then leads to a curriculum change and best practice in those classrooms, which is gonna lead to better outcomes. So, you know, I think those two things kind of go hand in hand. Um, and, and it also gives you a soft checks and balance system to understand where districts are at more on the local level to work with one another.

[00:14:34] **Kyle Thayse:** Um, and I, so I think that's important. And I think, um, the third point I wanna make is, uh, what's needed here is, is I think coaching is essential. And this, that was, that was heard over and over again this morning, or this morning and afternoon here at the, at the podium. And, um, you know, Mississippi has used, uh, you know, a playbook on.

[00:14:50] **Kyle Thayse:** I think also, you know, from my own experience in the district, none of this work is going to be done correctly unless you have people [00:15:00] in classrooms to support the teachers. When teachers learn, when teachers grow, when they feel comfortable, kids learn. And, and principals and directors right now have so much on their plates.

[00:15:09] **Kyle Thayse:** School districts, schools don't look the same anymore than they did even 10 years ago. And their ability to go in and, you know, they, they might be going in and, and, and giving feedback to teachers, but not on an everyday basis like a. They're not doing professional development and planning PDs, which actually our district has a day tomorrow, professional development day tomorrow, where Mia as, as a coach, would be involved in the full day, in the gamut of, of meeting with teachers and, and developing them.

[00:15:31] **Kyle Thayse:** So that's, that's the most important work that that can be done. So finding a pathway to sup to, to find coaches, support coaches, not just at the upper levels. I know D p I talked about that, but trickle down into the local level, school district coaches and how do we, how do we gain that? Um, if we don't have one of those coaches, cuz we're doing, we're doing okay as a district, we've made some of these gains.

[00:15:52] **Kyle Thayse:** Um, but I, I still think that, you know, we deserve, we deserve, just like anybody else does support in, in the coaching system as well. So, um, and the last point I [00:16:00] made in here, and I I mentioned this before, is, is the support of decodable texts. So, um, those are the, the main needs I'd say, uh, that I, I would say within the district that, uh, that we need, and this is not by any means, an easy job teaching reading is, is it's complex and, um, our teachers.

[00:16:16] **Kyle Thayse:** Uh, so many things on their plate. And I think from a professional development perspective, it's also important to think about all these pillars of literacy being taught. Um, when we focus on reading for two to three years, they're, they're still teaching math and science and social studies and, and social emotional curriculum and all these other things, and that means those things are being put to the side so that we can focus on reading.

[00:16:38] **Kyle Thayse:** And it's, it's no wonder honestly that, that our teacher's mental health is, is, is struggling right now. Those are a lot of things to take on and be responsible for, for 20 to 30 children in your classroom and try to really do it well. Um, so there, there's a lot on the table here. Um, literacy is very, very important, but I think how you approach this and how we handle this is, is very important as well.

[00:16:59] **Kyle Thayse:** And you know, the time [00:17:00] is now. We have all the right people at the table and I think, you know, let's not waste the opportunity. So that's, that's what I have. Um, and that's kind of our story Luxer Casco. So if you have any questions, I'd be happy to answer.

*Rep. Joel Kitchens:* Thanks a lot, Kyle. Um, So I know bringing in new teachers, and I think you and I have talked about that a little bit, you've had to sort of retrain some of them.

[00:17:19] And also similarly to that, how have you dealt with the teachers that have been there a long time and are pretty sure that they know what they're doing and to try to retrain them? And I know you have some very strong leadership at your school, which obviously helps, but can you address that a little bit and, and what you're seeing with the college prep piece of it?

[00:17:38] **Kyle Thayse:** Sure. Um, so I'll address the first part, the, the college preparation part. As a district, we have shifted our new teacher onboarding. Um, and it, it's, it's very costly. Um, we, we bring them in for a, a whole extra week, uh, of outside of the regular summer in service. They come in themselves for a whole extra week ahead of time and, and they meet with leadership [00:18:00] and, and coach in the coaches in the district.

[00:18:02] **Kyle Thayse:** Um, I'm the only district coach, but we do have other teachers that play a coaching role. We don't have the money for the positions, but we have, we, it's a need. So on the math side of things, we have teachers that, that help out and jump in, that are master teachers. Um, but, but we have to spend money, you know, preparing these, these teachers and going through this, whether it's from a curriculum



perspective, best practice perspective, um, you know, so that, that's I think, a big part of it.

[00:18:24] **Kyle Thayse:** And, um, throughout the school year. A lot of the coaching that I, that, that we do early on are with some of those new teachers, um, as well. So that, that, that takes up a lot of that as well in, in the training that goes along with it. Um, but I think the other thing that I think has been important here is I've, we've done the best we can at Luxembourg to try to.

[00:18:42] **Kyle Thayse:** um, collaborate with area, uh, universities and, um, up by us. This is UW GB and, and St. Norbit are two of them. And, um, and, and work within their education program. And also, um, I spend a lot of time talking to the ed, the, the professors in those areas and, and some of the teachers teaching in those areas. So I'm confident that this [00:19:00] stuff is all, it's on their radar, you know, they're, they're having conversations about it.

[00:19:03] **Kyle Thayse:** I don't know how, you know, how fast things are gonna move. Um, but that, that is something that I've had to. . Um, and I've been lucky enough to have my district allow me to do, to go right into the universities. I, I go and I, I go in as a speaker into those classrooms and talk about some of this stuff. Um, because I want those kids, I want those, those pre-service teachers to know what's on the table and um, and also have conversations with some of those professors and even have them come in and see in our classroom what we're doing.

[00:19:27] **Kyle Thayse:** Cause we, we do place a lot of students that come and, and see it firsthand just so that they get that opportunity to hopefully get that mind shift happening. Um, and, and I think it's gotta be in collaboration cause. teacher, you know, preparation, um, has, is moving to more experiential preparation, which I think is great.

[00:19:43] **Kyle Thayse:** We're getting 'em in the classroom. It needs to be like that. It's, it's, the theory's important, but they need to be out there seeing it. And so I think, um, you know, that's a, that's something that we're, have to continue to work on. But, um, you know, as a district, not every district does that. So I'm fortunate that leadership allows me to do that.

[00:19:57] **Kyle Thayse:** Now, on the other hand, uh, teachers who have been there, um, you [00:20:00] know, for a long time, I'm not discrediting any of their expertise, um, by any. . Um, but we often have conversations as if you know better, we're gonna try to do better. And, and it can't happen overnight. I mean, these curriculum shifts, these mind shifts.

[00:20:13] **Kyle Thayse:** They happen over multiple conversations, um, multiple meetings, um, conversations, just pop ins after school where, you know, you, you pick each other's brains and you have, you have deeper conversations about it. Um, but I think a lot of that movement is gained based on the trust and the fact that I'm a district coach, so they know that I'm there for.

[00:20:32] **Kyle Thayse:** all the time. Um, we have other coaches that do a great job in the district, but they leave. We have districts, you know, CISA comes in and, and, and offers us coaches and they do a wonderful job, but they're there for a day or two and then they're gone for a month and then they come back. There's no real relationship gain.

[00:20:44] **Kyle Thayse:** So I think, um, having the in-house coaching really helps, I think, move the needle for all of our adult learners. And, and doing it from a team perspective, I think is, is important too. So. Okay. Thanks.

*Senator John Jagler.* Thank you. I, as I talked to, to my local administrators, [00:21:00] um, I'm fascinated. Curriculum choices that have been made and continue to be made.

[00:21:06] And I'm, I'm, I'm quite honestly surprised you, you, you double down on one of the bad actors, uh, not my words, I'm not an expert, but identified **Lucy Calkins in this units of study as one of the bad actors, a bad actors in this, um, whole fight on the science of reading.** Why did you go there? Why did you go back to, to you, you know, went back to her version 2.0, which her critics would say, were only done because the spotlight was being shined on her by, by others.

[00:21:42] **Kyle Thayse:** I knew this question was coming today, so I kind of prepared myself. I thought that that was gonna be asked. So, um, you know, there was, there's a couple, a couple of reasons. I think as a district, we, we, we made that decision. Um, and I'll be honest, I was, I was, I was for it. Um, and, and a lot of it is, The, um, the [00:22:00] professional development that, um, I feel like we were able to lead through the district outside of the curriculum problems.

[00:22:08] **Kyle Thayse:** The what, what the curriculum brought to the table as far as the growth of our teachers, the tightness, the, the tightness, and the, uh, the collegial conversations about learning that happened on a daily basis in, in our classrooms. It was brought upon by that, by the models of that. and, um, above that second grade level, we, we don't have, there's, there's no real issues, you know, with the curriculum.

[00:22:32] **Kyle Thayse:** It's, it's, it's robust, it has great topics. Um, kids are exposed to a lot of different vocabulary with within it, and even at the lower levels it is too. Um, we did identify those problems that were in there and, uh, we didn't, we didn't take the full leap of faith right away. We purchased first the, the manuals and, um, I tasked myself with reading.

[00:22:50] **Kyle Thayse:** Every kindergarten manual, every first grade manual said to me, those were the two most important, uh, manuals. Every unit in that manual to identify in there, do, do I find [00:23:00] any of this at all? And, um, there was one little spot that I was concerned and I thought we were gonna have an issue. . Um, but what ended up happening was the, that part of the unit was actually more of an emergent reader.

[00:23:10] **Kyle Thayse:** Early, early literacy before students are even learning sounds, portion of the curriculum, um, where students were, were learning. Uh, the, the pattern part of the book was more of the memorization, the storytelling part where kids learn how stories go. This is like 4K, early kindergarten curriculum stuff. And, um, And past that, there were, I, they, there was the use of decodable texts.

[00:23:30] **Kyle Thayse:** There was, um, there was not any of the use of, of of, of the, uh, use the picture to solve the word. There was, um, a lot, uh, actually I would say almost triple the amount of lessons on phonics and emmic awareness within the actual reading curriculum. I mean, this is outside of the phonic tum that we already used.

[00:23:46] **Kyle Thayse:** Um, so once we saw that all in there, um, the price tag on a whole new curriculum, uh, the professional development that goes along. Um, and, and, and the time that it would take, uh, we thought we would be able to move faster as long [00:24:00] as the right tools were in there and we felt the tools were there.

So, uh, representative Shelton, did you have anything?

[00:24:07] **Rep Kristina Shelton:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Um, you might have said this, and I'm sorry if I, if I missed it. Um, do you have a sense of how much it cost your district to make those changes over the, from the time you started it to where you are now?

**Kyle Thayse** I. That would've been a great thing for me to bring today, but I do not, I, I'm just curious cuz again, I think your story is so compelling, right?

[00:24:24] **Rep Kristina Shelton::** What you were able to do at your district, but I'm thinking about how we scale this up, right? Yes. And again, as I think about, I'm in the Green Bay School district. I was on the Green Bay School Board. I have two kids in the Green Bay District and I've talked to a lot of the teachers and they have shared, you know, the concern, um, about wanting to meet the needs of their kids.

[00:24:42] **Kyle Thayse:** But the cost of moving the curriculum. , you know, I, I just, I appreciate you bringing that up and that's something I think we should look at more as, you know, what will this cost bigger districts? Um, I'm glad you were able to absorb it, but some people may not be able to.

**Kyle Thayse:** Yeah. And, and, and you bring up a great point.

[00:24:58] **Kyle Thayse:** I think the starting point to me though is [00:25:00] determining whether what those, what the schools within a larger school district like Green Bay, um, have for curriculum. I mean, that's your starting point, because some of those districts, I mean, I don't know, but maybe they have a phonics curriculum in there and maybe it's just a reading curriculum that, that needs to, or, or maybe they have a reading curriculum that that is, that is backed by science and, and research in there.

[00:25:17] **Kyle Thayse:** And all we need to do is we need to get a five curriculum ar phonemic awareness curriculum. I can't put a, I can't put a, a price tag on it, but I can tell you that it was very, Cost effective and, and, and, uh, did not take, there was not a lot of professional development that went along with it. So that was a small amount of money for a large win for us.

[00:25:35] **Kyle Thayse:** So thank you. Yeah.

Uh, representative Hong,

**Representative Francesca Hong:** thank you Chair Kitchens and thank you so much. Um, really appreciate you taking the time to be here today. I know it must be a very busy time for you and, and appreciate all of the teachers and the, the. You're supporting. Um, you mentioned earlier, and I really appreciated this in your testimony because I think it, it confirms, um, what was said earlier that, that [00:26:00] our schools are our ecosystems and that the nature and the environment of our classrooms right now, um, that there are so many different variables and factors playing into, uh, the mental health of our teachers, our, our students, um, and how that impacts how they learn to read.

[00:26:14] Um, I'm gonna go into, you met, uh, you noted. Um, you do still need support in that coaching system that you have now. Can you go into specifics about what that support looks like? Are you talking about financial support? Um, uh, are you able to take some of the data that you've, you've, uh, gotten over the past couple years of, of implementing this system, um, and how you're able to, uh, translate that data into what funds?

[00:26:44] **Kyle Thayse:** Yeah. Um, so I, I would say as, as, as far as support goes, On the funding side of things. I, I, I don't have that, that background information As far as, you know, costs go from a coaching perspective, um, I would say what kind of support, you know, our district would, would [00:27:00] need, or what we would be looking for from a, um, a standpoint of, uh, you know, me as a, our, our literacy coach at first 4K five, uh, that was a large overtaking, um, as the way it is and, and.

[00:27:13] **Kyle Thayse:** Transitioning and, and working 4K 12 I I spent a lot of time recently, I've spent a lot of time actually in our high school English classrooms and having conversations with our, our middle school English, uh, English, uh, ELA teachers. Um, and, and it's that, that has been a big shift for me professionally coming out of a, a, a lower, you know, a lower lever, lower level environment.

[00:27:34] **Kyle Thayse:** Um, but being stretched across that entire span has stretched me. And I also, I feel. Our district would benefit having somebody, um, once that transition happens where we're learning to read and reading, to learn, having experts in those two areas because of the importance, especially at the lower level of, of this, I think, you know, I feel like I can do my job efficiently, but um, I do feel like it's taken [00:28:00] me a, a long time to have all the tools in my belt to expect somebody to come in, uh, into a school district as a, as a coach in a first or second year.

[00:28:07] **Kyle Thayse:** And to be able to do that, I think. a tall task. And we also have, you know, we're talking the literacy side of things. Um, our math data is, is very good in our district. Um, but we do have, you know, there, there's a need there for, um, help with our instruction in math too. That's, that's a whole nother network, so.

[00:28:25] **Kyle Thayse:** Exactly. Yeah.

Uh, Senator Johnson,

[00:28:32] **Senator LaTonya Johnson; D-Milwaukee:** thank you. Um, actually, representative Sheldon asked one of the questions. I wanted to know which was the cost, how much it cost, um, but how many schools did you have to implement this for and, um, or how many kids?

**Kyle Thayse:** So the Luxemburg Casco School District is, is a one campus school. It's not a, it's not a large, large, it's not, doesn't have multiple schools.

[00:28:57] We have a, a pre-K or, uh, excuse me, a, a [00:29:00] 4k, uh, two school at our primary. And, and I can't, um, right now off the top of my head, give you exact numbers, but I can tell you that on average, um, a, a kindergarten classroom is anywhere from 110 to 120 students. We have a, um, seven right now, currently seven kindergarten teachers, six first grade teachers, uh, and six second grade teachers.

[00:29:21] **Kyle Thayse:** So that's our primary building. And then our intermediate school building, uh, is three six. And, um, we also, same setup there where there's six classroom teachers per grade. Per grade level with approximately, you know, I'd say 120 to 125 students per, um, per grade level. And then that tend tends to increase as we get towards middle school from a numbers perspective because we take a influx of student, uh, students from some of our, um, school districts, uh, private schools that are inside that only go up to a certain grade level.

[00:29:50] **Senator LaTonya Johnson:** So, and um, forgive me if you said this already, I tried to take notes, but sometimes I get. , did you say that you were, um, [00:30:00] an instructor or like director of instruction or Nope.

**Kyle Thayse:** Um, I am not. I, so I, I taught fourth grade and then I was a, um, literacy coach and I did some intervention work, oddly on the math side of things.

[00:30:13] **Kyle Thayse:** Um, because that's what you do in districts. You figure out ways to find jobs, work, make jobs. Um, and then that transitioned after they saw the growth into a, the full-time role. So I'm, I'm our district's full-time instructional coach. Okay. It's not just literacy. Um, but I spent, I think it was six years directly involved in our literacy portion, and I spent a lot of my coaching capital down there to it.

[00:30:35] **Senator LaTonya Johnson:** So after you became the instructional coach, did you guys, did you get replaced as a literacy coach?

No. Or, or you just do it all? I do it all.

**Senator LaTonya Johnson:** All right. Thank you. I'm sorry. No, that's okay. That's a lot for you. That's okay. , do the best we can.

I'm not sure what this is about, but anyway, uh, I don't see any other questions, so thanks so much for coming down.

[00:30:57] **Kyle Thayse:** Yep. Really appreciate it.

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