The "I Read with Mayor Mike" program brings a unique literary experience to area first graders, to help encourage their love of reading and set them up for a successful school career and adult life.

For the past 14 years, “I Read with Mayor Mike” has been a key initiative of the Mayor’s Office in an effort to grow a city of readers. In Fall 2020, Mayor Copeland will visit each of the nine Title I elementary schools in the Olathe School District to read to as many as 500 students. Complete with stuffed animals and animated storytelling, it's a fun event for kids and adults! The Mayor also sends the students home with a bag and a book of their own, to share the joy of reading with their family.

“Programs such as ‘I Read with Mayor Mike’ are critical for helping to develop a lifelong love of reading, particularly at our Title I schools,” District Library Media Coordinator Lori Franklin said. “When burgeoning readers see adults who are enthusiastic and engaged with literature, it helps instill in them a desire for developing and sharing their own reading experiences.”

During the visit, students also get a unique opportunity to interact with the head of their local government. They get to ask Mayor Mike about his life, his job, and their city, and hear about the importance of being a good citizen.

The fun doesn't stop there! At each school, two children are randomly selected to ride on a float with the Mayor in the annual Old Settler's Day Parade. Each year the float also emphasizes the importance of reading, helping drive home the message that reading is fun!

The program is fully grant supported, and costs between $3,000 and $4,500 a year, depending upon enrollment. Funds go toward buying books, bags, stickers and shirts for the students. We appreciate the opportunity to build vital relationships with the community to sustain “I Read with Mayor Mike.” The power of reading in undeniable, and a cause everyone can get behind.
**2020 Budget:**

- 500 books at $3/each = $1,500
- 500 bags at $3.25/each = $1,625
- 500 stickers at $0.60/each = $300
- 20 shirts at $11.49/each = $229.80
  Total: $3,654.80

**Students Served:**

- 3,337 kids K-8 in the Olathe School District’s Title I schools
- 518 first-graders enrolled for the 2019-2020 school year
- 65.47% economically disadvantaged (2,185 kids K-8)
- 36.73% ELL (1,226 kids K-8)
- 41.83% Hispanic (1,396 kids K-8)
- 41.35% White (1,380 kids K-8)

A community’s future begins in the classroom, and we recognize the importance of supporting our local educators. The program is an outstanding example of public entities (the City, the local library and the school district,) joining with committed literacy partners, like our sponsors, to strengthen the community's literacy efforts among our most vulnerable population. As a supplement to the school district's regular reading curriculum, the "I Read With Mayor Mike“ program is making a positive difference in our very diverse Title I schools, where a significant impact can be made on literacy at the first-grade level.

We're proud to share the love of reading with kids. Truly nothing better prepares them for a life full of learning, adventure, and success. We are so fortunate to also showcase the generosity of our community in the process.

To donate, please send a check to:

The City of Olathe
I Read with Mayor Mike
100 E. Santa Fe Street
Olathe, KS 66061

If needed, you can find our sales tax exemption certificate on [OlatheKS.org](http://OlatheKS.org).

For more information, please contact:
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