



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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LET'S READ MILWAUKEE

By Rep. Dale Kooyenga and Rep. Evan Goyke

Significant public debates surrounding education are often centered on financing and governance of our K-12 system. However, one of the greatest catalysts for improvement which is less controversial and simple, involves having smart-phone-free adults spending quality time with children teaching them to read.

We have had significant disagreements relating to solutions for the poor performance in Milwaukee's inner city schools. We agree, however, there is an opportunity to make significant progress in our community by putting out a call to arms to all Milwaukee residents to join us in the fight against poverty by volunteering to read with children in our community schools with the greatest needs.

We are going to put our money where our mouth is and volunteer every week to read one on one with Milwaukee students that require reading assistance. The percentage of Milwaukee 3rd graders reading proficiently is 15% districtwide for school year 2013-14. We are pledging to make a positive impact and we ask that you join us.

The new school year is just beginning and we are asking you to assist us by volunteering to read at a school in need. If just one in twenty readers of this article accepts our challenge and volunteers for one hour a week, we will have over 670,000 hours of additional directed reading time in our community schools.

Passionate debates regarding education will continue in the years to come. We would be disappointed if educational policy was not a central matter of debate since education is the foundation of a strong economy, safe neighborhoods and overall enlightenment of the citizenry. As future generations enter the democratic process it is critical their positions are not rooted in ignorance – ignorance is best combated by reading.

We are directly appealing for your assistance in the central city community where the need is the greatest. Please choose a school that is geographically convenient. Times are flexible and if you need to skip an occasional week for business or vacations that is alright. If you want to volunteer but just aren't comfortable with the reading challenge, we encourage you to volunteer in other ways such as [Make A Difference Wisconsin](#) which is an organization that teaches financial literacy to high school students.

To volunteer, please contact either of us at Rep.Kooyenga@legis.wisconsin.gov or Rep.Goyke@legis.wisconsin.gov and we will help connect you with the school requesting your assistance. We know you will get just as much out of this experience as the students in need. Thank you for joining us.