



For Immediate Release

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Media Release

Cocky's Reading Express visits Chicora

Chicora Elementary School

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North Charleston, S.C. - The Charleston Bar Association and [Cocky's Reading Express](#) brought an amazing assembly to Chicora Elementary School's first and second graders last week. They were treated to four engaging read-alouds, singing, laughter, and a free book. Cocky's Reading Express travels to Title I elementary schools across the state, performing unforgettable storytimes and providing free giveaway books alongside the University of South Carolina (USC) mascot.

Cocky's Reading Express is the university's literacy outreach initiative, working to eradicate illiteracy across South Carolina. USC students and Cocky (the school's mascot) provide free books, motivating children to read through high-energy storytime programming. The program primarily serves 4k through second grade students. The coordinator for Cocky's Reading Express will reach out to qualified schools for in-person school visits.

"Reading is cool,' is what kids say after experiences like this," said Melissa Zahler, teacher librarian at Chicora. "They see connections to literature, libraries, and the love of reading when people and characters they admire talk about books. It makes learning relevant and kids understand that literacy can be fun."

On this most recent visit, members of the Charleston County Bar Association read to students and passed out donated books.

"Literacy is not just about reading and writing; it's about access to knowledge, opportunities, and the ability to engage fully in society, which emphasizes that reading is fundamental for overall literacy and personal development," said Principal Monica Smalls.

Christy James, CCSD's Library Media Services Coordinator and District Textbook Coordinator, said that literacy continues to be a district priority for all students.

"Teachers and librarians work hard to help students develop a love of reading. Having fun and engaging programs like Cocky's Reading Express supports all of this. It's always great to have community members involved and sharing the gift of reading with our kids," added James.

For more information, contact Principal Monica Smalls at (843) 746-2211.

