

**COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS**

Michael Harralson  
Chair

Office 612 673.3012  
Fax 612 673.2599  
TTY 612 673.2157

July 22, 2015

To: Michael Goar, Interim Superintendent, Minneapolis Public Schools  
The Honorable Betsy Hodges, Mayor, City of Minneapolis  
Minneapolis City Council Members  
Principals, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade Coordinators,  
Teachers, Social Studies Faculty  
Minneapolis Home, Alternative, Charter and Private Schools  
Public Relations and Communications Departments, Minneapolis Public Schools  
Esteemed Youth Organizations

Re: 2016 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Essay Contest:

The Minneapolis Commission on Civil Rights, the Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights, Minneapolis City Council, and the Minneapolis Mayor are pleased to present the 2016 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Essay Contest. This contest is open to all Minneapolis students in the 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grades.

Students are asked to write or type an original essay in English addressing this year's topic. The essay should contain proper spelling and grammar.



[www.minneapolismn.gov/civilrights](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/civilrights)  
Affirmative Action Employer

The topic for this year's contest is:

*Dr. King's vision is alive and well through the work of current civil rights activists. What kind of impacts are these activists making on the current political and social landscape, and how do you see their work influencing the future?*

Provide and properly cite all direct quotes from at least two current leaders/activists in your essay, and give their contact information for verification purposes. You can use information gathering techniques such as interviews, reaching out to organizations/houses of worship doing civil rights work, attending community meetings, and much more. Essays may be from one to three pages in length and address the selected topic. **Completed entry forms with parent's signature must be attached to the back of the essay.** All submissions are due by November 16th, 2015.

Teachers can request a member of the Minneapolis Commission on Civil Rights to visit their classroom and to assist students with the essay topic. To request a visit, please contact the commissioner listed at the bottom of this letter.

Additional packets can be found on the Minneapolis Commission on Civil Rights website [http://www.minneapolismn.gov/civilrights/commission/civil-rights\\_commission\\_announcements](http://www.minneapolismn.gov/civilrights/commission/civil-rights_commission_announcements)

All contest winners will be notified in January, 2016. There will be three winners chosen from each grade level.

**The contest winners will receive a gift card to be awarded at a ceremony before the Minneapolis City Council in January 2016.**

First Place	\$ 300.00
Second Place	\$ 200.00
Third Place	\$ 100.00

There will be a reception after the award ceremony to honor the winners. Teachers, parents, educators and others are invited to attend. Students will have the opportunity to meet and take pictures with the Minneapolis Commission on Civil Rights members, Minneapolis City Council members and Mayor Hodges. Interviews may be requested by the media. The first place winners will have an opportunity to read a portion of their essay at the awards ceremony

**Completed Essays should be returned no later than Monday November 16th, 2015 to:**

Minneapolis Department of Civil Rights  
Attention: Christian Taylor, MCCR Liaison  
350 South 5th Street, Room 239  
Minneapolis, MN 55415  
[christian.taylor@minneapolismn.gov](mailto:christian.taylor@minneapolismn.gov)

Your participation in this event is appreciated. Please feel to contact me directly with any questions or concerns at 612-298-6009.

Sincerely,



Aaliyah Hodge  
Commissioner, Minneapolis Commission on Civil Rights