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***“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.” --Martin Luther King, Jr***

**2018 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day Essay Contest**

**Presented by Erie's Public Schools and the Martin Luther King Center**

All students in grades 6-12 are invited to participate in the 2018 MLK Day Essay Contest. This year, the essay contest is being offered through a partnership between Erie's Public Schools and our local MLK Center.

The contest is optional for students but all entries must be submitted to ELA teachers in Erie's Public Schools by **Wednesday, January 3, 2018**. Entries will be collected from each school at 3:00pm on **January 3** and judged by a panel of community members. Winners will be notified on **January 10** and will be invited to attend a formal awards ceremony at the MLK Center on **Monday, January 15**.

Entries must be submitted in the following format: typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman 12pt font, one-inch margins. Entries must also include the student's name, grade, school, parent/guardian name, home address and phone number.

Essay topic for grades 6-8: **Considering the belief that “free press” is a cornerstone of a vibrant democracy, and the fact that its role during the Civil Rights Movement was critical in presenting that struggle to the world, what do you think would be Dr. King's view on the current trend to categorize the free press as “fake news?” What would he say about this trend and its impact on American democracy?**

Essay topic for grades 9-12: **Dr. King constantly addressed the moral climate of America during the Civil Rights Movement in which blacks were denied rights and discriminated against. In recent months we have seen a crisis in our moral climate toward the treatment of women through numerous accusations of misconduct and abuse. How would Dr. King address this moral decline and what do you think his views would be on addressing this issue?**

Prizes for grades 6-8: 1<sup>st</sup> place- \$150; 2<sup>nd</sup> place- \$100; 3<sup>rd</sup> place- \$50

Prizes for grades 9-12: 1<sup>st</sup> place- \$150; 2<sup>nd</sup> place- \$100; 3<sup>rd</sup> place- \$50