The "Mountaintop Today" Contest

For the Live the Dream: Our Declaration of Unity community commemoration of

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day 2026

West Chester and Liberty Townships, Ohio

As part of our community's 27th annual observation of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, all Lakota students in grades K – 12 as well as any home or privately schooled students who reside within the Lakota Local School District boundaries are invited to participate in a contest. Winners will share their entries with the public as part of the community celebration, to be held on January 19, 2026. Additionally, entries may be shared with the community through various online venues throughout the duration of January and February.

Here is this year's Contest prompt. Please ensure that you complete all the steps in it.

- **Read and/or listen to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *entire* Mountaintop Speech, given on April 3, 1968, in Memphis, Tennessee.** (Plan ahead to allow yourself plenty of time. The audio version takes almost an hour.)
- **Find one part of the speech that speaks to you or that reflects something you see in your life, community, or the world you live in today.**
- **Relating that segment of the speech to *your* life, give specific examples as to how you can personally help change the world we live in today *and* how your ideas will continue to impact future generations.**

Contest Rules:

1. All entries must be the student's own original thoughts, ideas and workmanship.
2. If young elementary students find the entire speech to be too demanding, they may focus on one section of it, or read a condensed, children's version of it, like the one at this website: https://kids.kiddle.co/I%27ve_Been_to_the_Mountaintop. The MidPointe Library will have resources on hand to help with their research.
3. Give specific personal examples of the impact of King's words on you as you think about what he is saying and apply them to your life.
4. Entries should be ***limited to 2 minutes*** if they are multi-media, performance, or presented orally. **Written submissions should be able to be read aloud in the 2-minute time frame as well.** (Typically, this is no longer than one typewritten page.)
5. It is helpful for the judges if artwork includes a written explanation of what is depicted and how it answers the question of the prompt.
6. Entries that do not address or meet the requirements of the contest prompt will not become winners. Those submitted after the deadline will not be judged.
7. Each student who enters will receive a Certificate of Participation. Written entries and Fine Arts entries will be judged separately and have one winner from each of the following categories that

will receive a prize valued at $20: Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, Junior High, High School. English Language Learner and Special Merit winners will be selected within each grade category. A grand prize worth $50 will be awarded to one overall winner in both the written and fine arts categories.

8. All submitted entries will be equally considered and will be judged according to age-appropriate expectations.
9. All entries, including essays, multimedia or fine art submissions must be submitted electronically via Google at this link: bit.ly/LivetheDream2026.
10. **Deadline for submitting entries is Monday, November 24, 2025, at 4:00 p.m**.
11. All entries will be judged anonymously although each entry must have a completed and signed registration form accompanying it. Winners will be notified personally, by a phone call or email, so personal contact information needs to be accurate and something that is checked regularly. Decision of the judges is final. No further compensation beyond prizes for the winners is implied. All entries become the property of the Live the Dream committee, to be used or disposed of at their discretion.
12. If a group or class project is chosen as the winner, the prize money will be awarded to the supervising adult, to be distributed appropriately, or divided evenly among group members.
13. Questions about this contest or the January 19th program may be addressed to Gail Webster at 513-860-4049. Community service hours are available to high school students, through Sign-Up Genius, for help with implementing the community celebration.

All entries are to be turned in electronically to: bit.ly/LivetheDream2026 by **4 p.m. on Monday, November 24, 2025.**

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https://www.facebook.com/Live-The-Dream-1797047357179364/