



TO: Effingham County Schools and Community Organizations
FROM: Ms. Nellar Lonon, President, Dr. MLK, Jr. Observance Day Committee
DATE: September 21, 2026
RE: Invitation to Participate in the 44th Annual Dr. M.L.K, Jr. Observance Day Celebration

Dear Schools and Community Organizations:

Dr. MLK, Jr. Observance Day Committee is pleased to invite students throughout Effingham County to participate in the 44th Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Observance Day Celebration. While final plans for the celebration will be announced at a later date, we are excited to continue our long-standing student contests. These activities provide students with meaningful opportunities to learn about and reflect upon the life, leadership, and philosophy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

CONTEST OPPORTUNITIES

- **Theme Contest - Grades 4-12:** Students are invited to submit an original theme for this year's celebration.
- **Poster Contest - Grades 1-5:** Students are encouraged to express their creativity through artwork inspired by the selected theme.
- **Essay Contest - Grades 6-12:** Students are invited to submit essays based on the selected theme and contest guidelines.

We respectfully ask schools and community organizations to help us encourage student participation by sharing these opportunities through announcements, flyers, newsletters, social media, and other appropriate communication channels.

THEME CONTEST GUIDELINES

- The theme should reflect the life and philosophy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- The theme must not exceed ten (10) words.
- Only one (1) entry per student may be submitted.
- Deadline: Thursday, October 15, 2026.
- Students should complete and submit the attached Official Theme Contest Entry Form to Dr. Sandra Nethels at snethels@effingham.k12.ga.us, your school, or mail to: Dr. MLK, Jr. Observance Day Committee, P.O. Box 26, Guyton, GA 31312.

The winning theme will be announced on Wednesday, October 21, 2026. At that time, guidelines for the poster and essay contests will also be provided. The deadline for poster and essay submissions will be Friday, November 20, 2026, and the winners of these contests will be announced Friday, December 4, 2026.

If you need additional information, please contact me at lonon01@bellsouth.net or (912) 661-0170.

Thank you for your continued support.

Nellar Lonon, President
Dr. MLK, Jr. Observance Day Committee



OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM - GRADES 4-12

Theme Entry Deadline: Thursday, October 15, 2026

Create an original theme reflecting the life and philosophy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

The theme must be 10 words or fewer. Only one entry may be submitted per student.

Complete and submit the Official Theme Contest Entry Form to

Dr. Sandra Nethels at snethels@effingham.k12.ga.us, your school, or mail to address below.

MY THEME

STUDENT INFORMATION

Student Name: _____

Grade: _____ **T-Shirt Size:** _____

School: _____ **Teacher:** _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION

Parent/Guardian Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Parent/Guardian Email Address: _____

STUDENT CERTIFICATION

I certify that the theme submitted above is my own original work and that I have followed the Theme Contest guidelines.

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

IMPORTANT DATES

Theme Contest Deadline	Thursday, October 15, 2026
Winning Theme Announced	Wednesday, October 21, 2026
Poster & Essay Kick-Off	Wednesday, October 21, 2026
Poster & Essay Deadline	Friday, November 20, 2026
Poster/Essay Winners Announced	Friday, December 4, 2026

For Additional Information: Email lonon01@bellsouth.net