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**Bayonne School District Demonstrates Honor and Respect  
Regarding the Life and Accomplishments of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Dr. Patricia L. McGeehan, Superintendent of Schools for the Bayonne School District, states, “On January 18, 2010, United States citizens will celebrate a national holiday and commemorate the life and achievements of civil rights leader, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The Bayonne School District has planned a host of learning activities during the month of January, highlighting the life and teachings of Dr. King.”

During his lifetime, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., worked tirelessly toward a dream of equality. He believed in a nation of freedom and justice for all, and encouraged all citizens to live up to the purpose and potential of America by uniting and taking action to make this country a better place to live. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. sought to forge the common ground on which people from all walks of life could join together to address important community issues.

“As Superintendent of Schools for the Bayonne School District, I would like to announce that we, as a school district, have taken time out to pause, reflect, and honor all of the dreams and ideals of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. In addition, our classroom teachers have incorporated into their curriculum examples as to why his legacy is of such great importance. They will also teach the value of tolerance, equity, and respect to all of our students.”

Superintendent McGeehan further adds, “The life of Martin Luther King, Jr. offers a great deal of learning and teaching opportunities for our staff and students, and every elementary school and Bayonne High School have planned an array of activities focusing on the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.”

Bayonne School District’s projects and activities promoting Dr. King’s message of nonviolence and social justice are as follows:

- Strengthen Community – Dr. King recognized the power of service to strengthen communities and achieve common goals. As our district theme states, *Building a Caring Learning Community...Everyone Counts In Our Success...To Create A Spirit of Excellence!*, our students will learn and reflect upon the importance of community service and how our students can truly make a difference through various acts of kindness.
- Empower Individuals – Dr. King believed each individual possesses the power to lift himself/herself up no matter what his/her circumstances, rich or poor, black or white, man or woman. Our students will learn that acts of service can help others improve their own lives.
- Bridge Barriers – In his fight for civil rights, Dr. King inspired Americans to think beyond themselves, look past differences, and work toward equality. Serving side-by-side, we are more alike than we are different.

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- Our students will be involved in activities representing character education, such as values, kindness, sharing, and respect.
- Students will watch a short video biography of Dr. King and discuss the importance of responsible leadership and his impact on America, define the meaning of leadership using Dr. King as a person to admire and emulate. Through this discussion, students will understand that one person can truly change the course of history.
  - Bulletin board displays will be illustrated to reflect the life and work of Dr. King.
  - Journal writing will take place incorporating the concept of Dr. King's "dream". Students will reflect and write their own personal dreams.
  - In primary grades, students will color pictures, discuss dreams, make booklets, watch videos, and journal writing regarding Dr. King.
  - Students will incorporate social studies and language arts by reading a history of Dr. King and the civil rights movement, then completing activities such as sequencing events, learning new vocabulary words, word search and puzzles, context clues, and math worksheet.
  - Students will discuss how Dr. King had a responsibility to speak out against violence and to think about a problem they might have a responsibility to speak out about.
  - Students will keep a log of kind and just acts done during the day.
  - Students will watch a documentary, discuss, and write why it is important to celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. day.
  - Students will write in a journal – "I have a dream that..."
  - Students will imagine that they were one of thousands of people who listened to Martin Luther King's speech in August 1963. Then they will write a letter to a friend describing the day and their reaction to the speech.

Dr. Ellen M. O'Connor, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction, adds, "Dr. King encouraged Americans to come together in order to strengthen communities, alleviate poverty, and acknowledge dignity and respect for all human beings. During his lifetime, Dr. King truly recognized the importance and power of service to strengthen all communities and achieve common goals. I commend all administrators, teachers, and students for their creative participation in the exemplary activities that the Bayonne School District has coordinated regarding the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr."