

MUNSEY PARK SCHOOL
COMMUNITY READ – JANUARY 2015

*“I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up
and live out the true meaning of its creed:
We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.”*

Dear Munsey Park Families,

The Munsey Park Shared Decision Making Team’s “Community Read” selection for January is Martin’s Big Words, by Doreen Rappaport and illustrated by Bryan Collier. In 2001, this book won the following awards: the Caldecott, the Coretta Scott King, the ALA Notable Book, and the New York Times Book Review Best Illustrated Children’s Book. The author uses the *key words and big ideas* of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement to tell the story of the African-American struggle for equality in the United States through simple words and brilliant pictures. It introduces children to Dr. King’s teachings about non-violence.

Martin Luther King, Jr. grew up in a place where people used words that made him feel badly. This award-winning book shows how Martin used words to fight for equal rights for all people. Quite simply, Martin’s Big Words is a perfect introduction to the man and the holiday in which he is remembered. At the beginning of the story, young Martin is reading a “White Only” sign in his hometown. Martin grows up, becomes a preacher and studies the writing of Mahatma Gandhi. He puts his ideas into practice at the Montgomery bus boycott and other civil rights demonstrations. More and more people listen to him.

The book ends with some of the “big words” for which Dr. King is remembered: peace, love, freedom, together, and dream. The ending statement, “His big words are alive for us today” can spark discussion and exploration into the power of words as a tool for social justice and provide an opportunity for you and your child to think about what Dr. King’s words mean in our everyday lives.

Warmest regards,

Jean C. Kendall, Ed.D.
Principal

Essential and Guiding Questions:

- What is courage?
- Why nonviolence?
- How does nonviolence work?
- What are the qualities of a leader?
- Who are our heroes?
- What are the qualities of a hero?
- How can we follow the example of MLK Jr. today?
- How do Gandhi’s ideas compare?