

# SCHOOL DISTRICT OF OKALOOSA COUNTY

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## NEWS RELEASE

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### Okaloosa County School District Celebrates 2026 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Oratorical and Poster Contest Winners

The Okaloosa County School District proudly recognizes the students who were selected as winners in the 2026 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Oratorical and Poster Contests, held on Saturday, January 10, 2026, at Fort Walton Beach High School. Hosted in partnership with Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Sigma Omicron Omega Chapter, the annual event brought together students from kindergarten through 12th grade to honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. through powerful speeches and creative artwork reflecting his message of leadership, service, and unity.

“These students honored Dr. King’s legacy in a truly meaningful way,” said Superintendent Marcus Chambers. “Their words and artwork reflected not only creativity and talent, but also a deep understanding of Dr. King’s message and its importance in today’s world. I am incredibly proud of each student who participated.”

The district congratulates the following 2026 contest winners:

#### Elementary K–2 Poster

- **3rd Place:** Cecilia Peterson – Bluewater Elementary School
- **2nd Place:** Aranza Pinto – Edwins Elementary School
- **1st Place:** Santana Stewart – Liza Jackson Preparatory School

#### Elementary K–2 Oratorical

- **1st Place:** Riyah Welcome – Kenwood Elementary School

#### Elementary 3–5 Poster

- **3rd Place:** Sophia Feilder – NWF Ballet Academy School
- **2nd Place:** Taylor Wilcox – Bluewater Elementary School
- **1st Place:** Sophia Kleiser – Bluewater Elementary School

#### Elementary 3–5 Oratorical

- **3rd Place:** Landyn Duncan – Edwins Elementary School
- **2nd Place:** Corry Lee – Edwins Elementary School
- **1st Place:** Emily Chambers – Lewis Elementary School

#### Middle School (6–8) Poster

- **2nd Place:** A’Kayla Glenn – Woodlawn Middle School
- **1st Place:** Melonie Welcome – Pryor Middle School

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### **Middle School (6–8) Oratorical**

- **3rd Place:** Kaydence Coolin – Liza Jackson Preparatory School
- **2nd Place:** Melonie Welcome – Pryor Middle School
- **1st Place:** Eriella Havens – Okaloosa STEMM Academy

### **High School (9–12) Poster**

- **3rd Place:** Ke’Aire Gains – Crestview High School
- **2nd Place:** Elizabeth Clark – Choctawhatchee High School
- **1st Place:** Asher Guilary – Crestview High School

### **High School Oratorical**

- **3rd Place:** Paisley Swlingbere – Choctawhatchee High School
- **2nd Place:** Anthony Jones – Crestview High School
- **1st Place:** Kadesh Lott – Navarre High School

The Okaloosa County School District extends its gratitude to Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., Sigma Omicron Omega Chapter, for its continued partnership and commitment to celebrating student voice and Dr. King’s enduring legacy.



(First Place Oratorical Winners)

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