

**MARTIN LUTHER KING JR COORDINATING COMMITTEE
2025-2026
Applications and Guidelines**



THEME: Building Bridges, Not Walls

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR COORDINATING COMMITTEE - WPB
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West Palm Beach, FL 33401
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Application and Guidelines

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MARTIN LUTHER KING JR COORDINATING COMMITTEE

2026 Annual Competition Application

THEME: "Building Bridges, Not Walls"

This application **MUST** be filled out completely for each entry by an applicant. Incomplete applications will not be accepted. Competition Category: (Please check which category)

☐ Art ☐ Essay ☐ Oratorical ☐ Performing Arts ☐ Photography ☐ Poetry

Section A:

First Name _____ Last Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Grade _____ Age _____ Email Address _____

Name _____ of _____ School/Teacher _____ (Please indicate if home-schooled)

Parent/Guardian Name: _____ Phone # _____

Section B: Performing Arts Contestants only. (If you are not a Performing Arts Contestant, please proceed to section C.)

Performance Division:	Vocal	Monologue	Instrumental
	Dance	Rap	Theater

Note: Group competitors must complete individual application forms.

Equipment Request: MLKCC-WPB will provide onsite microphones, music stand, a piano, and a Computer. All other equipment must be provided by contestants.

Section C:

Disclosures/Liability: Images of entries may be reproduced for marketing and publicity purposes. Students and the public may photograph artwork. Utmost care will be given to all entries. However, MLKCC-WPB cannot assume any responsibility for the damage or loss of entries in transit. It is the responsibility of applicants in the photography competition to secure the necessary releases from identifiable persons shown in all images. I/We understand the information printed above and agree to comply with MLKCC-WPB rules and regulations regarding the 2026 competition.

2026 Fine Art Competition _____ Guidelines

THEME: “Building Bridges, Not Walls”

THE ART COMPETITION IS THEME RELATED

Deadline: Saturday, January 3, 2026

Qualifying: Levels: { } Level **1** (k-1); { } Level **2** (2-3); { } Level **3** (4-5);
{ } Level **4** (6-8); { } Level **5** (9-12)

Guidelines: Art must be submitted with a completed application form. Entries submitted without an application will be rejected. Applications should be typed or printed and attached to the back of the entry. Read and reread the theme, rules and consideration thoroughly.
Entries must be original artwork, digitized manipulated art is not accepted.
All entries must be mounted on tag or poster board. Minimum size 8 ½ x 11.

Media: Tag, Poster board, Pen, Pencil, Markers, Crayon, Collage materials, Tempera, Watercolor, Charcoal, Cloth etc.

Considerations:

- 1) Teachers, students should consider subject matter in relation to the theme, creativity, and originality in making selections for entries.
- 2) Entry should have Theme included on the entry.

Application: Copy or download as needed from website: www.mlkccpb.org
Teachers name and school must be included on application

Judging: The art will be judged by an impartial panel of judges.

Display: After the MLK Celebration, student artwork will be displayed at selected City/County Libraries during the month of February.

Awards: **1st, 2nd, and 3rd place award** will be given at each level, Certificates will be given to all applicants, regardless of their placement.

Returns: Art entries will be returned upon request after the end of February 2026.

Mail Entries to: Attn: Edith C. Bush - 1444 8th Street -West Palm Beach, FL 33401

Art Entries will be displayed at the MLK Candlelight Service and at the Summit Blvd. Library.

2026 Essay Competition _____ Guidelines

THEME: “Building Bridges, Not Walls”

THE ESSAY COMPETITION IS THEME RELATED.

Deadline: Friday January 9, 2026

Qualifying levels: { } **Level 1** (k-1) 100 - 150 words { } **Level 2** (2-3) 150 - 300 words
{ } **Level 3** (4-5) 300- 450 words { } **Level 4** (6-8) 450 - 600 words
{ } **Level 5** (9-12) 600 - 800 words

Guidelines:

- a.** Essays must be submitted with a completed application form. Entries submitted without an application will be rejected. Applications should be typed or printed and attached to the essay.
- b.** Essays must be original and not previously published. Essays may not be used to participate in the oratorical competition.
- c.** Essays should be well organized, should state the theme, use literary techniques, provide supported facts for arguments, be creative adhere to word count and draw a conclusion.
- d.** Essays should use descriptive language, interesting ideas, good grammar and spelling.
- e.** Essays should be typed or neatly printed; name/grade/school should appear on all pages of the essay. Illegible entries will not be judged.

Considerations: Teachers should consider guidelines for writing a Standard Base Essay. (5 Paragraph Model – age appropriate)

Application: Copy or download as needed from website: www.mlkccpb.org

Judging: The essays will be judged by an impartial panel of judges. Winning applicants will be notified upon completion of the judging. Awards will be presented at the **Annual MLKCC-WPB, Breakfast, Monday, January 19, 2026.**

Awards: **1st, 2nd, and 3rd place awards** will be given at each level. Certificates will be given to all entrants, regardless of their placement.

Return of Essays: Applicants should make a copy of their essay before submitting it for judging. All essays become the property of MLKCC-WPB and may be returned upon request.

Mail to: MLKCC-WPB - Attn: Edith C. Bush – 1444 8th Street – West Palm Beach, FL 33401

2026 Oratorical Competition _____ Guidelines

THEME: “Building Bridges, Not Walls”

THE ORATORICAL COMPETITION IS THEME RELATED.

Deadline: Friday, January 9, 2026

Qualifying levels : { } **Level 1** (k-1) { } **Level 2** (2-3) { } **Level 3** (4-5) { } **Level 4** (6-7)
Time Restrictions: 1-2 minutes 2-3 minutes 3-5 minutes 3-6 minutes
{ } **Level 5** (8-9) { } **Level 6** (10-12)
6-7 minutes 7-9 minutes

Guidelines: Applicant must submit four (4) copies of oratorical speech with a completed application form. Entries submitted without applications will be rejected. Applications should be typed or printed and attached to the speech. Applicant not in compliance with the time restrictions will be penalized. All speeches must be memorized, positive in nature, and theme related. Any help from judges will result in a reduction of the points. No props may be utilized during the presentation of the speech. The criteria for scoring can be found on pg.5.

Applicants must be onsite no later than 2:30 pm.

Considerations: Students should consider subject matter in relation to the theme, creativity, and originality in making selections for entries.

Application: Copy or download as needed from website: www.mlkccpbc.org

Competition Location: Orthodox Zion Primitive Baptist Church 2900 N. Australian Avenue
West Palm Beach, FL 33407

Judging: The speeches will be judged by an impartial panel of judges. Winning entrants will be notified upon completion of the judging.

Awards: **1st, 2nd, and 3rd place** award will be given at each level. Certificates will be given to all applicants, regardless of their placement.

Return of Speeches: Applicants should make a copy of their speech before submitting it for judging. All speeches become the property of MLKCC-WPB.

Mail to: MLKCC-WPB - Attn: Geraldine Cyrus - 1444 8th Street - West Palm Beach, FL 33401

2026 Oratorical Judging Criteria _____Guidelines

THEME: “Building Bridges, Not Walls”

Judging Criteria for the Oratorical Competition

- 1. Visual Delivery**
Eye contact through eye sweep and expression
- 2. Formal posture**
Effective stance, showing no nervous mannerisms, swaying, shifting
- 3. Movement**
Effective use of body movement to show visual breaks, reinforce message
- 4. Gesture**
Effective appeal of hand motions to create a visual impact
- 5. Introduction**
Effective “**Attention Getter**” to gain interest and establish topic
- 6. Theme**
Creative development of the chosen theme reflecting careful analysis of subject
- 7. Motivational Appeal**
Ability of the speaker to “**Reach out**” Thereby creating empathy
- 8. Language**
Creative phrasing showing effective vocabulary, transitions, and style
- 9. Conclusion**
Effective ending to summarize overall message and leave a memorable impact
- 10. Technical Application**
Speaker’s Effective rate, volume, and articulation
- 11. Vocal Appeal**
Speaker’s sincerity and generation of enthusiasm
- 12. Overall Effectiveness**
- 13. Memorization**

***All speeches must be memorized, positive in nature and reflect the theme of the current year. No props may be utilized during the presentation of the speeches.**

2026 Performing Arts Competition ____Guidelines

THEME: “Building Bridges, Not Walls”

THE PERFORMING ARTS COMPETITION IS THEME RELATED

Deadline: Friday, January 9, 2026

Qualifying levels: Levels: { } **Level 1** (k-1); { } **Level 2** (2-3); { } **Level 3** (4-5);
{ } **Level 4** (6-8); { } **Level 5** (9-12)

Time Restrictions: **K-1** (1-2 minutes); **2-3** (2-3 minutes); **4-5** (3-4 minutes);
6-8 (4-5 minutes); **9-12** (5-6 minutes)

Performance Division: **Vocal Rap Monologues Dance Instrumental Theatre**

Guidelines: Students competing in the performing arts competition must submit a completed application that is either typed or printed. Applicants may only compete in one performance category and one act. Point deductions will occur for those not complying with the time restrictions. Vocalist/rappers are to perform with an instrumental track, accompanist, or a cappella. ***Singing with a recorded artist is prohibited.*** Applicants must agree to have great behavior at all times and comply to concert etiquette protocol. Staff of large groups of performers (singers, dancers, instrumentalist, etc.) will be contacted and asked to sit in the designated area with their performers. However, under no circumstances, is visual coaching allowed. If props are used, the contestant must provide and remove them. Excessive scenery and special and elaborate, production lighting are not appropriate for the event.

Audition and Orientation: **In order to compete in this competition,** a mandatory audition and orientation are required for all applicants.

Evaluation: An impartial group of judges with musical backgrounds will grade contestants on a scale of 5 to 1, with 5 being superior and 1 being poor. The scoring will be in the areas of appropriateness of selection, preparation, stage presence, originality, and time limit.

Awards: **1st, 2nd, and 3rd place winners** in each qualifying level, will be the recipient of 1 trophy and certificate. For example, if a group of 10 wins, 1 trophy will be presented to the group.

Mail to: MLKCC-WPB - Attn: Iona Gamble - 1444 8th Street - West Palm Beach, FL 3340

2026 Creative Photography Competition Guidelines

THEME: “Building Bridges, Not Walls”

The Photography Competition is category related. Applicants must choose from the following Categories:

Category: Equality Human Rights, Civil Rights, Activism, Culture & Heritage

Deadline: Friday, January 9, 2026

Qualifying Levels: { } Level 1 (4-5 Grades) – { } Level 2 (6-8 Grades) – { } Level 3 (9-12
Guidelines

- Photographs must be submitted with a completed application form. Entries submitted without an application will be rejected. Applications should be typed or printed legible and attached on the back of the entry.
- A maximum of two photographs per applicant will be considered for judging.
- Photographs must be prints. Discs, slides and digitized manipulated photos will not be accepted.
- Black and white, color and sepia tone photographs are accepted.
- Entries must be the original work of the entrant and bonded to a mat board.

Photo Description: A title and brief description should accompany each photo, (maximum 300 words). This description should describe the setting, category chosen, and how the photo relates to the category chosen

Considerations:

- 1) Students should consider subject matter in relation to the theme, creativity and originality in making selection for entries.
- 2) Applicants should be sensitive to the privacy of human subjects and may need to obtain the permission of subject before photographing them.

Application: Copy or download as needed from website: www.mlkccpb.org.

Judging: Photographs will be judged by an impartial panel of judges. Presentation of winning entries will be made at the *Annual MLK Breakfast* at the Palm Beach County Convention Center 650 Okeechobee Blvd, West Palm Beach, Fl. **January 19, 2026**

Display: Student Photographs will be displayed at selected city/county libraries during the month of February 2026.

Entries: All entries become the property of MLKCC-WPB and may be returned upon request.

Mail to: MLKCC-WPB - Attn. Edith Bush 1444 8th Street West Palm Beach, Florida 33401

2026 Poetry Contest _____ Guidelines

THEME: “Building Bridges, Not Walls”

THE POETRY COMPETITION IS THEME RELATED

Deadline: **Friday, January 9, 2026**

Qualifying levels: { } **Level 1** (4-5)–{ } **Level 2** (6-8) – { } **Level 3** (9-12)

Submission Criteria :

- All entries must be the original work of the student
- Poem must be no longer than 40 lines in length
- All entries must be reflective of the theme
- No entries will be accepted that contain profanity, language that is discriminatory (based on race, religion, creed, nationality, or gender)
- The students name should be placed on the application only and should not appear on any place on the poem itself
- All entries must be typed
- Plagiarism is considered fraud; any contestant found committing or submitting a poem they did not write themselves will be disqualified
- The judges may disqualify any entry at any time for failing to comply with contest rules

Awards: Will be awarded to the **first, second, and third place winners**; all participants will receive a certificate of participation rights: All rights remain the soul property of the author/poet; however, the MLKCCC does reserve the right to publish the winning entries on its website, in its newsletter, other affiliated publications.

Judges: A panel of judges will review all entries - work will be judged based on creativity and originality. Honorary Judge(s): In the event of a tie will broke the tie.

. Application: Copy or download as needed from website: www.mlkccpbc.org

Mail to: MLKCC-WPB - Attn: Edith C. Bush
1444 8th Street - West Palm Beach, FL 33401



MARTIN LUTHER KING JR COORDINATING COMMITTEE-WPB

2026 Achiever Scholarship_____ Guidelines

THEME: “Building Bridges, Not Walls”

Qualifying Level: Grade 12 (Graduating Senior)

Guidelines: Students must compete and win **1st, 2nd, or 3rd place** in at least one of the MLKCC-WPB events.

Student must complete a scholarship application before receiving their competition placement notification.

Student must submit a wallet size photo.

Criteria: Minimum 2.5 GPA

Deadline: Contact Edith C. Bush for details

Mail to: MLKCC Scholarship
Attention: **Edith C. Bush**, Founder/Executive Director
1444 8th Street
West Palm Beach, FL 33401

Questions: Questions regarding the application or scholarship guidelines should be emailed to edithcbush@gmail.com or call 561.236.8549

Application: Copy or download as needed from website: www.mlkcpcb.org

Announcement: All scholarship recipients will be notified via application contact information.

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR COORDINATING COMMITTEE-WPB

THEME: Building Bridges, Not Walls

2026 Achiever Scholarship Application

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT INFORMATION IN BLACK OR BLUE INK

First Name _____ Last Name _____ MI _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Current High School / Home School _____

GPA _____ Graduation Date _____ Email _____

Cell# _____ DOB _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN INFORMATION

Mother's Name _____ Father's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

Cell Phone _____ Cell Phone _____

Mother's E-mail _____ Father's E-mail _____

COLLEGE INFORMATION

College(s) you plan to attend? _____

Number of College credits already earned? _____

Major _____ Minor _____

Additional Scholarship(s)/Grant(s): _____

Confirmation of entries received will be sent, within one week of receipt, to the above email address. To ensure proper delivery, please add the MLKCC-WPB website - www.mlkccpbc.org to your domain safe website list.

Disclosures: I hereby certify that the information in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, true and correct. I have not knowingly withheld any facts that would jeopardize inclusion of this application.

Student Signature: _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date _____