

## **Martin Luther King, Jr. Day and Black History Month**

When we have commemorative holidays or months, it gives us all an opportunity to focus our thoughts a bit differently. In busy lives it is easy to not be reflective and just be task oriented. This is too true of Roosevelt students who have many responsibilities and complex lives and concerns. I'd like to invite all the Roosevelt community to be a little reflective as we celebrate and acknowledge Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday and the month of February. Let's work for community by learning a little more about one another. Try to learn and experience more about another person on an individual basis. Make an effort to interact and get to know classmates and/or co-workers.

Another way to learn about people different from us in some way is obtaining information about persons who are not constantly in the media. Many persons do great, interesting, or funny things and may even be easier to identify with than those often in the media.

Being a woman, I'm always curious about women of other races, cultures, and times and what they do, what they think, and how they achieve their goals. For example, Octavia Butler is a writer of science fiction who wrote many award winning novels like Dawn. Barbara Jordan was an attorney, elected to the Texas senate and later to the U.S. House of Representatives. Gwendolyn Brooks although born in Kansas, went to a junior college in Chicago and was the poet laureate of Illinois in 1968. Have you read any of her poems? Poetry and literature can transport you into the thoughts, feelings and struggles of another person.

Being a psychologist, the career and writing of Kenneth B. Clark caught my attention early on. He was the author of the 1950 report on racial discrimination that was cited in a 1954 Supreme Court decision and an early leader in the civil-rights movement.