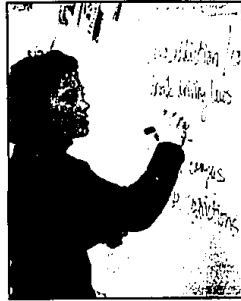


# North students take part in a 'Voicing Protest' teach-in

This story marks another installment of Today's Lesson, an occasional series which chronicles classroom activities in Farmington Public Schools.

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Appropriately so for Martin Luther King Jr. Day, protest was the topic du jour in North Farmington High School teacher Jennifer Buckley's classroom.



Brainstorming: North teacher Jennifer Buckley lists students' concerns.

## Learning about Rosa Parks, A10

The discussion about forms of protest in American history took place in Buckley's writers' workshop classroom and all over the Farmington district school, as part of the MLK Day activity "Voicing Protest: A Teach-In."

Buckley, who spearheaded the activity along with North teachers Armando Delicato and Jim Denke, wrote questions on the board such as "What is a protest?"

During the 25-minute segment of the class, which preceded a half-hour lunch interlude, the teacher and her students delved into the answer. They wrote journal entries and talked about it.

"It's when people resist actions or beliefs that are placed on them," said one student.

Buckley noted that protests entail something being wrong that people "try to fix."

Fixing a social problem could mean peaceful boycotts, such as those advocated by King. They could mean signing petitions, such as one during the first semester about the still-unpopular closed lunch campus. Or, protest could take the form of writing—whether articles, books, poems or songs, Buckley continued.

"Writing is a very powerful form of protest," the teacher said, imploring students to come up with a prominent example from the American past—the Declaration of Independence.

"It was, 'Dear King, here's what's wrong, here's how we're going to fix it. Bye bye,'" Buckley said.



## Food for thought

Students mentioned several protest songs, such as What Are We Fighting

For, an anti-Vietnam war tune by Country Joe & the Fish. The music of Rage Against the Machine sometimes railed against the U.S. government, another said.

Before lunch, students were asked to ponder one of the handout materials to determine its intended audience and the social conditions prompting the author's work.

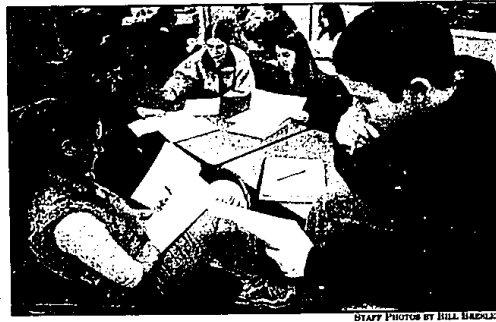
Handout materials distributed included excerpts from King's April 1963 "Letter from Birmingham Jail," Bob Dylan's 1963 protest song Masters of War, and Lady Freedom Among Us, a 1993 poem penned by Rita Dove, an African-American poet laureate.

After lunch, clusters of students discussed the various handouts and prepared for discussion with the full class. In the group poring over Dove's poem were students Dan Margolis and Lindsey Silberschein.

"What do you think she (Dove) is trying to say?" asked Buckley of Dan and Lindsey's group.

"We think it's talking about immigration," Margolis said, "because the Statue of Liberty is the first thing people see when they come into New York Harbor."

According to Silberschein, the poem describes how immigrants are treated



Pondering: North Farmington students Melinda DeSantis, Jennifer Balbes, Lauren McKinney, Teresa Jarjis and Blake Suerdlen work on questions about contemporary problems.

differently "because of the way they look."

"What do you think she wants people to do?" continued Buckley.

Change the way they are," responded Silberschein.

Before leaving for the day, Buckley assigned homework, instructing students to brainstorm as many social problems as possible, as long as they did not focus on personal issues such as "My mom won't buy me a new car."

The teacher later emphasized that it is important for young people to realize they do have a voice and can make something happen for the betterment of society, and that Martin Luther King Jr. was a citizen just like they are.

"Here's a danger that Dr. King can be turned into an icon, a sort of saint that can't be touched or approached," said Buckley, referring to MLK Day programs and tributes. "What we're

trying to reinforce (with "Voicing Protest...") is he was just a citizen doing a citizen's job in a democracy."

## Full day

The teach-in wrapped up a full day of activities and discussions about Martin Luther King's legacy and what he stood for.

Earlier Monday, North students attended two programs: "Songs of My People," featuring dance and choral selections and appropriate readings; Ida B. Wells, a play by the Wayne State University Black Theatre Troupe about one of the early civil rights leaders.

"Dr. King's message and legacy is every bit as important today as it was then," said North Principal Rick Jones, about the variety of activities. "He did provide that model for how we can bring about meaningful change."

## SCHOOL DISTRICT PTA REFLECTIONS WINNERS

Each year, the Farmington Area PTA Council holds its Reflections contest which includes visual arts, photography, literature and music. Under the direction of parent Almoa Ergas, this year's theme was "It Would Be Really Strange If ..."

Eleven schools participated. Contest winners will be honored by the Farmington Board of Education on Tuesday, March 27. They also will be entered in the statewide contest.

Following is a list of this year's district-wide winners:

### VISUAL ARTS

Primary (K-2)

1. Jordan Berman, Eagle Elementary

2. Stephanie Sanders, Highmeadow Common Campus

3. Emma Forbes, Woodcreek Elementary

Intermediate (3-5)

1. Ryo Namiki, Kenbrook Elementary

2. Maxwell Majors, Longacre Elementary

3. Dominic Nuccitelli, Hillside Elementary

Middle (6-8)

1. Melissa Butman, East Middle School

2. Rennie Jones, East Middle School

3. Cassandra Cook, East Middle School

PHOTOGRAPHY

Primary (K-2)

1. Madelyn Salk, Highmeadow Common Campus

2. Grant Boatwick, Highmeadow Common Campus

3. Alec Latta, Hillside Elementary

Hon. Mention: Michael O'Connor, Gill Elementary

Intermediate (3-5)

1. Kristina Polk, Beechview Elementary

2. Madelyn Moore, Hillside Elementary

3. Michael Minkus, Woodcreek Elementary

Middle (6-8)

1. Melissa Butman, East Middle School

2. Laura Spring, East Middle School

3. Melissa Butman, East Middle School

LITERATURE

Primary (K-2)

1. Brent Atkinson, Hillside Elementary

2. Alec Goldsmith, Eagle Elementary

3. Melissa Mullison, Longacre Elementary

Intermediate (3-5)

1. Anna Lichtman, Hillside Elementary

2. Kimberly Gillman, Longacre Elementary

3. Vicki Moses, Gill Elementary

Middle (6-8)

1. Andy Kravis, East Middle School

2. Shannon Bailey, East Middle School

3. Maya Shwayder, East Middle School

MUSIC

Primary (K-2)

1. Jennifer Jacob, Gill Elementary

2. Haley Guilfoyle, Hillside Elementary

3. Elizabeth White, Longacre Elementary

Intermediate (3-5)

1. Marc Lecerf, Highmeadow Common Campus

2. Sara Levovic, Highmeadow Common Campus

3. Alyssa Ried, Highmeadow Common Campus

Honorable Mention: Thomas Boherty, Eagle Elementary

## King march from page A1

Hills. Jensen offered the opening prayer.

"Knowing that some of us speak in the language and faith of Dr. Martin Luther King, we hear the call to be disciples of



Dream: Alexandria Marshall recites Dr. Martin Luther King's speech.

The fifth-grade choir from Wooddale, under the direction of teacher Lori Cleland, sang at the start and end of the program.

Mercy Principal Sister Regina M. Doelker, "Mercy is honored

to be part of the first walk to honor Dr. King. It is especially important that we remember our heroes. I am personally very pleased with our two cities (City of Farmington and Farmington Hills) and their rich diversity."

Host for the presentation in the auditorium was Angie Smith, Wooddale Elementary School

multiracial/multicultural council, said "We are here today to give thanks for a man who believed in unity, Dr. Martin Luther King."

"We have all benefited from civil rights," Bolson said.

On Monday Bolson said the council was happy with the turnout. "We saw many people Sunday whom we had never seen before."

Following the march and presentations in the auditorium, the crowd enjoyed refreshments in the Mercy auditorium lobby. The event took about two hours from the time the crowd arrived at Costick Center at about 4 p.m. until the closing at Mercy at 6 p.m.

Costick Center and Mercy High School are in Farmington Hills at 11 Mile and Middlebelt.



Uplifting: Neliwa Dorsey sings 'Lift Every Voice and Sing'.

PTA president. "Dr. King would have been very proud today if he saw this audience," Smith said. Several races and cultures were apparent in the mix of audience members. There were very young children, teens and older persons present.

Farmington Hills Mayor Nancy Bates read a proclamation about the day and the march, saying "We listened to King with our ears and our hearts."

Also speaking briefly were Mayor Pro-tem Jim Mitchell of the City of Farmington, who cited the meaningfulness of Farmington's diversity. School board president Frank Reid offered "congratulations on a wonderful event."

"Martin Luther King said we must choose between chaos and community," Reid said. Today we choose community, he said.

Karen Bolson, co-chair of the

# \$1,000,000

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