

MLK Holiday

To the Arlington Public School Community,

As our nation celebrates the life and legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on what would have been his 93rd birthday, his words and deeds to unite our country serve as a powerful reminder of how far we have come, and at the same time, how much work there is still to do. This holiday also makes me reflect on the importance of service to others, the true meaning of community, and the dream for which he sacrificed his life – a diverse and inclusive country. Our community, Arlington Public Schools wholeheartedly embraces these values in our mission to be a diverse, inclusive community where everyone is welcome, safe and supported, and where discrimination and hate are not tolerated.

This holiday represents a joyous moment celebrating King's service and endurance to create a better United States – it inspires us to serve our community. To truly understand King's story, we must realize he didn't work alone. The movement was not just the work of African American communities, but the effort of the American people. White Americans such as, Walter Reuther, Barbara Henry, were beacons of hope in the struggle for human rights, justice, and equality. "The problem is not a purely racial one, . . . it is not a struggle between people at all, but a tension between justice and injustice. Nonviolent resistance is not aimed against oppressors but against oppression."



It is my hope that we all use this holiday, situated in the middle of the school year, and coming just a few weeks after the holidays, not just as a day to enjoy being with our family and friends, but also as a powerful reminder and opportunity to find new ways to be of service to others, and to reach out to serve all the people in the APS community.

There is a lot of work to be done. Not just for this Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, but for those in our community who may still find themselves marginalized.

Dr. Jason Ottley

Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer

