**[](http://www.houstonisd.org/HISDmedia)HISD students to perform speeches at annual Martin Luther King Jr. Oratory Competition**

**What:** Twelve Houston ISD elementary students will spread the work and teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by performing self-written speeches inspired by the civil rights leader as part of the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Oratory Competition.

The MLK Oratory competition, sponsored by Gardere Wynne Sewell LLP, invites fourth-and fifth-grade students to write and present a short original speech that envisions King’s message in today’s world. This year’s theme is “If Dr. King were alive today, what would he say about Muhammad Ali’s contribution to society?”

Students are judged based on delivery, stage presence and decorum, content interpretation, and memorization. The winner will be awarded a $1,000 prize. The second place winner will receive a $500 prize while the third place winner will be presented with a $200 prize. Other finalists will each receive a $100 monetary award.

The 12 students who were recently selected as finalists and will present their speeches are:

* Olutobi Adeyeri, Valley West Elementary School
* Zyahra Barnes, Windsor Village Elementary School
* Alan Cabanas, Anderson Elementary School
* Mariyah Calvin, Bruce Elementary School
* Jazell Coleman, Thompson Elementary School
* Jernee Craig, Whidby Elementary School
* Sebastian Garza, Cornelius Elementary School
* Nhedrick Jabier, Crespo Elementary School
* Thomas Johnson, Burrus Elementary School
* Leana McGee, Lockhart Elementary School
* Kamarah Pennamon, Blackshear Elementary School
* Caitlyn Thompson, Pleasantville Elementary School

The program will be streamed live on Facebook.com/HoustonISD.

**Who:** HISD elementary students as well as HISD Board of Education trustees Wanda Adams and Diana Dávila

**When: Friday, Jan. 13, 2017, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.**

**Where:** Antioch Missionary Baptist Church of Christ, 500 Clay St., 77002