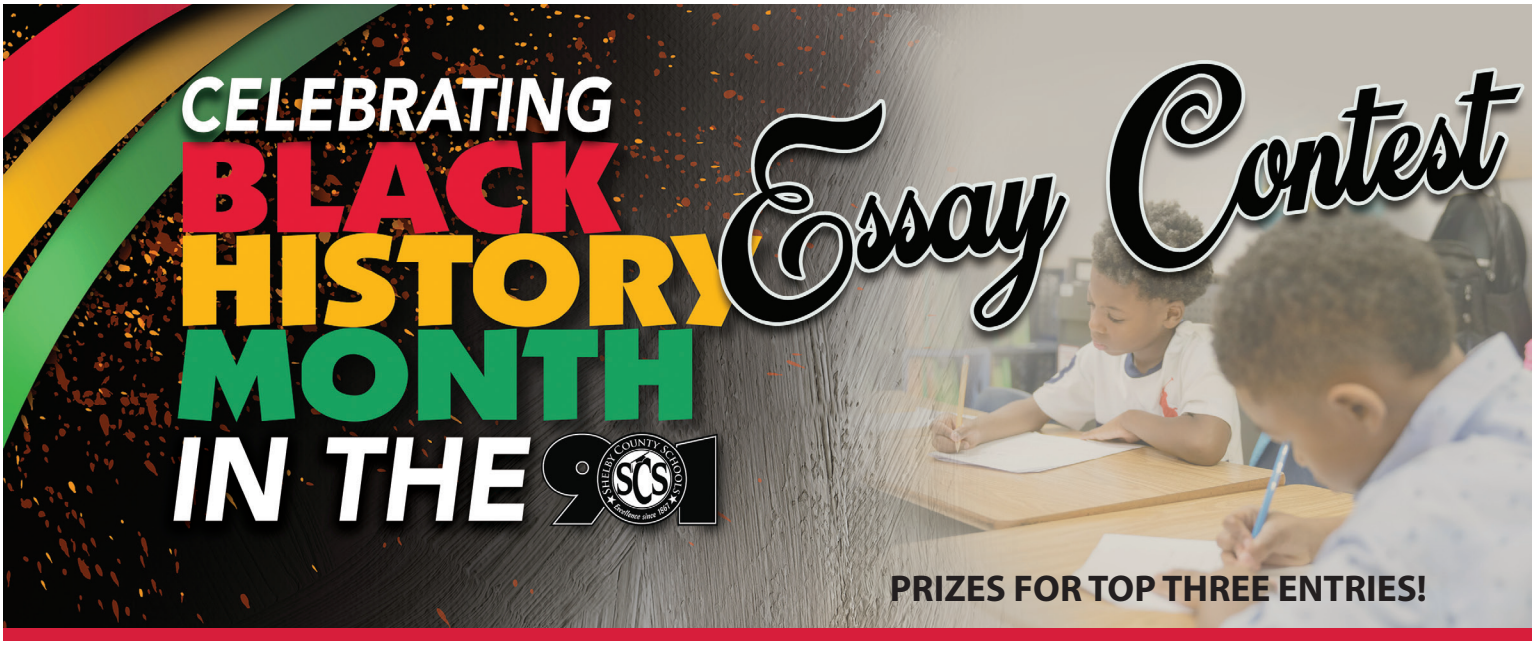


Black History Month is American history, and we can gain insight into the experiences of African Americans and the vital role they have played throughout history. Shelby County Schools takes this time to celebrate the many achievements and contributions of African Americans who have done so much to make our country the culturally diverse and prosperous nation we are today.

We invite our students to share in this celebration while showcasing their writing talents during the **2020 Celebrating Black History Month Essay Contest.** Students of all cultural backgrounds are encouraged to participate in the contest. We are looking for creative, innovative and reflective words of wisdom from students in grades 3-12.

SUBMIT YOUR ESSAY BY FEBRUARY 21

TO ENTER:

- **Website: scsk12.org/ourboys**
- **Email: ourboysneedus@scsk12.org**

GRADES 3 – 5

In 300 words or less, please describe how African Americans have helped to define Memphis' heritage and identity through their achievements and contributions to the broader society.

GRADES 6 - 12

In 500 words or less, think of an African American historical figure whose life and works you wish you knew more. After doing some research on this person, write an essay describing his or her life, work, and historical importance. Try to show not only what makes the person unique in general but also how racial identity influenced his or her life.

Official contest rules:

All submissions must be received by **Friday, February 21, 2020 at 5 p.m. CST.** Entrants may write in their primary language as long as an interpretive English translation is also attached. Use of copyrighted material is prohibited. Essays will be judged based on content, organization and originality. The top three winning essays, determined on the basis set forth in the judging criteria section, may be included in print or online in support of African American Male Empowerment activities. 20 entries will be awarded, and three grand prizes. **Winners will be announced at a special ceremony on February 27, 2020.**

Shelby County Schools offers educational and employment opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, creed, age, disability, national origin, or genetic information.