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## Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
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**\*\*3 PHOTOS ATTACHED\*\***

### **200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Lincoln's Birthday: Students Win Essay/Card Contests, Collect Pennies for UNICEF**

**Baton Rouge, LA – Had he lived longer, President Abraham Lincoln would have had to blow out 200 candles on his birthday cake today, February 12. Students across the East Baton Rouge Parish School System have been celebrating this event by entering hand-drawn birthday cards (the younger children) and essays in the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Celebration Contest. In addition, Creative Thinking gifted elective class students at Glasgow Middle School held a penny drive for United Nation's Children's Fund (UNICEF).**

**Teacher Melanie Hanley organized the UNICEF penny drive, called the Children's Lincoln Penny Power Campaign, under the umbrella of the Louisiana Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission. The money will be used for the prevention and treatment of typhoid fever and tuberculosis. Lincoln's son Willie died at age 11 of typhoid fever while the family lived in the White House. His youngest son, Tad, died at age 18 (after Lincoln's death) of tuberculosis. His son Eddie also died of tuberculosis at age 3. To date, students have raised \$60 and hope to expand the drive statewide and then nationwide.**

**Students from throughout the School System who created cards or wrote essays will be recognized at 3 p.m. today by the Commission on the State Capitol steps. As part of the Louisiana Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission's theme, "Lincoln Chose Louisiana," Secretary of State Jay Dardenne will give a dramatic reading of Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address. There also will be proclamations by Gov. Bobby Jindal and East Baton Rouge Mayor-President Melvin "Kip" Holden.**

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## LINCOLN BICENTENNIAL/2

**In addition, last Saturday, February 7, three schools (Ryan, Lanier and South Boulevard elementary schools) were represented at a Lincoln Bicentennial event held at Magnolia Mound for its Black History Month observance. Some students read their essays at the event. Students like Miracle Bell, a kindergartener from Lanier Elementary (*first photo*), also presented “Mr. Lincoln” with birthday cards created by her class.**

The artwork of posters and birthday cards created for Lincoln were very colorful. **Javier Villaneuva, a La Belle Aire Elementary second grader**, used Popsicle sticks and a penny to illustrate Lincoln’s log cabin on a birthday card. A photocopied picture, construction paper and Crayons helped **second grader Lena Foster of Forest Heights Elementary** create a unique birthday card (*second photo*). **Northeast Elementary second grader D’Metrie King’s** card featured a Crayon rendering of our 16<sup>th</sup> president (*third photo*).

“I can be like Abraham,” wrote **Judaya Bivens, a Ryan Elementary third grader**, in her essay on President Lincoln. “I’m brave just like him. Me and him could have been twins, except I’m a girl. If I had been born back then, I would have become president, too. I’m self taught. I’m a hard worker. I am brave enough to stand up in front of people if that’s what it takes to be a wonderful leader like Abraham Lincoln was.”

“Lincoln is remembered for freeing the slaves. Thank God for Lincoln and such a caring heart. He also played a great part during the time of the Civil War between the Northern and Southern states. ... Abraham Lincoln, I salute you and one day I plan to be a great leader and support my country. With God in front of me and lots of hard work, it can be done,” wrote **Milton Lee Day Jr., a Brownfields Elementary third grader**.

**At Crestworth Elementary, fifth grader Aaliyah Jackson** wrote “Abraham always told the truth. He was absolutely crazy for honesty. ... He inspired our president today, who is President Barack Obama.” **Fellow student Calvin Marquis Morris, a third grader**, wrote “He (Lincoln) was my favorite because he let the slaves free. If it wasn’t for him, I’d be a slave.”

### **The overall School System contest winners (Pre-K to 2<sup>nd</sup> grades for posters/birthday cards and 3-5 grades for essays) are:**

Brownfields Elementary – Milton Lee Day Jr., third grade  
Cedarcrest Elementary – Ketki Mahaba Eshwarkar, second grade  
Claiborne Elementary – Desiree Dixon, first grade, and Nicholas Johnson, third grade  
Forest Heights Elementary – Charlysse Casma, kindergarten  
La Belle Aire Elementary – Javier Villaneuva, second grade  
Lanier Elementary – Miracle Bell, kindergarten, and Larry Thomas, fifth grade  
LaSalle Elementary – Serena Boatner, third grade  
Northeast Elementary – Ramiyah Rogers, pre-K, and D’Metrie King, second grade  
Park Forest Elementary – Rebeka Sanchez, fourth grade  
Polk Elementary – Latreval Jones, fifth grade  
Shenandoah Elementary – Gavin Falcon, first grade  
South Boulevard Elementary – Zoe Bryant, fourth grade  
Southdowns Elementary – Jamila Ford, Pre-K  
Wildwood Elementary – Brooke Bosley, kindergarten

**For more information, contact Assistant Superintendent Paula Johnson at (225) 922-5616 or Hanley at (225) 925-2942. For more information about the Louisiana Commission and its work, visit <http://www.lincolnbicentennial.gov/>.**

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