

Resolution

Whereas, Clara Luper (1923-2011) was an Oklahoman, a teacher, a civic leader, and a pioneer in the Civil Rights Movement. She obtained her Bachelor of Arts degree in mathematics from Langston University and, in 1950, she became the first African American student in the graduate history program at the University of Oklahoma, where she received a Master of Arts degree in History Education; and,

Whereas, Clara Luper was a respected educator who brought her passion for learning and equality into her public school classroom for four decades; and,

Whereas, Clara Luper was a teacher in the Oklahoma City Public School (OKCPS) District, spending time at Dunjee High School, Douglass Mid-High School, NW Classen High School, and John Marshall Mid-High School; and,

Whereas, Clara Luper was also the advisor for the Oklahoma City NAACP Youth Council. In 1958, she led the Oklahoma City sit-in movement, where alongside members of the NAACP and her two young children, she successfully conducted nonviolent sit-in protests in drugstores and restaurants that helped end segregation policies in the downtown area; and,

Whereas, Clara Luper continued her advocacy efforts in the state helping desegregate hundreds of establishments in Oklahoma. She was also an activist at the national level and participated in the 1963 March on Washington, where Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., gave his illustrious 'I Have a Dream' speech, and in the 1965 Selma to Montgomery marches; and,

Whereas, Known for her courage, dedication and passion, Clara Luper was a significant civic leader in the fight to end segregation in Oklahoma and for all Americans; and,

Whereas, Clara Luper's daughter, Marilyn Luper Hildreth said, "My mother dedicated her life to education, always calling her students her 'diamonds.' She believed that all children could learn, and she took time to find different ways to teach and more importantly to reach each one of them;" and,

Whereas, Clara Luper told her daughter, "I want you to go places I've never been and dream the dreams I've never dreamed – and the only way you can do it is through education;" and,

Whereas, on Nov. 13, 2018, the members of the Oklahoma City Public Schools Board of Education named the new Oklahoma City Public Schools Administration building, located at 615 North Classen Boulevard, Oklahoma City, as the Clara Luper Center for Educational Services; and,

Whereas, Clara Luper will be forever remembered as a fierce advocate for education and a pioneering leader in the American Civil Rights Movement whose legacy continues to live on in her family, her students and her community; and,

Whereas, May 3, 2023, would have been Clara Luper's 100th birthday.

Now, therefore, be it resolved that we, the members of the Oklahoma City Public Schools Board of Education, take great pride in designating May 3, 2023, as "Clara Luper Day" to recognize and celebrate Clara Luper and honor her legacy with district staff, students, families and the community.

Dated this 10th day of April, 2023.


Paula Lewis, Board Chairperson

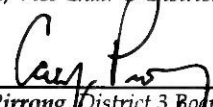

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