

PRESS RELEASE

December 26, 2008

Contact: Melba White Newsome, MAISD/Head Start of Muskegon/Oceana, 231-767-7260

Photo Attached: Dr. Janice Hale, Author, Speaker, &
Professor of Early Childhood Education at Wayne State University

Well-known author to address achievement gap with educators



On Friday, January 16, 2009, from 1:00 - 3:30 p.m. at the MAISD, well-known author and speaker **Dr. Janice Hale**, Professor of Early Childhood Education at Wayne State University, will be speaking to educators on her book **Learning While Black: Creating Educational Excellence for African American Children**. Hale will be the featured speaker earlier that same day at the *13th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Unity Breakfast* held at Muskegon Community College.

In her book, Dr. Hale argues that educators must look beyond the clichés of urban poverty and teacher training to explain the failures of public education with regard to black students. Why are black students not being educated as well as white students? Dr. Hale goes beyond finger pointing to search for solutions. Closing the achievement gap of African American children does not involve better teacher training or more parental involvement. She believes the solution lies in the classroom, in the nature of the interaction between the teacher and the child. And the key is the instructional vision and leadership provided by principals. Dr. Hale will outline strategies for redefining the school as the Family, and the broader community as the Village, in which each child is too precious to be left behind.

Hale is the founder of Visions for Children, a demonstration school designed to facilitate the intellectual development of African American preschool children. Her two previous books are *Black Children: Their Roots, Culture, and Learning Styles* and *Unbank the Fire: Visions for the Education of African American Children*. Hale also founded the Institute for the Study of the African American Child (ISAAC).

Educators must register in advance for the free afternoon program at www.muskegonisd.org. For the Unity Breakfast, the general public can purchase tickets for \$20 each or \$200 for a reserved table of eight at the Muskegon County Convention Visitors Bureau, Muskegon Community College Book Store, Rite Way Communications or Urban Apparel on Broadway Avenue. The Urban League of Greater Muskegon, Muskegon County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Community Foundation for Muskegon County, Alcoa Howmet, Muskegon Area Intermediate School District, Muskegon Community College, The Muskegon Chronicle, the Muskegon Tribune, 103.7 The Beat, and Williams Hughes & Cook, PLC are sponsoring Hale's time in Muskegon.