

Greetings,

I can't say that I'm too upset that there is snow in the forecast, only because whatever amount of snow may fall, it'll fall during the three day weekend and so there will be no stressful decisions to be made. That said, I'm not looking forward to the extremely cold weather that's in the forecast. Remember to bundle up!

Yes, we have a three day weekend! While we always cherish an extra day of rest, this three day weekend also offers a moment to reflect on two profound events that highlight the ideals of democracy, justice, and hope: the observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day and the presidential inauguration. These occasions, though distinct, share a powerful connection that underscores our nation's ongoing journey toward equality and the promise of a brighter future.

First, Dr. King's legacy reminds us of the strength found in unity, the power of peaceful advocacy, and the unyielding pursuit of justice. His dream of a nation where all are judged by the content of their character continues to challenge and inspire us to work for progress in our own community. It's important that we don't lose sight of the amazing impact Dr. King had on not just our beautiful country, but on the world. In many respects, his message still resonates today as we continue to strive to meet Dr. King's ideals. So as we enjoy the extra day off, let's not take for granted the incredible contributions and positive impact Dr. King had on all our lives. He was an incredible American.

The presidential inauguration, regardless of where you may fall politically, represents the resilience of our democracy. It's a reminder of our shared commitment to peaceful transitions of power and faith in the ideals of our Constitution. Given the events following the last presidential election, the 2025 inauguration represents a reset as the world will be watching. Now, more than ever, we need to focus on what unites us and come together as a community and a nation. I know that there are people on both sides of this upcoming inauguration and that feelings may run deep. There are also members of our community that may have some trepidation about what's to come and the impact it may have on not just public education, but on the lives of so many of our families. In Dr. King's honor and in keeping with the true intent of our constitution, we should be optimistic about the future of our nation because we all have a hand in it. Just as we try to instill in our students when they engage in civics projects, there are things we can do to affect change and ultimately, complaining on social media or engaging in fruitless debates does nothing.

As we honor Dr. King's vision and witness the promise of democracy in action, let's reflect on what these moments ask of us: to listen, to learn, and to contribute to a society where everyone can thrive. Whether in our classrooms, neighborhoods, or larger communities, each of us has a role in fostering equity, understanding, and hope.

Together, let's build a future grounded in unity and purpose.

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Here's a powerful quote from Martin Luther King Jr. that speaks to unity and forgiveness:

*"Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend."*

This encapsulates Dr. King's belief in the power of love and unity to overcome division and conflict, urging us to rise above animosity and work toward reconciliation.

As always, it's a real privilege serving this community as your superintendent of schools. Have a great weekend and stay warm!

Tony Santana

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