

Greetings,

While Groundhog's Day symbolizes a sort of déjà vu feeling, I'm not sure I can remember a time when so many people have been falling ill with such a wide spectrum of illnesses. Sure, we can all think back to Covid, *or preferably not*, but it seems like so many people have been diagnosed with not just Covid, but various strains of the flu, strep, and the notorious norovirus, AKA - the stomach flu. Some have been diagnosed with multiple things at once! As much as I pride myself on never using sick days, I too was struck with that stomach bug and it was absolutely not fun at all. All I'll say is that you should do whatever it takes to keep yourself healthy and even go back to those Covid protocols like washing your hands repeatedly, minimizing exposure, and certainly doing your best not to spread any bugs should you not be feeling well. Wait, it kinda does feel like Groundhog's Day!

Yes, this coming Sunday the country will be watching to see if one of the multiple groundhogs of fame, *Punxsutawney Phil, Staten Island Chuck, General Beauregard Lee, Buckeye Chuck, Chattanooga Chuck, and even Thistle the Whislepig*, comes out of their burrow and sees their shadow. All I'm saying is that not only am I ready for spring, I may be ready for summer!

Needless to say, it's been a rough couple of weeks with everything going on outside our school district, prompting meetings in superintendent's circles as we collaborate to work on navigating the challenges we'll be facing in the weeks ahead. From school financing and the potential for the loss of federal funds to the fears associated with immigration enforcement, it's been a lot. And to the latter, I know there are so many mixed feelings and I just want to emphasize that it is extremely important that we are mindful of any commentary that might be offensive or hurtful for our students and staff. Our collective role is to educate students in an apolitical manner and simply abide by the rules that govern us. Comments regarding the immigration status of students should not be discussed as it is not only upsetting, but a clear violation of FERPA laws. I cannot emphasize this enough.

Having said that and despite the last couple of weeks being somewhat rough, keeping me in my office more than I'd like to be, it's been great seeing our school buildings continuing to strive and provide positive experiences for our students. As much as we appreciate the ills of social media, I love following our district's various social media handles and seeing kids learning, playing, and competing at all levels. This is a credit to all of our staff members who push all of the uncertainty and unrest aside to ensure our students feel safe, secure and supported. Big shout to all of you. You are truly appreciated.

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

Tony Santana

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