

Greetings,

Hard to believe it's November already and this weekend we'll be falling back, setting our clocks back which on the one hand is great as we get an extra hour of sleep, but on the other, it's dark by five p.m. Sigh. Still, I love that we live in the Northeast and there is something to be said about the change in seasons. Each has such a different vibe and it just keeps things exciting and new, giving us opportunities to reset and enjoy what's best in each season - like fall sunsets, foliage, and comfort food. Maybe that's just me.

We're also approaching our Superintendent's Conference Day and this year we really wanted to change things up a bit and give staff different options that speak to professional practices as well as things that are fun or help us fill our cups. We're appreciative of all the staff members who made themselves available to participate and I'm also excited that we'll have an opportunity to experience community circles which can be impactful in our learning more about one another and appreciate just how much we might have in common. I'm also excited about my participation and looking forward to the book talk and our anxious generation. As the perpetual optimist, I do feel like there is a shift happening and provided we get through the presidential election and inauguration, things will hopefully begin to settle and tensions will diminish. Remember to exercise your civic duty and vote!

So much of our mindsets are also influenced by media spin, especially considering we live in an era where there is little objectivity when it comes to news reporting. More than that, it seems like we are inundated with all that's bad with the world. New York City, given the turmoil with the mayor's office, constant reports of pretty heinous crimes, subway surfing deaths, and all those things that seem to dominate any city news, making it seem like the city is in disrepair and liken to the city that Snake Plissken had to rescue the president's daughter from in 1981's *Escape From New York*. Last night I walked in the City's Annual Halloween Parade and while I'll always be partial to my home town, there were literally thousands of people out, families and kids too, and everyone was simply reveling in the evening. At no point was there any tension or anger. The point I am trying to make is that there is a lot of good too. We definitely need to start really thinking about what it means to be media literate and equip ourselves with the ability to sift through what is truly sensationalized and what is really accurate.

In line with what I'm trying to get across, last night Diwali was observed, the Festival of Lights. Let's all celebrate its themes of hope, renewal, and unity. Diwali symbolizes the victory of light

over darkness and knowledge over ignorance. To our South Country Central School District staff who celebrate, may this time bring you joy, prosperity, and meaningful reflection.

Best wishes for a great weekend and as always, it really is a pleasure serving South Country as your superintendent of schools.



Tony Santana

[#clipperPRIDE](#)