

Greetings,

Unfortunately, we don't have any immediate updates regarding the budget process or our efforts to respond to the unexpected financial challenges we're facing heading into next year. Like many school districts across the Island, we're in a tough spot, and while there's some comfort in knowing we're not alone, it doesn't make the process feel any easier. That said, we continue to work through the budget line-by-line, combing through everything from transportation routes to textbooks, technology purchases, and beyond to identify areas where we can responsibly reduce expenditures without negatively impacting our core programs or student experience.

At the same time, we haven't lost sight of the great things happening all around our schools. In recent weeks, there have been career day events, inspiring visits from college athletes, student recognitions in music, a beautiful production of *Matilda Jr.*, a jam-packed curriculum fair, spring sports kicking off, and last night, a moving celebration of students who reached English proficiency on the NYSELAT. It was so powerful to see so many proud families in attendance, joined by the teachers and administrators who've supported these students every step of the way. There was just so much love and Clipper compassion on display.

One of the most touching moments came from a high school senior who spoke about her journey from Ecuador to the United States, learning English and becoming fluent in just two short years. She stood in front of a crowded library and delivered a heartfelt, articulate speech about her experience. Her gratitude, courage, and determination were palpable and a reminder of why we do what we do. Amid all the stress and uncertainty, it was the kind of moment that grounds you and lifts you up at the same time. It certainly did for me.

This Monday, our schools will be closed in observance of Eid al-Fitr, which marks the end of the month-long fasting of Ramadan. To all who observe, I wish you a heartfelt *Eid Mubarak*, and to everyone, I hope you enjoy a well-deserved and restful long weekend.

Thank you, as always, for all you do to support our students, your colleagues, and our school community. It's an honor to serve as your superintendent.

Tony Santana
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