Greetings,

So I'm not gonna front—it's been a long couple of weeks. Like many of you, I've felt the weight of the challenges we're facing. But in the midst of it all, I've also had the chance to experience some truly uplifting moments in our schools that remind me why this work matters so much.

This past week, I had the privilege of visiting Civics Day presentations where our students showcased their insight and civic awareness. I listened to several Seal of Biliteracy presentations. We're up to approximately 40 students who are on track to earn this prestigious accolade at graduation! I also joined a thoughtful and timely discussion on substance abuse hosted by COMPASS Unity, attended a career presentation for sixth graders, and enjoyed a fantastic variety show at the high school (as a lifelong SNL fan, that one hit especially close to home!). Despite the difficult situation we find ourselves in and decisions that need to be made, there is no questioning the value our teachers have on our community.

Yesterday was National Principals Day, a job that's often not appreciated in terms of the many things principals grapple with on a daily basis. I spent ten years serving as a school principal and I can recall so much that I encountered and managed that went unseen. So a shout to our principals is well deserved. As we navigate ongoing challenges, our administrative team will continue to work hard to support staff and maintain a strong foundation for teaching and learning.

Looking ahead, it's time to turn our attention to the school budget. While the past few weeks have presented us with tough decisions, our focus must now shift to what lies ahead. This proposed budget is critical to maintaining the programs and opportunities that make South Country so special. It reflects our commitment to students and keeps us moving forward, even in difficult times.

Thank you for staying engaged, for supporting our mission, and for always keeping students at the center. I'm really appreciative of everyone's efforts, all of our staff and community that work towards making South Country such a wonderful place.

This weekend I am going to get my 'nerd' on and check out Marvel's Thunderbolts*. Yes, Marvel has been my guilty pleasure for years now and I'm looking forward to a little escape. Hoping everyone can find some time to disconnect and relax despite the rainy forecast ahead.

As always, it's a privilege serving you as your superintendent of schools!

Tony Santana
#clipper**PRIDE**