Greetings,

I don't think I've looked forward to a weekend as much as I've looked forward to this weekend. Now, the weather forecast may not be entirely perfect, but it'll be good enough and a welcome reprieve from the chilly and wet weather we had the last couple of days.

As we approach the Memorial Day weekend, many of us are looking forward to the chance to pause and enjoy a well deserved three or four day break as some of us were in today. This time of year traditionally offers us a moment to reflect, to be with family and friends, to host a barbeque, maybe hit the beach for the unofficial opening to the summer season, and most importantly, to honor the men and women who gave their lives in service to our country. It's a solemn reminder of the profound sacrifices that have helped safeguard the freedoms we enjoy today. Let's not forget the true meaning of the holiday as we still have men and women who put service before self in the name of our country and our freedoms.

In the spirit of gratitude, I also want to thank our community for supporting this year's school budget. The vote of confidence speaks volumes about our belief in our students, our staff, and the future we're working together to build. Passing a budget is never a simple task, it's a long and arduous process that requires collaboration, transparency, and sometimes very difficult decisions. This year was an incredibly difficult year and the biggest challenge I've had to face in all my years in education.

This brings me to the more bittersweet part of this message. While we are grateful to have a budget in place, it's with a heavy heart that we acknowledge the impact it has had on some of our dedicated employees. Yesterday was an extremely difficult day as several members of our South Country team were informed that they are being excessed due to budget constraints. These individuals are more than just positions or titles, they are colleagues, mentors, and friends who have contributed greatly to the life of our schools and the success of our students.

These are incredibly difficult moments for any school community. Please know again that these decisions were not made lightly, and that we are committed to supporting those affected in every way we can. Their dedication and professionalism have not gone unnoticed, and we are immensely grateful for all they have done.

As always, we remain grounded in our shared commitment to the students and families of South Country. Even in moments of challenge, our Clipper Pride remains strong - rooted in compassion, resilience, and the belief that together, we can weather any storm and continue to move forward.

I wish you all a peaceful and reflective Memorial Day weekend. Let us take time to rest, to honor, and to hold one another close.

Tony Santana
#clipper**PRIDE**