Greetings,

Well, we did it - we made it through Week One!

Sure, some of us forgot how early those alarm clocks go off. (No matter what the tone is, even if it's a Barry Manilow song, I'm not sure anyone enjoys the sound of the alarm going off early in the morning.) And yes, there were a few "where does this bus go?" moments and a bit of the expected cell phone adjustment drama, but overall, what a great start to the school year. And the weather could not have been better!

I had the chance to visit every one of our schools on opening day, and I walked away from each with the same feeling: we're in a good place. What stood out most was the genuine kindness, patience, and Clipper Compassion I saw between staff and students. This is a community that leads with heart.

The energy in our buildings is strong. I saw teachers greeting students with warmth and purpose, students helping one another find their way (or their lockers), and support staff working magic behind the scenes to keep things running smoothly. A big shoutout to our Buildings & Grounds team for making sure everything was ready to go - your work does not go unnoticed. Routines are setting in. Relationships are forming. The year is taking shape.

This afternoon, I was especially excited to attend the "Bellwood" football scrimmage, Bellport vs. Longwood, two strong communities, one awesome tradition. It's kind of the unofficial kickoff of fall sports, and I can't wait to see our student-athletes in action across every field and court in the coming weeks. Go Clippers!

Thanks to all of you - staff, families, and students - for the flexibility, patience, and positivity you've brought to this opening week. Let's keep the momentum going.

Enjoy the weekend. Rest up. We're just getting started.

It really is a privilege serving this community as your superintendent of schools!

Tony Santana
#clipperPRIDE