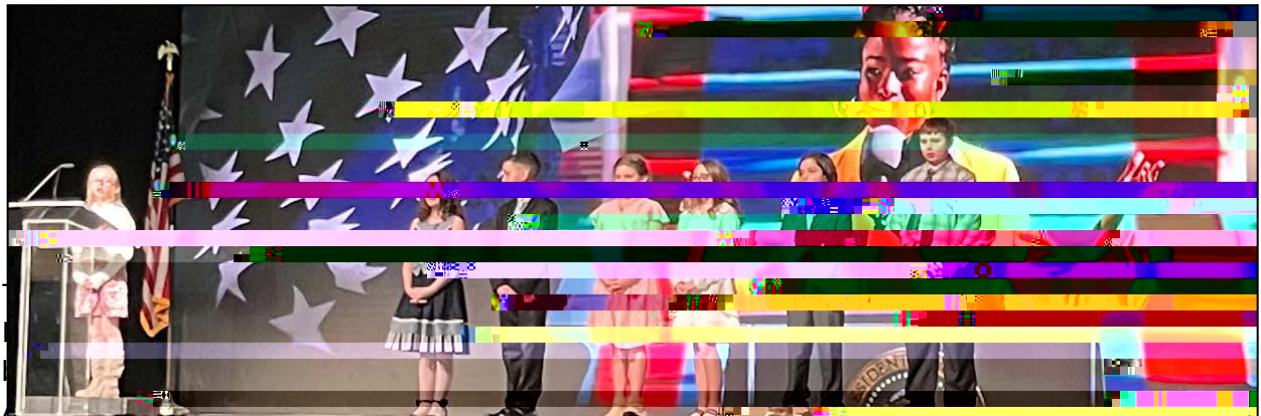


Greetings,

Another week down and it's Spring ahead weekend! As much as I love longer days, losing that precious hour of sleep in them This was another week that fostered lots of Clipper PRIDE. First, I had the pleasure of attending the New York State Council of School Superintendents (NYSCOSS) Winter Institute up in Albany. Always informative and a great opportunity to network with superintendents from across the state. I think we take for granted just how big our wonderful state is and how diverse school districts are. I had the opportunity to speak to superintendents from really rural districts in western New York and learn about their unique challenges, as well as school districts up in Buffalo who have had to deal with tremendous winter storms! What all districts shared, however, was an emphasis on equity, restorative practices, and advocacy - all from a very American perspective. Elementary school students from W.A. Wettel Elementary School in the Verona Sherrill School District, located a little northwest of Syracuse, recited both Dr. King's speech and Amanda Gorman's inaugural poem, I e, M M i M

that they appreciated their meaning. While the authors of both works are African American, the kids performing were not and I believe that really demonstrated that the message is an American one - one of tolerance and love and of perseverance. One we can all subscribe to.



the ideals of our great constitution. This past week our equity team presented at our board meeting in anticipation of their presentation at the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's (ASCD) national convention in Denver, Colorado. Ms. Doyle, Mr. Watkins, and Ms. Tetuan really captured the amazing work we've been doing as a district. (Ms. O'Hagan, another member of the equity team, was up in Albany for the Social Studies conference where high school teacher Mr. Budris is being recognized as New York State Council for the Social

Studies (NYSCSS) Outstanding Social Studies Teacher of the Year!) Needless to say, it gives me great pride that South Country, in many respects, is ahead of the curve with regards to equity work and restorative practices. I also don't take for granted that while these topics are again sometimes deemed controversial, despite the obvious positive impact they have on learning communities, we have persevered and have been at the forefront of these initiatives for a while now. Evidence of this was demonstrated by our high school students who advocated for single color graduation gowns at the same meeting. While such a significant change may not happen immediately, they are the catalyst for discussion and should the district move in that direction, it would be their legacy and a product of student voices being heard. This is not just civics, but equity at work. As I said at our board meeting, I wish I could take even a little bit of credit, but the credit goes to our team, practitioners, and our students. I am really excited at the prospect of the team sharing these best practices on a national level. South Country will be on the map! #clipperPRIDE

As always, there is lots to be proud of and it really is a great pleasure serving this community as your superintendent of schools! Best wishes for a great weekend!

Tony Santana  
[#clipperPRIDE](#)