

Greetings,

So, isn't it ironic? Mother Nature has a way of messing with us and it happens almost every season. The week before school started, temperatures were cool and humidity was low. Many of us engaged in conversations about the start of fall and perhaps indulged in some pumpkin something or other. There is plenty to choose from. Fall was upon us just in time for the start of school! Well, like another one of her cruel jokes, the tide turned and we opened the school year in a heat wave with incredibly hot temperatures and high humidity. Despite this, there were lots of smiles on the faces of students and staff and we pushed through it. I am always impressed by our fortitude and our ability to deal with adversity, even when it comes from such a powerful entity like Mother Nature. Needless to say, in witnessing the many positive interactions amongst staff who comforted our smallest learners who were missing mom or simply having a hard time adjusting to the new routine, I felt lots of Clipper PRIDE and am excited to see what the year has in store. And, one week down!

Sadly, the beginning of September also represents a tragic moment in our nation's history. Monday marks the 22nd anniversary of the attacks of September 11, 2001. Many of us lived through these events and remember the overwhelming feelings of uncertainty and fear. I was living in Brooklyn at the time and saw the towers burning from an elevated subway station. Worse than that, my teacher friends sat in classrooms with terrified children wondering if their parents who worked in the city were okay as we lost touch with family and friends. It was an awful day. Our neighborhood became engulfed in a fog like smoke with pieces of papers from the towers falling out of the sky like dirty snow. This lasted weeks. Above and beyond all this, I remembered visiting the observation deck with my brother and feeling on top of the world. For thirty years of my life, the buildings were a symbol of our country's might. I was crushed.

As I mentioned on opening day, kindness needs to be our north star. In the aftermath of the attacks, this proved true. We came together in the spirit of unity and compassion. We were all Americans. So many people rose up and neighbors reached out and there were countless moments when the ties of family, community and country felt stronger than ever. Y

While we honor our heroes with thoughts and prayers, let us also honor them with action.

Let's all be a part of a lasting and forward-looking legacy -- annually rekindling the spirit of service, tolerance and compassion that unified America and the world in the immediate aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. Let's wear red white and blue on Monday and honor our solidarity. I also challenge everyone in our community to do a good deed as we remember and honor 9/11 victims, first responders, recovery workers, military, those injured, and others impacted by 9/11 terrorist attacks. And let's be inspired to always look out for our families, communities, and each other. I believe South Country has the spirit to do just that.

Best wishes for a great weekend and thank you for making our first week such a successful one.

It really is a true privilege serving you as your superintendent of schools!

#clipper**PRIDE**