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*To inspire each student to
extraordinary achievement
every day*

March 27, 2026

To Our Twin Rivers School Community,

Our children are back where they belong, and so are we.

Let me begin the only way I know how: with gratitude — and with honesty.

To every student, parent and guardian who wrote to me, who held your family together during a stretch that was genuinely hard, who kept faith in your children's schools even when uncertainty made that difficult, I heard you. I read your words. I felt the weight of your concern, and I acknowledge plainly: the disruption these past weeks placed on your families was real, and I do not take that lightly. Your patience and your grace during this time meant more than I can adequately express.

To our teachers, our site and district administrators, our classified staff, our Twin Rivers School Police Department, and every partner who is part of this Twin Rivers family, each of you, in your own role and your own way, showed up. Not just during a difficult stretch, but every day, in every school, for every child. That is who you are. That is who you have always been. Thank you.

Here is where we stand.

What has been achieved is fair — fair to the educators who give everything to our children every day, and balanced in the way that matters most to families: every program, every sport, every arts performance, every career pathway, every dual enrollment opportunity, every support service that your child depends on — none of it goes away. All of it continues. That commitment has always been my north star, and it always will, because in Twin Rivers, supporting the people who serve our children and protecting what our children experience have never been competing priorities. They are the same priority.

Moments like this call us to remember who we are.

This is the district where a student can walk into a classroom speaking one of 53 different languages and find a place built for them. Where first-generation college students in the Class of 2026 are on pace to graduate this spring having already earned an Associate of Arts degree from American River College, more than 25 of them, before they ever receive their high school diploma. These are young people from Del Paso Heights, North Highlands, Rio Linda, Foothill Farms, and every neighborhood we serve.

And this week, as our teachers returned to classrooms and our community turned the page, the California Department of Education announced that Grant Union High School has just been named a 2026 California Exemplary Dual Enrollment School, joining Rio Linda High School, which earned that same statewide honor in 2022–23 as the only school in the entire Sacramento region to do so. Two Twin Rivers schools. A continued standard of excellence. That is not a coincidence. That is a culture, and that culture belongs to every student, teacher, staff member, administrator, and family in this district.

Our graduation rate has risen from 76% to 92%, on pace to exceed 93% this year. We have eliminated every dollar of the debt this district once carried. We have built a new school, created 37 career pathways, grown championship athletic, JROTC, cheer, and performing arts programs, earned 8 Gold Ribbon Schools, and done it all without ever losing sight of the one thing that justifies every decision, the children in our classrooms.

This is not my legacy. This is our legacy. Every teacher who poured themselves into a classroom. Every administrator, at every school site and across this district, who held things together with quiet resolve. Every classified employee who showed up, as they always do, because that is simply who they are. Every counselor who listened. Every parent who showed up. Every student who chose to believe. This community built this together, and no chapter of difficulty can diminish what that means.

Abraham Lincoln, in the darkest hours of a divided nation, did not call on his country to remember its wounds. He called on it to remember its purpose, "that this nation, shall have a new birth of freedom." He asked a fractured people not to look back in anger, but forward in resolve.

That is my ask of you today.

Not to forget what was hard, but to let what was hard remind us of what we are made of. The families of Twin Rivers do not break easily. Our students do not stop dreaming easily. That is who we are. That has always been who we are.

To the students of Twin Rivers, you are the reason. Every decision made in this district, every dollar invested, every agreement reached, it was for you. It will always be for you.

To this community, thank you for trusting me. Thank you for challenging me. Thank you for being exactly who Twin Rivers has always needed you to be.

Twin Rivers is still Twin Rivers.

To inspire each student to extraordinary achievement every day.

With deep gratitude, profound respect, and an unshakeable belief in this community,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steve Martinez". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Steve Martinez, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Twin Rivers Unified