

# **Faribault County Register**

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**Dr. Topinka - January 2026**

The first semester of the 2025–2026 school year is in the books, and we are past the halfway point of the school year. Over the past 18 weeks, our students at USC have demonstrated strong engagement and commitment, making it a rewarding semester in Rebel country. We are looking forward to building on this momentum as we continue into second semester.

Looking ahead, we're already beginning to plan for the 2026–2027 school year. One wrinkle we're working through with next year's academic calendar is the later-than-usual placement of both Memorial Day and Labor Day. Throughout November and December, our calendar committee, made up of staff, students, and parents, met several times to review survey feedback from families, students, and faculty. While no calendar can meet every preference, the committee stayed focused on creating a schedule that best serves the greatest number of people and supports student learning. The finalized 2026–2027 academic calendar, along with a summary of the survey results, is available on our school website to help families and staff begin their long-range planning.

As our School Board continues to explore the possibility of a building referendum in the fall of 2026, community input remains a central part of our process. USC's facilities taskforce most recently met on January 12, where members reviewed multiple design options for potential projects. The group, which includes members of all of our district communities, provides a truly valuable perspective as we evaluate our current needs and long-term priorities. The taskforce is scheduled to meet again on February 9 to further refine a proposal. In addition, we will host our second community meeting on February 19 at the Golden Bubble Event Center at 6:00 PM where we will give our community members an opportunity to learn more about the process, ask questions, and share feedback. We genuinely are aiming for this to be a shared community enterprise and want as much community participation as possible to make this the strongest possible plan for students and the district's future. With this in mind, if you have any questions, concerns, or comments, please reach out to me at USC, and I would love to visit more.

As we start a new year, our school board is once again planning to hold several meetings outside of Wells to stay connected with all of our District communities. We will begin by holding our February school board meeting in Easton at 5:30 PM on the 17th. Prior to the meeting, our board will be at the Community Center at 5:00 PM to host a question-and-answer session about our facilities project process. Following that, we are scheduled to meet in Bricelyn in April, Kiester in June, Walters in August, and Freeborn in October. We also plan to hold similar Q&A sessions prior to each of these meetings, as well as a session in Wells on May 19th. We are happy to answer questions and provide as much information as possible about our future plans. We encourage everyone to participate in the democratic process of school governance and ask any questions you may have.