



# United South Central Schools

*"Empowering students to reach their full potential through a supportive community and engaging school experiences, inspiring them to be lifelong learners and responsible citizens."*

Taylor Topinka, Superintendent

Hello United South Central Families,

The 2026-27 school year is past its mid-point and we are well into the second semester. It has been an eventful winter on the academic, activities, and weather fronts, and we are excited for what Spring will have in store for USC.

**Open Positions** - One of the strengths of United South Central is having a healthy balance of staff across ages and generations. With that balance, retirements are a natural part of the cycle, and at the conclusion of this school year we will be saying goodbye to four outstanding teachers, many of whom have served USC for a significant length of time. We extend a sincere thank you to our upcoming retirees for their dedication and impact on our school community: Anne Feist (16 years), Brad Huse (27 years), Pierre Stencel (27 years), and Amy Stenzel (26 years). Change is never easy, especially when it involves individuals who have been part of our schools for so many years. At the same time, these transitions allow us to welcome new people and fresh perspectives into our district. With that in mind, we currently have multiple elementary teaching positions and a high school physical education position open, and our principals are actively accepting applications. If you know of anyone who may be interested in these opportunities, please feel free to send them our way.

**Van and Bus Drivers Wanted**- Many Minnesota school districts rely on outside contractors to operate buses and other school vehicles. At USC, we have handled this work in-house for many years, and thanks to a dedicated group of drivers and strong leadership, transportation typically runs very smoothly. As we move through the winter months, however, we are currently a bit short on van and bus drivers and are looking for individuals who may be interested in helping safely transport students to and from school. All required training will be provided and covered by the district. If you know of anyone who may be interested, please direct them to USC Transportation Director Mary Smothers at 507-553-3134.

**Facilities Referendum Process** - We are quickly approaching the point where we need to get serious about enrollment for next year, as well as potential class and section sizes. As we have these conversations, it becomes clear that we have virtually no available rooms or space options to accommodate an additional section if it were needed. Metrics like this are a key reason we continue discussing future facilities needs and the direction our community would like to see the district take. Our facilities taskforce is finalizing its review of facilities, enrollment data, and future maintenance plans, and is close to concluding which expansion plan would best meet all of our identified needs, ensuring USC can continue to provide the best possible learning environment possible for our students.

**February 19 Community Meeting** - We have our second community informational meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 19th at 6:00 PM at the Golden Bubble Event Center. At this meeting, we will review enrollment information, share the results of our building assessment, and discuss potential options moving forward. The most important part of the meeting is to have a dialogue about what matters most to our community. A meal and childcare will be provided, and we hope to see you there. If you have any specific questions, concerns, or comments, please reach out to me at USC and I would be happy to connect and visit further.



Independent School District No. 2134

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## Upcoming Events and Activities at USC -

- February 16, Presidents Day - No School
- February 17, School Board Meeting (in Easton) - 5:30 PM (With a question and answer opportunity prior, beginning at 5:00 PM)
- February 19, Facilities Community Meeting - 6:00 PM
- March 12, K-12 Evening Conferences

Go Rebels!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Taylor Topinka".

Taylor Topinka  
USC Superintendent