



710 17th Street SW, Faribault, MN 55021

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February 17, 2026

Superintendent Jamie Bente  
Faribault Public Schools  
710 17th Street SW  
Faribault, MN 55021

Dear Superintendent Bente & School Board Members,

On behalf of the Faribault Native American Parent Advisory Council (NAPAC), we submit this resolution following the council's recent concurrence vote of **no** regarding current district practices impacting Native American students.

The NAPAC Council serves as a statutorily recognized advisory body under Minnesota state law, charged with partnering with the district to promote academic success, cultural identity, and educational equity for Native American learners. A concurrence vote of "No" reflects the Council's determination that existing conditions do not yet meet these obligations and signals the need for documented review, response, and improvement.

## Community Context and Data

Of the 40 families identified as NAPAC participants within Faribault Public Schools:

- 30.8% identify as American Indian Dakota (State-Identified)
- 23.1% identify as American Indian Ojibwe (State-Identified)
- 23.6% identify as American Indian with unknown tribal affiliation
- 17.9% identify as American Indian, Other
- 2.6% identify as American Indian, [unspecified]

## Alignment with District Mission and Policy

Faribault Public Schools affirms its commitment to educating, elevating, and empowering every student Every Falcon. Every Day. Existing district policies, including Policy 419 (Tobacco-Free Environment), already recognize Native American cultural and spiritual practices such as ceremonial tobacco use and smudging. The Council views this resolution as an opportunity to extend that recognition into systemic educational practices, decision-making, and accountability.



## Council Recommendations and SMART Goals

The NAPAC Council respectfully submits the following SMART goals as recommended priorities for collaborative implementation. Informed by data, community voice, and statutory purpose, these goals are intended to guide continued planning and coordination to strengthen outcomes for Native American students and families. With School Board acknowledgment and district partnership, the NAPAC Coordinator will work alongside district leadership and departments to support implementation and progress monitoring during the upcoming cycle.

## Requested Action

The NAPAC Council formally requests that the School Board:

1. Review the attached recommendations and SMART goals in full.
2. Provide a **written response to each recommendation** by **April 17, 2026**, outlining acceptance, modification, or rationale for non-implementation.
3. Engage in continued dialogue with the NAPAC Council to support shared accountability and partnership.

Testimonials from Council members and families may be shared with prior consent and anonymity, in recognition of the trust required for meaningful engagement.

We appreciate the School Board's attention to this resolution and welcome questions or discussion as part of the public meeting process. The NAPAC Council remains committed to collaborative work that honors students who are Native American and their families.

Respectfully,

Denise Mesta  
Native American Student and Family Advocate  
Faribault Public Schools

cc: School Board Members  
NAPAC Members



## Non-Concurrence SMART Goals

### SMART Goal 1: Council Access & Participation

Beginning immediately and no later than the end of the current school year, the NAPAC Student and Family Advocate will provide virtual participation options for at least 80% of NAPAC Council meetings while maintaining in-person meetings with food-sharing when appropriate. Meeting formats and attendance data will be reviewed annually and reported to the School Board.

### SMART Goal 2: Family Engagement & Parent Participation

By the end of the current school year, the NAPAC Council will increase meeting participation among parents and guardians from the current 7.5% by an additional 7.5% through targeted outreach and flexible meeting options. Participation will be tracked at each meeting and reviewed quarterly.

### SMART Goal 3: NAPAC Student Support & Belonging

By the end of Fall 2026, the district will establish at least one designated space or structured program to support Native American students' academic success and sense of belonging, consistent with district policy, with implementation reviewed at semester's end.

### SMART Goal 4: NAPAC Student Club Implementation

Within six months, the NAPAC Student and Family Advocate will promote and support student access to create and operate a student-led NAPAC club for Native American students, consistent with district procedures. Club participation and sustainability will be reviewed at the end of the first semester of operation.

### SMART Goal 5: Curriculum Transparency & Advocacy Review

Within one academic year, and effective immediately, the NAPAC Student and Family Advocate will have access to participate in Teaching and Learning advisory councils, as appropriate, to represent NAPAC perspectives on Native American-related history and literature, and will share relevant updates with the NAPAC Council for review and recommendations.

### SMART Goal 6: Staff Training & Cultural Visibility

By the end of the next school year 26-27, the district will incorporate Native American history, cultural traditions, and student needs into at least one district or site-based professional learning opportunity. Staff participation and feedback will be collected and reviewed annually to inform ongoing training.