

Work Session

Monday, September 14, 2026 5:30 PM

Faribault Public Schools District Office, 710 17th Street SW, Faribault, MN 55021

I. Call to Order

I.A. Determination of a Quorum Present

I.B. Pledge of Allegiance

II. Informational Items

II.A. First Days of School - **REPORT** **Presenter:** Jamie Bente, Superintendent

II.B. Academic Honors Recognition for Graduating Seniors - **DISCUSSION** **Presenter:** Jamie Bente, Superintendent, and Nate Molitor, Principal

III. Move to a closed session, as permitted by Minn. Stat. 13D.03, for negotiation strategies with Local 70 - **ACTION** **Presenter:** Nicole Yochum, Human Resources Director

IV. Move to a closed session, as permitted by the attorney-client privilege (Minn. Stat. Section 13D.05, subdivision 3 (b)) to discuss the potential resolution of a threatened lawsuit against FPS - **ACTION** **Presenter:** Jamie Bente, Superintendent

IV.A. Reconvene the meeting and consider approval of a Settlement Agreement concerning a lawsuit threatened by FPS former employee Lindsay Scholten - **ACTION** **Presenter:** Jamie Bente, Superintendent

V. Adjourn - **ACTION**



WE ARE FARIBAULT



Valedictorian Discussion

Breaking down why this procedure was changed, how it was implemented, and what this will look like in the future.



Why was the Valedictorian/Salutatorian title removed?

THE GOAL

To establish a culture that emphasizes student growth, achievement, and belonging rather than competition for two individual positions.

1. Reduce Academic Stress

- Class ranks can be extremely close, sometimes differing by only a fraction of a point, creating a highly competitive environment.
- This competition directly contributes to academic stress and student anxiety.
- Ultimately it can lead to academic burnout.

2. Less Academic Flexibility

- Students often limit themselves to very specific classes to maintain or improve their class rank.
- This discourages students from exploring diverse classes that genuinely interest them or align with their future career paths.



Why was the Valedictorian title removed? (Continued)

3. Uplifting Student Culture

- Eliminates one aspect of competition with one's peers.
- Shift from a "me vs. you" model to an "us" model.

4. Increase Student Recognition

- Transition to an altered Latin honors model:
 - 3.0–3.499: Honors
 - 3.5–4.0: High Honors
 - 4.0+: Highest Honors
- Aligns with the Latin honors standards used by many colleges.

5. Success from Other Schools

- Other school districts have already shifted to this model with successful results.



How was this policy implemented?

- This policy went into the student handbook in July 2024.
- This policy goes into effect on July 2027.
- Every year the handbook is reviewed with students at the beginning of the year to ensure students have an understanding of school expectations, policies, and structures.



What will this look like in the future?

Old Model

- Pick valedictorian/salutatorian based off class rank.
- Both are recognized during senior awards night.
- Valedictorian speaks at graduation.

New Model

- Establish all honor, high honors, and highest honors students (latin honors model).
- Recognize all students who meet the latin honors criteria (3.0 - 4.0+).
- Application process for senior speaker at graduation.

This decision (just like all decisions) was made with what we believe is best for our students, their families and our community.

Questions?

