Strategic Plan
2022 - 2027

SOUTH DAKOTA
BOARD of REGENTS

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"Upon the subject of education, not presuming to dictate any plan or system respecting it, I can only say that I view it as the most important subject which we as a people may be engaged in."

-President Abraham Lincoln

Prepared by: Dr. Brian L. Maher 01/15/2022

A Message from the Executive Director

After the 2020 South Dakota Legislature passed Senate Bill 55 into law, a 20-member task force of legislative, business, and education leaders took its charge to heart. From October 2020 to June 2021, the task force engaged in a detailed study of operations and functions of higher education under the Board of Regents' authority.

As the task force work progressed, it became clear that a new strategic plan must guide the Board of Regents' direction going forward. The final task force report and recommendations, along with numerous internal and external discussions, have greatly informed and shaped the new strategic plan found on the following pages.
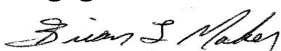
This new plan sets out strategies, objectives, and outcomes that establish a strong foundation for our South Dakota public universities. The work now underway includes developing new performance metrics that will tightly couple to the plan, serving as indicators of progress.

As we proceed, we must be mindful of external factors that affect the work we do, such as state and regional demographic trends. In December 2020, the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) updated its projections of high school graduates nationally through the year 2037. Key findings from this study will shape how South Dakota public universities react and respond in the future:

- Nationally, the number of high school graduates is expected to peak in the mid-2020s before entering a period of modest decline through the end of the projections in 2037.
- COVID-19 introduces significant uncertainty into the projections.
- Increased diversification of the graduating classes is a projected trend.
- Significant state and regional variation are important features of these projections.

After the Senate Bill 55 Task Force completed its work, the Board of Regents took its recommendations to the campuses and their local communities. We held stakeholder outreach sessions and presented to state policymakers, executive branch agencies, and their staff. With continued examination and dialogue, we expect many of these ideas to positively influence Board of Regents' policy and actions long term.

This strategic plan is a tool to help us understand our past successes or failures, while we develop new ideas for a stronger public university system of the future. It creates structure for a continuing, robust dialogue. Moreover, it serves as a tactical plan to turn strategy into action, delivering South Dakota a well-educated workforce and engaged citizens.

Brian L. Maher

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Educational Impact to South Dakota

The Board of Regents governs the six public universities and the two special schools. It works to advance the state of South Dakota through teaching, research, and service.

South Dakota's public universities include:
- Black Hills State University
- Dakota State University
- Northern State University
- South Dakota School of Mines and Technology
- South Dakota State University
- The University of South Dakota

South Dakota's special schools include:
- South Dakota School for the Deaf
- South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Public post-secondary education has a direct annual impact on the state of South Dakota. A recent Economic Impact Study of South Dakota's public universities resulted in the following findings[i]:

- **34,520 students served**
- **10,000 employees within the Regental system**
- **12,354 generated jobs**
- **550,000 volunteer hours valued at $3.8 million**
- **Education drives lower unemployment rates**
- **$2.1 billion combined economic impact**

Public post-secondary education is critical for the state of South Dakota. Improving upon the quality of education, student success, and degree attainment--as outlined in this strategic plan--will only make the state stronger.

SDBOR
SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD of REGENTS

Mission Statement

The Board of Regents' mission is to provide an excellent, efficient, accessible, equitable, and affordable public university and special schools system that improves South Dakota's overall educational attainment and research productivity, while enriching the intellectual, economic, civic, social, and cultural life of the state, its residents, and its communities.

Vision Statement

The public university and special schools' system will educate more individuals to higher levels to enhance state workforce development and will move more research into viable businesses to support state economic development.

Challenges and Opportunities

The Board of Regents' mission and vision begin to set the stage for the strategic plan. In order to identify accurate goals, the following challenges and opportunities are considered to create necessary change.

- High school graduates "will peak" modestly and *then decline by the mid-2020s.* As a result, competition for high school graduates in the region will increase, enhancing the need to enroll more non-traditional student populations, underserved populations as well as non-resident student populations.[i]

- Attracting and retaining non-resident students will be even more important in reducing workforce shortages and will require creative tuition and fee pricing policies.

- Creating opportunities for additional academic delivery models that offer enhanced educational quality will be critical for additional enrollments and an important strategy for affordability.

- Strategic investments in higher education's physical/technical infrastructure will be necessary to allow South Dakota to compete in the modern economy.

- Recruiting and retaining qualified faculty and staff will be essential due to shifts in workforce demographics and economic drivers.

- Workforce shortages will increase as skilled job growth exceeds the growth of available skilled workers.

- Increasing awareness and advocating on behalf of post-secondary education will be critical for student enrollment, recruiting and retaining talent.

- Engaging in discussions on brain drain and impact to the South Dakota workforce will be critical.

[i] WICHE Report (2020). Knocking at the college door: Projections of high school graduates. https://knocking.wiche.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/10/2020/12/Knocking-pdf-for-website.pdf

Strategic Focus

This strategic plan will begin in 2022 and conclude at the end of 2027. The strategic tenets and goals include: <u>Governance</u>, <u>Access and Affordability</u>, <u>Academic Excellence, Student Success and Educational Attainment</u>, <u>Workforce and Economic Development</u>, and <u>Financial Health and Competitiveness</u>.

    Goal 1: Governance
    Goal 2: Access and Affordability
    Goal 3: Academic Excellence, Student Success and Educational Attainment
    Goal 4: Workforce and Economic Development
    Goal 5: Financial Health and Competitiveness

To align system priorities in a meaningful way, the following foundational statements will be incorporated in the development of goals, priorities, objectives, and outcomes.

- South Dakota's workforce will add approximately 32,000 new jobs by 2030; of those, 38% will require a *need for bachelor's and more advanced degrees*[i].

- South Dakota's population *will need to be more highly-educated*[ii].

- South Dakota will require advanced levels of education to support the *knowledge-based economy*.

- South Dakotans will need *increased access* to continuing education opportunities to upgrade their credentials while remaining in the workforce.

- South Dakota will strive to work toward programming that will meet the need of the workforce, while *partnering with business and industry using high impact practices* to prepare our students for gainful employment.

- The South Dakota *economy will benefit from significant increases in university and associated research-derived commercialization* activities.

- South Dakota will be a *recognized national leader* in the use of system information technology to enhance its educational, economic, social, scientific, and political development.

[i] Emsi Report (2021). Degree and Workforce Gap Analysis.
[ii] Emsi Report (2021).

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Priorities, Objectives, Actions, Measurements Defined

The strategic focus of this strategic plan drives the goals as outlined in the next several pages. To achieve success, the goals each have a priority, objective(s), action(s), and a performance measurement. The regental staff will develop additional tactics to successfully operationalize. The terms used are defined as:

- <u>Strategic Priority</u> : the strategic initiative identified to achieve part or all of the goals.

- <u>Objective</u>: the measurable unit of the strategy in meeting the project or functional area identified in the strategic priority.

- <u>Actions</u>: the steps the Regents and their staff will implement to achieve the objectives.

- <u>Performance Measures</u>: the measurement (qualitative or quantitative) that will be employed to evaluate the success of the actions used to achieve the Strategic Priority.
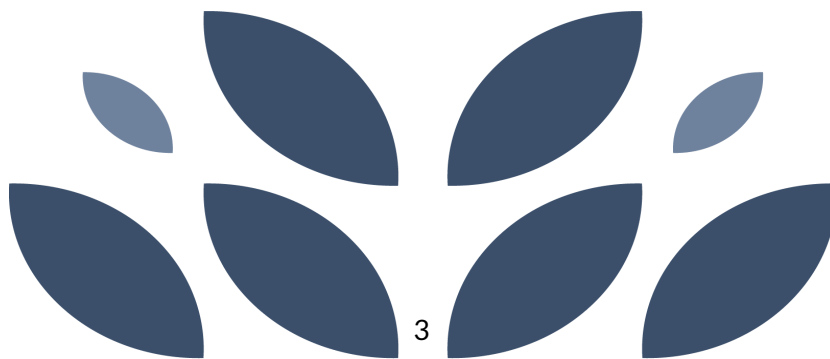
PLAN GOALS

Governance

Goal 1:

The Board of Regents shall **govern** the six public universities and two special schools to engage, advocate and ensure stewardship in post-secondary public education policy, resource utilization and overall Regental effectiveness.

Access and Affordability

Goal 2:

The Regental system is the largest public post-secondary education system in South Dakota. This system offers both undergraduate and graduate education. **Access** *to affordable* education is the cornerstones to ensuring South Dakotans attend a public post-secondary institution.

Academic Excellence Student Outcomes Educational Attainment

Goal 3:

South Dakota public universities and special schools shall focus on **student success** while providing a quality educational experience.

Workforce Development Economic Development

Goal 4:

South Dakota public universities shall create academic programming that responds to the changing educational and **workforce skills** needed to meet the demands through 2030; promote strategic engagement and investment designed to enhance and drive the state's long-term economy.

Financial Health Competitiveness

Goal 5:

South Dakota public universities and special schools shall continue to seek means for improving the **financial health,** efficiency and effectiveness, and overall **competitiveness** for the South Dakota public universities and special schools in the delivery of educational services.

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Goal 1: Governance

The Board of Regents shall govern the six public universities and two special schools to engage, advocate and ensure stewardship in post-secondary public education policy, resource utilization, and overall Regental effectiveness. To further this goal, the Board of Regents will encourage continuous improvement in planning and governance, stewardship, procedures and policies, and administrative processes that enable stakeholders to achieve shared strategic goals.

To ensure that the Regental system continues to enhance programming, compete nationally, and ensure financial stewardship, the Board of Regents supports the need to reinvest in updating mission statements, advocacy, and continuous improvement on behalf of the academic and administrative functions.

AUG 2022
DEC 2023

Mission

Step 1 - Discover definitions, defining characteristics. Report to the Board August 2022 BOR Meeting.

Step 2 - Research and identify common shared interests, unique qualities by campus. Report to the Board August 2023 Meeting.

Step 3 - Develop recommendations on enrollment strategies connected to tuition and fees. Report to the Board December 2023 BOR Meeting.

Step 4 - Engage an outreach campaign to the public on the unique missions for the campuses.

JAN 2022
DEC 2024

Communication Campaign

Step 1 - Rebrand the Board of Regents Logo. Report to the Board at its March 2022 BOR Meeting.

Step 2 - Enhance website. Report to the Board at its May and August 2022 BOR Meeting.

Step 3 - Develop and deploy enhanced dashboards, Fact Book by December 2022.

Step 4 - Establish annual goals for outreach to stakeholders.

JAN 2022
DEC 2027

Continuous Improvement (LEAN)

Step 1 - Identify two Lean process improvements annually or 10 within the five-year period.   Report to Board through a communication from the Executive Director.

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Goal 1: Governance Strategic Priorities

Mission Review and Revision

Objective: Develop a new Mission Framework over the next 24 months to be completed by December 2023.

Actions:
- Evaluate current BOR mission statements with stakeholders;
- Recommend revisions to increase strategic advantage of each university, and
- Report recommendations to the BOR over three Regental meetings.

Performance Measures:
- Complete Definitions and Characteristics by August 2022 BOR Meeting.
- Complete shared and unique qualities by August 2023 BOR Meeting.
- Complete BOR Policy by December 2023 BOR Meeting.

Educate/Advocate/Communicate

Objective: Improve upon and expand advocacy for public higher education over the next 36-48 months (January 2022 - December 2025).

Actions:
- Rebrand and redevelop website;
- Expand tools, medium, and approaches; and
- Develop an awareness campaign.

Performance Measures:
- The rebrand should be completed within six months and approved by March 2022.
- Website development completed by August 2022.
- Dashboards, Fact Book enhancements by December 2022.
- Annual goals will be defined for campaigns.

Continuous Improvement Review

Objective: Implement two Lean continuous improvement projects annually or a total of 10 over the next five years.

Actions:
- Identify two functional areas annually for a continuous improvement review.
- Create a team to assess the functional workflow and project.
- Implement the identified Lean process for increased efficiency and effectiveness.

Performance Measures:
- Annual goals to be established by the Executive Director as they relate to each Lean Project.
- A summary will be provided to the Board of Regents annually at its August BOR Meeting.

Rationale

Mission: During the SB55 Task Force, both the Academic and Administrative Committees recommended a review of the campus missions. The Board of Regents governs a unified higher education system in which its six universities each contribute in distinct ways. The academic recommendation was that the new mission framework should define the curriculum emphases of each institution to effectively regulate unnecessary academic program duplication and aid informed decision-making on low enrolled programs as requested within SB 55. In addition, having a unique institutional mission has further benefits. Revised mission statements should establish substantive differentiation in the service each university fulfills within the broader system mission to the state in academic programming, geographic areas served, and scope of research investments.

Educate/Advocate/Communicate: During the SB55 Task Force, the overall committee consensus was to increase advocacy around the value of higher education. The final report suggested the Board of Regents should broaden relationships with state officials, legislators, congressional representatives, workforce/industry leaders, K-12 community, technical colleges, public university home communities, and the public. The task force noted the importance of relationship building with these constituencies to achieve appropriate recognition for higher education's contributions to the state and equitable funding for each institution.

Continuous Improvement: Working together with the task force, the legislature and the universities, one of the goals incorporates continuous improvement through lean processes, and effective utilization of resources. During the BOR 2021 outreach sessions, SB55 committee dialogue, Regental meetings, and other means of communication, the Board of Regents identified that collaboration of programming, information technology solutions, policy and practices would further strengthen the system through effectiveness and efficiency. Therefore, utilizing a Lean process will further promote this collaboration.

Goal 2: Access and Affordability

The Regental system is the largest public post-secondary education system in South Dakota. This system offers both undergraduate and graduate education. Access to affordable education is the cornerstone to ensuring South Dakotans who desire to attend a public post-secondary institution can. The Board of Regents must prepare pathways for enrollment efforts to ensure this strategic plan and the strategies identified within it are successful.

Pathways selected to achieve this strategic goal include the following: access through a competitive tuition and fee model; education on the state-wide needs-based scholarship and FAFSA completion initiatives; strategic enrollment initiatives to attract traditional high school students, adult learners, and graduate students; and a policy review and recommendation to facilitate seamless transfer into a Regental university. Partnerships will be essential for success around seamless transfer. Together efforts focusing on traditional students, underserved populations, non-traditional populations, and transfer students will be a critical building block to ensuring that every qualified South Dakotan can access public post-secondary education.

JAN 2022
DEC 2023

FAFSA Completion Intiative

Step 1 - Develop and implement a software platform for FAFSA reporting, January 2022
Step 2 - Implement a pilot with participating high schools, January 2022-May 2022.

Step 3 - Implement a state-wide project with participating high schools for FAFSA Completion Awareness, September 2022.

Step 4 - Report to the Board regularly on status of initiatives.

JAN 2022
DEC 2027

Enrollment Initiative

Step 1 - Create think-tanks for strategic enrollment strategies.
Step 2 - Work with South Dakota high schools partnering on the value of post-secondary education, dual enrollment campaigns, and other collaborative initiatives.
Step 3 - Review statistics annually and initiate tactics to enhance the goal outlined in the plan.
Step 4 - Report to the Board regularly on status of initiatives.

JAN 2022
DEC 2027

Transfer Initiative

Step 1 - Revise policies on transfer initiatives, December 2022.
Step 2 - Create state-wide partnerships for transfer opportunities.
Step 3 - Review statistics annually and initiate tactics to enhance the goal of 5% growth.
Step 4 - Report to the Board regularly on status of initiatives.

JAN 2022
DEC 2024

Tuition and Fees

Step 1 - Analyze new tuition and fee models, August 2024.
Step 2 - Engage in a system-wide collaboration on Open Educational Resources (OER) options.
Step 3 - Report to the Board regularly on status of initiatives.

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Goal 2: Access and Affordability - Enrollment Initiatives Strategic Priorities (Part 1)

FAFSA Completion Initiatives

Objective: Increase FAFSA applications throughout the state of South Dakota by 5% annually.

Actions:
- Review the FAFSA Tracker and establish goals annually.
- Partner with the SD Department of Education, SD Educational Access Foundation, high schools, and Mapping Your Future.
- Implement the FAFSA Completion Portal state-wide.

Performance Measures:
- Measure total numbers of the prior year FAFSA Application to the current FAFSA Application period.
- Utilize the FAFSA Tracker with Mapping Your Future.

Student Enrollment

Objective: Increase SD high school enrollments by 5% over the established baseline.

Actions:
- Create initiatives to further develop and promote strategic enrollment campaigns, think-tanks, practices, and policies.
- Review percentage change annually and identify tasks to further promote accomplishment of the enrollment goals.
- Initiate creative pathways increase awareness/value of post-secondary education.

Performance Measures:
- Measurement should be completed annually and at the end of the five years for the cumulative total goal.
- Annual outcomes will be measured throughout the period to evaluate the overall five-year goal and tasks assigned.

Seamless Transfer Initiative

Objective: Increase transfer enrollment by 5% through improved access to bachelor's degree programs for students with earned credits from technical and community colleges.

Actions:
- Revise transfer policies and guidelines to be more student-centered.
- Evaluate outcomes each year and reassess the policies and guidelines. Make changes as necessary to facilitate objectives.
- Identify strategic partnership opportunities with the Board of Technical Education to improve traditional transfer and reverse transfer in South Dakota.

Performance Measures:
- Measure transfer enrollments as of Fall Census and Spring Census annually.
- Measure total count at the end of the five-year period.

Rationale

FAFSA: In the 2020 South Dakota Legislature, a bill was supported and passed for a new needs-based scholarship. This is a critical step toward meeting the financial needs of South Dakotans. The Board of Regents received funding to develop and implement a FAFSA Completion Portal and educational campaign. The overall goals of these grants were to develop the technology, increase awareness of FAFSA, and create partnerships with selected school districts to implement a pilot for the FAFSA Completion Portal. The FAFSA Completion Portal will provide local school districts with the data tools necessary to document students that have or have not completed their FAFSA.

Student Enrollment: Given that the state of South Dakota passed the Freedom Scholarship and private funding of the FIRST Premier Scholarships, there is momentum to increase access to prospective students from low-income families. In addition, with the FAFSA Portal and communication campaign, South Dakota will have tools to assist in growing enrollments from the traditional high school student population. While this initiative will focus on the traditional population special focus should also go toward increasing enrollments from student populations who don't typically attended a South Dakota post-secondary institution. This includes underserved traditional student populations, and those traditional student populations that would otherwise attend out-of-state colleges and universities.

Seamless Transfer: The Board of Regents must revise policies on transfer to create clear, efficient, student-centered pathways that honor prior successful college coursework and allow flexibility for students who wish to complete a bachelor's degree. Current policies, particularly those surrounding in-state technical college credits, should be simplified and revised. The 2020 agreement on articulated general education between the Board of Technical Education and Board of Regents should be reflected in policy and used as a model for future collaboration. Articulation agreements must be reviewed, revised, and renewed to improve seamless transfer. Additionally, options should be available for those who complete an associate degree but wish to pursue a different major or attend a different Regental university than the one articulated.

Goal 2: Access and Affordability - Cost of Attendance Strategic Priorities (Part 2)

Tuition and Fee Cost Model

Objective: Analyze new tuition and fee model(s) based on a competitive market comparison, student access, student demographic, and population needs by Fall of 2024.

Actions:
- Evaluate current BOR tuition and fee structure with stakeholders.
- Recommend revisions to increase strategic enrollment impact to the Tuition and Fee model.
- Report recommendations to the BOR.

Performance Measures:
- Review a Tuition and Fee proposal by August 2022 with BOR.
- Review Recommendation to implement new Policy by April 2023.

Cost Reduction Course Content

Objective: Engage in a system-wide collaboration and grant opportunity for funding to incorporate open educational resources/content (OER).

Actions:
- Create a system coalition for OER content including faculty, library and bookstore stakeholders.
- Explore ideas to engage faculty momentum in OER adoption.
- Research and apply for OER grant opportunities.

Performance Measures:
- Meet quarterly with coalition.
- Document grant opportunity received for OER annually and over the five-year period.
- Tasks assigned will be measured throughout the period to evaluates accomplishment of the five-year goal.

Rationale

Tuition and Fees: The Board of Regents aspires to be regionally competitive and to ensure tuition and fees are not creating undue obstacles for students. The Average Net Price, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, is defined as the "average yearly price charged to first-time, full-time undergraduate students receiving student aid at an institution after deducting student aid" this is the "sticker price" which provides students and families on the cost of attendance[i].

By working to keep tuition, fees, and other expenses as low as possible, the university system advances several important goals, such as improving college access for students of all income levels, reducing the long-term debt of student loan borrowers, and helping South Dakota's institutions compete for both in-state and out-of-state students. Combined, these goals are of tremendous importance to the state's long-term economic prosperity.

Open Educational Resources: Open Educational Resources (OER) provides a mechanism to assist in reducing the cost of attendance for students by reducing the overall costs of course content. This is particularly of interest to students looking for more affordable course content. Engaging faculty and students will create a pathway to support toward OER materials.

[i] National Center for Education Statistics. Average institutional net price FAQs. https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/report-your-data/faq-average-net-price

Comprehensive Regional Colleges

Black Hills State University

Pictured to the left and nestled in the beautiful Black Hills of South Dakota, BHSU has an emphasis on teacher education, science, business, and humanities.

Economic Impact:
- $135.9 Million Impact
- 1,019 Jobs
- $6.2 Million Taxes

Student Statistics:
- 3,858 Students
- 616 Graduates Annually
- 74.2% Local SD Students
- 21% First Generation

Academic Statistics:
- 56 Undergraduate Programs
- 7 Graduate Programs
- 24 Certificate Programs

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Northern State University

Pictured below, NSU is one of the comprehensive regional campuses with an emphasis on teacher education, business and the arts and sciences.
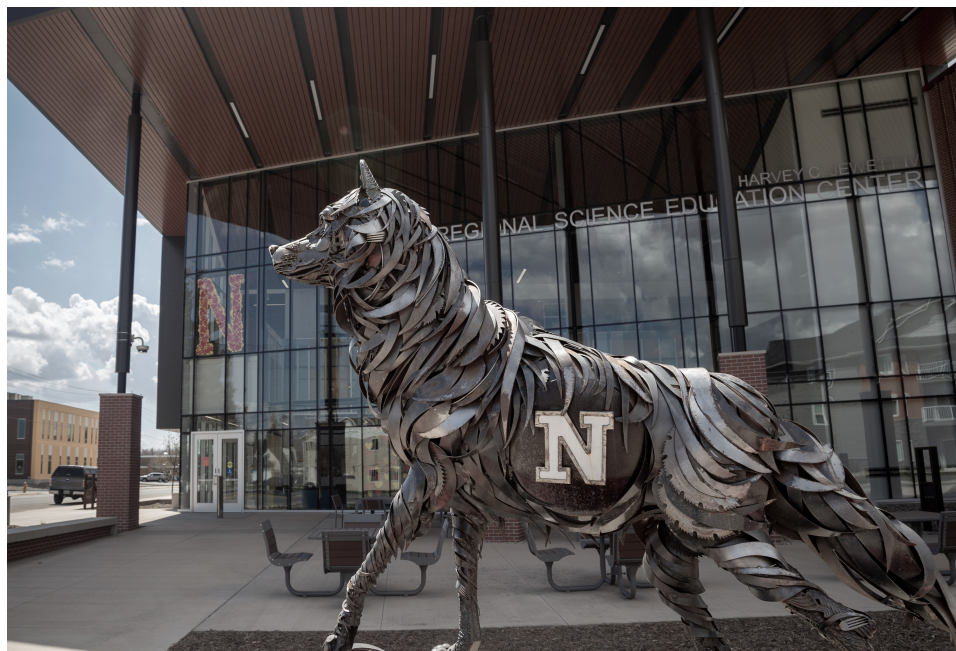
Economic Impact:
- $180.7 Million Impact
- 1,008 Jobs
- $6.8 Million Taxes

Student Statistics:
- 3,427 Students
- 374 Graduates Annually
- 78% Local SD Students
- 35% First Generation

Academic Statistics:
- 55 Undergraduate Programs
- 9 Graduate Programs
- 23 Certificate Programs

Goal 3:

Academic Excellence, Student Outcomes, Educational Attainment

Successful student outcomes will be facilitated when student learning outcomes, academic curriculum, and assessments are aligned to nationally recognized standards. National standards can be measured by understanding accreditation for higher education institutions. The Regental universities are accredited through the Higher Learning Commission (individually) and academic programs may have additional specialized accreditation. Specialized accreditation is highly desired to ensure that graduates of highly technical and professional fields meet outcomes required by the university, the state, and industry.

Student success includes academic success such as retention and grade point average, it also includes financial stability and social well-being. A balanced experienced helps to ensure students succeed in their educational attainment goals, which is essential to the Board of Regents. Universities employ many strategies locally to include advising, pathways, mentoring, co-curricular activities, etc. The system office can particularly assist in areas around student mental health and financial aid needs-based campaigns. The result of these strategies supports degree completion.

In the spring of 2021, the Board of Regents conferred 4,723 undergraduate degrees and 1,644 graduate degrees. The average undergraduate four-year completion rate for students monitored through their home campus in FY21 was 35.6%; the national average was 40.6%. The system average four-year undergraduate completion rate for a student starting at one Regental university and completing at another was 37%. When comparing undergraduate completion rates to that of the United States average, SD lags approximately 3% behind. Improving the completion rate is particularly urgent, as the projected need in South Dakota workers with a bachelor's degree or higher is anticipated to be 38% higher by 2030.

JAN 2022
DEC 2027

Academic Excellence

Step 1 - Prioritize new program proposals requiring specialized accreditation.

Step 2 - Prioritize new program proposals with high-impact practices and workforce alignment.

Step 3 - Decrease the number of low productivity programs improving resources for high-demand programs.

Step 4 - Report to the Board at its December BOR Meeting.

JAN 2022
DEC 2027

Student Outcomes

Step 1 - Increase advocacy around student mental health.

Step 2 - Increase visibility of support for extended mental health services.

Step 3 - Foster solutions for advising, co-curricular support, student planning, and academic support models.

Step 4 - Initiate collaborative partnerships for STEM pathways.

Step 5 - Report to the Board at its December BOR Meeting.

JAN 2022
DEC 2027

Educational Attainment

Step 1 - Increase completion at home campus through advising, curriculum scheduling, expending modalities, etc.

Step 2 - Increase completion within Regental system through seamless transfer, targeted campaigns and communications.

Step 3 - Report to the Board at its June BOR Meeting.

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Goal 3: Academic Excellence Strategic Priorities (Part 1)

Sustainable Academic Portfolio

Objective: Increase by 10% accredited programs (highly technical and professional fields).

Actions:

- Prioritize new program proposals that require specialized accreditation, and support existing programs to seek specialized accreditation where possible.

- Review each year's percentage change and identify tasks associated to further promote accomplishment of the strategy.

Performance Measures:
Government Operations and Audit Committee (GOAC): Academic Success - Professional Licensure and Academic Quality through Accreditation Reporting.

Sustainable Academic Portfolio

Objective: Increase the percentage of program proposals containing High Impact Practices from 60% to 70% at the undergraduate level.

Actions:

- Require new program proposals to identify high impact practices that will be used in new programs, and prioritize the approval of new programs that robustly implement high impact practices.

- Review each year's percentage change and identify tasks associated to further promote accomplishment of the strategy.

Performance Measures:
Government Operations and Audit Committee (GOAC): Academic Success - High Impact Proposals Reporting.

Sustainable Academic Portfolio

Objective: Enhance resources for mission critical and high demand programs.

Actions:

- Implement new policy and reporting to measure productivity.

- Review each year's percentage change and identify tasks associated to further promote accomplishment of the strategy.

Performance Measures:
Internal measurement (new policy will need time to operationalize results).

Rationale

Academic Portfolio: University accreditation is critical to ensure students receive a quality educational experience. Accreditation is a peer-driven, self-regulatory quality assurance[i] process. To support increased rigor applied to programming and new program creation, the desire to increase the number of programs with specialized accreditation will be a priority. Students who graduate from a university with specialized accreditation often gain eligibility for licensure exams, and specialized accreditation enhances the reputation of the university.

The SB55 Committee on Academics identified the need to not only streamline the workflow of programming, but also to ensure university academic portfolios contain vital programs that prepare students. High impact practices (HIP)[ii],[iii] are research-based instructional strategies that foster student engagement, enhance learning, and nurture skills like critical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making. Examples of HIP include: first-year seminars, learning communities, writing-intensive courses, service learning, internships, capstone projects, undergraduate research, collaborative assignments, etc. As programming is tightly coupled to the Board of Regents Workforce and Economic Development Goal, having programming and curriculum designed to meet the needs for the workforce will further facilitate meeting those objectives.

SB55 Committee on Academics also recommended a change in how the system manages low enrolled programs by recommending policies for new program evaluation procedures[iv]. The new policy that was recommended will move toward best practices and an evaluation cycle.

[i] Higher Learning Commission. Guiding Values. Retrieved from https://www.hlcommission.org/Publications/guiding-values.html
[ii] Kuh, George D., and O'Donnell, Ken (2013). Ensuring quality & taking high-impact practices to scale. Association of American Colleges & Universities: Washington, DC. Retrieved from https://www.aacu.org/sites/default/files/files/LEAP/HIP_tables.pdf.
[iii] Kuh, George D. (2008). High-Impact Practices: What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter. Association of American Colleges and Universities, 14(3), 28-29).
[iv] South Dakota Board of Regents (2021). Senate Bill 55 Task Force Recommended Policy Revision: BOR Policy 2:34 Academic Program Evaluation (New Policy) (First Reading). Retrieved from https://www.sdbor.edu/the-board/agendaitems/2014AgendaItems/2021%20Agenda%20Items/October21/6_D2_BOR1021.pdf

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Goal 3: Student Outcomes
Strategic Priorities (Part 2)

Student Academic Success

Objective: Increase advocacy around academic support initiatives to further engage students in their academic success.

Actions:
- Foster solutions for advising, co-curricular support, student planning, and academic support models.

- Initiate collaborative partnerships for STEM pathways.

Performance Measures:
- Measure success in solutions achieved through academic support models.

- Measure retention of full-time, first-time students from Fall to Fall.

Student Well-Being

Objective: Increase advocacy around student mental health.

Actions:
- Explore funding initiatives for student mental health.

- Increase visibility of support for available mental health services.

Performance Measures:
- Measure the number of advocacy meetings held or attended by BOR staff or representatives.

- Measure funding allocation awarding if provided through grants, federal funding, state funding, etc. if available.

Rationale

Student Academic Success and Well-Being: SB55 Committee on Administration recommended that the university system should work with the State of South Dakota for additional American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to implement supplemental Student Tele-Mental Health for the students of the Regental system (BHSU, DSU, NSU, SDSMT, SDSU and USD)[i].

With the onset of the pandemic (COVID-19), the need for student mental health services has increased. In addition, there is a need to educate faculty and staff on the signs of mental health needs. Prior to COVID-19, a New York Times article stated that over 60% of students reported having "overwhelming anxiety"[ii]. Inside Higher Education provided that a quarter of those surveyed during the COVID-19 crisis had considered suicide[iii].

When researching student mental health needs, it was found that the University of Georgia System[iv] had implemented a supplemental package as they navigated the COVID-19 pandemic. With the findings in the research and the fact that other systems have pursued additional mental health funding, the SB55 Committee on Administration recommended that SDBOR work to create a temporary tele-mental health package for students providing telehealth and additional mental health awareness and education.

In addition to providing student support services, the Board of Regents will pursue academic support initiatives to facilitate student success including student planning, academic support, completion strategies, retention, transfer, etc.

[i] South Dakota Board of Regents (2020). Final Senate Bill 55 Task Force Report and Recommendations. https://www.sdbor.edu/the-board/agendaitems/2014AgendaItems/2021%20Agenda%20Items/October21/3_I_BOR1021.pdf
[ii] Wolverton, Brad (2019). As students struggle with stress and depression, colleges act as counselors. New York Times. Retrieved from https://www.nytimes.com/2019/02/21/education/learning/mental-health-counseling-on-campus.html
[iii] Anderson, Greta (2020). Mental health needs rise with pandemic. Inside Higher Education. Retrieved from https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/09/11/students-great-need-mental-health-support-during-pandemic.
[iv] University System of Georgia (2020). USG significantly expands access to student mental health support services. Retrieved from https://www.usg.edu/news/release/usg_significantly_expands_access_to_student_mental_health_support_services

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Goal 3: Educational Attainment Strategic Priorities (Part 3)

Completion by Cohort (Home University)

Objective:
- Increase the percentage of students who complete their undergraduate program within four-years from 35.6% to 40.6% at the home (cohort) campus.
- Increase the percentage of students who complete their undergraduate program within six-years from 55.4% to 60.4% at the home (cohort) campus.
- Expand the type of instructional methodologies/ modalities to meet the demand of students.

Actions:
- Utilize the system advising and academic affairs team to consider policies and guidelines on student success models.
- Review academic course rotations, course enrollment, and section offering to determine if they meet all student population needs (traditional and non-traditional student populations).
- Understand new modalities and programming to further promote working professionals/adult learners' completion goals.
- Recommend changes as needed to meet objectives.

Performance Measures:
- Government Operations and Audit Committee (GOAC) Reporting

Completion by Regental System (Transferability)

Objective:
- Increase the percentage of students who complete their undergraduate program within four-years from 37% to 42% within the system.
- Increase the percentage of students who complete their undergraduate program within six-years from 59% to 64% within the system.
- Initiate a review to ensure seamless internal Regental student transfers from home campus to another within the system.
- Increase completion for students who attended a Regental university but stopped out prior to degree attainment.

Actions:
- Evaluate system and university policies on transfer; expand collaborative programs between system universities; and ensure common courses are used where possible.
- Work closely with leadership at the universities to identify South Dakota students who have earned credits from a Regental university but no degree.
- Implement a communication campaign for stopped-out students to achieve educational attainment.

Performance Measures:
- Government Operations and Audit Committee (GOAC) Reporting

Rationale

Educational Attainment: The SB55 Committee on Academics recommended that the Regental system implement a new policy and practice around course enrollment management[i]. The need to incorporate a more holistic policy on course rotation, academic capacity, and enrollment is essential for a quality experience. It is a priority to manage the rotation to ensure students can graduate in four years. Effective planning can be measured through completion statistics. While students may stop-out for various reasons, trying to promote completion in four-years leads to positive student outcomes and their educational attainment.

Our goal is to support degree attainment by our Regental students within their cohort/home campus where possible. When students stop-out or determine to transfer to another Regental university, the goal shall including a seamless transfer within in the Regental system.

Where students do not complete within six years, a review will be conducted to identify the following options for those students within the Regental system: seamless transfer from one to another university for completion, review of credit hours for completion at the associate degree, or identify another pathway for completion.

[i] South Dakota Board of Regents (2021). Senate Bill 55 Task Force Recommended Policy Revision: BOR Policy 2:35 Course Enrollment Management (New Policy) (First Reading). https://www.sdbor.edu/the-board/agendaitems/2014AgendaItems/2021%20Agenda%20Items/October21/6_D3_BOR1021.pdf

Goal 4:
Workforce and Economic Development

Public post-secondary higher education serves as a critical pipeline for the workforce locally in South Dakota as well as nationally and globally. Being recognized as a leader through effective academic programming, aligning students to the workforce, and realizing competencies and outcomes for students shall be paramount to the Board of Regents. That is why every South Dakota public university shall create academic programming that responds to the changing educational and workforce skills needed to meet the demands through 2030 and ensure engagement designed to enhance the state's long-term economy.

Another economic driver for South Dakota includes research and development. For the Regental system in FY19, there was over $168 million in research impact with over 974 jobs supported and sustained.

**JAN 2022
DEC 2027**

Workforce Alignment

Step 1 - Align new or enhanced undergraduate programs to the South Dakota and national workforce.

Step 2 - Utilize the Degree and Workforce Gap Analysis and national research while working with business and industry.

Step 3 - Place a special emphasis on STEM, Teacher Education, Nursing and Healthcare, and Business undergraduate completion.

**JAN 2022
DEC 2024**

Business and Industry Partnerships

Step 1 - Increase advocacy with local and regional business and industry.

Step 2 - Increase academic programming and strategic partnerships with business and industry.

Step 3 - Establish annual goals for outreach to stakeholders.

**JAN 2022
DEC 2027**

Student Placement Opportunities

Step 1 - Work with state-wide coalition to decrease the loss of South Dakota graduates.

Step 2 - Increase awareness of placement needs, and opportunities within South Dakota for graduates.

**JAN 2022
DEC 2027**

Research and Development

Step 1 - Increase advocacy across the state of South Dakota to increase public/private partnerships.

Step 2 - Promote strategic investments in critical need areas to fuel South Dakota's knowledge based economy.

Goal 4: Academic Strategic Priorities (Part 1)

Workforce Alignment

Objective:
- Align new or enhanced undergraduate programming to the South Dakota and national workforce needs utilizing the Degree and Workforce Gap Analysis, national research, and working with regional private partners.
- Focus on increasing STEM graduates to 32.8%, Teacher Education graduates to 11.3%, Nursing graduates to 13%, Healthcare to 9.5% and Business to 11.9%.

Actions:
- Initiate and implement a policy, practice that monitors new program requests.
- Identify a goal with market demand data to support a percentage increase toward workforce initiatives.
- Conduct a Gap Analysis every 3-5 years

Performance Measures:
- Government Operations and Audit Committee (GOAC) Performance Measures - STEM, Nursing, Healthcare, and Business Reporting

Establish Partnerships

Objective: Increase advocacy for workforce needs through a partnership with local and regional businesses and industries. Increase partnerships with the state of South Dakota (DOE, DLR, BOTE, Governor's Office).
- Increase academic programming and strategic partnerships to include innovative internships, tuition assistance, academic program support/sponsorship, instructional support, scholarships, sponsored research including graduate assistantships, etc.

Actions:
- Implement outreach campaigns to establish networks for workforce engagement toward advocacy.
- Complete an updated Gap Analysis within 3-5 years.
- Identify goals to better connect academic programming with business and industry need.

Performance Measures:
- Completion of quarterly meetings with state government stakeholders.
- Regional business stakeholder meetings held semi-annually.
- Gap Analysis completed by 2025.

Student Placement Opportunities

Objective: Increase the number of graduates remaining in South Dakota:
- increasing statewide and regional placement opportunities for student graduates here in South Dakota, and
- engaging in an awareness campaign on the needs for South Dakota and increasing opportunities to continue in South Dakota.

Actions:
- Identify additional strategies with South Dakota business and industry for internships, on-boarding careers, and financial incentives that lead to employment (highly technical and professional fields).
- Work with campuses on education campaigns on opportunities such as career ladders, induction and mentoring programs, salary enhancement, etc.
- Implement a statewide coalition on graduate retention in South Dakota.

Performance Measures:
- Coalition created by the end of June 2022.
- Communication campaign materials by end of 2022.
- Outreach meetings four times a year with various stakeholders beginning January 2023 annually through 2027.

Rationale

Workforce Alignment: SB55 Committee on Academics recommended that the Board of Regents use the data provided in the program gap analysis to inform decisions on academic program duplication within the system (i.e., academic programs offered at more than one institution). Specifically, according to the SB55 recommendation, "the information provided in the academic program gap analysis should become a central variable in decisions on proposals for new academic programs....and...identify high demand occupations and related academic fields"[i]. By implementing the gap analysis, the academic programming will be more tightly coupled to the South Dakota workforce needs. Universities shall also review their regional and national market workforce needs. Universities may utilize student demand in addition to the gap analysis.

Partnerships: SB55 recommended that the Board of Regents pursue discussions with multiple stakeholders regarding workforce initiatives. Specifically[ii], "The program demand gap analysis should be shared with other stakeholders to aid in promoting workforce development within the state. This includes but is not limited to the state legislature, state agencies, Governor's Office of Economic Development, and regional workforce organizations. Moreover, the Board of Regents should consider partnership with the state technical colleges on future editions of the program demand gap analysis to produce an integrated and comprehensive view of public higher education's relationship to the state workforce". With this recommendation, the Board of Regents has shared with multiple stakeholders the Degree and Workforce Gap Analysis and has started to collaborate with state agencies on partnerships. The next viable step is to foster partnerships with local business and industry. This report is only valid for a short period of time, and the SB55 Committee on Academics supported this be updated every three to five years.

Student Placement: SB55 recommended that the Board of Regents pursue discussions with multiple stakeholders regarding workforce initiatives. The goal to educational attainment should also include pathways to onboarding of careers. By partnering with a workforce coalition there may be additional synergies that can be pursued.

[i] South Dakota Board of Regents (2020). Final Senate Bill 55 Task Force Report and Recommendations. https://www.sdbor.edu/the-board/agendaitems/2014AgendaItems/2021%20Agenda%20Items/October21/3_I_BOR1021.pdf
[ii] South Dakota Board of Regents (2020). Final Senate Bill 55 Task Force Report and Recommendations. https://www.sdbor.edu/the-board/agendaitems/2014AgendaItems/2021%20Agenda%20Items/October21/3_I_BOR1021.pdf

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Goal 4: Research
Strategic Priorities (Part 2)

Research and Development

Objective:
- Increase advocacy across the state of South Dakota to increase public/private partnerships in research-based efforts.

- Promote strategic investment(s) in critical research and development areas to fuel South Dakota's knowledge-based economy.

Actions:
- Identify research/business think-tanks.

- Support the universities through an educational campaign for private/public partnerships.

- Deploy resources to support investment in research and development areas with strategic opportunity for South Dakota.

Performance Measures:
- Think-tank creation by December 2023.

- Conduct four meetings annually with different private and public entities on the value of research.

Rationale

Research and Development: The Council of Presidents and Superintendents and the Board of Regents support the need to increase economic development through the pursuit of research. SD Mines, SDSU and USD are heavily engaged in research activity. DSU is also currently pursuing contracting opportunities that have engaged it in the economic engine of research. By actively participating in the conversation of research and the impact to South Dakota awareness, advocacy will bring forth change. According to the SDBOR Economic Impact Study (2021), research has already transformed SD by the receipt of $86.2 million in federal awards, $17.4 million in state awards, $3.2 million in private awards, and $6.8 million in other awards.[i]

[i] South Dakota Board of Regents (2021). Economic Impact Study. https://www.sdbor.edu/mediapubs/publications/EconomicImpact21_w.pdf

Specialty Universities

South Dakota Mines

Pictured above, SD Mines is an engineering and science focused university.

Economic Impact:
- $131.4 Million Impact
- 916 Jobs
- $4.3 Million Taxes

Student Statistics:
- 2,529 Students
- 548 Graduates Annually
- 44.4% Local SD Students

Academic Statistics:
- 22 Undergraduate Programs
- 25 Graduate Programs
- 12 Certificate Programs

- -

Dakota State University

Pictured below, DSU is a technology focused university.

Economic Impact:
- $127.4 Million Impact
- 908 Jobs
- $5.7 Million Taxes

Student Statistics:
- 3,268 Students
- 436 Graduates Annually
- 65.4% Local SD Students
- 40.7% First Generation

Academic Statistics:
- 38 Undergraduate Programs
- 10 Graduate Programs
- 29 Certificate Programs

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Goal 5:
Financial Health, Competitiveness

The affordability and fiscal health of a public post-secondary institution balance on a number of factors, including student debt, administrative and academic services, information and technological advancements, information security, and economic competitiveness. Therefore, maximizing resources across the Regental system is essential not only for students and employees but also for the entire state of South Dakota. To meet its many demands, the Regents will strive to ensure the universities maintain a healthy Composite Financial Index per university accreditation guidelines, that the tuition and fee structure is competitive, and that advancements in technology are managed to ensure 'student-centered system' principles are held.

Therefore, South Dakota public universities and special schools shall continue to seek means for improving the financial health, efficiency and effectiveness, and overall competitiveness for the South Dakota public universities and special schools in the delivery of educational services.

JAN 2022
DEC 2027

Financial Health

Step 1 - Analyze the Composite Financial Indicator, annually.

Step 2 - Analyze the Auxiliary Systems Coverage Ratio, annually.

Step 3 - Report to the Board through the Executive Director during meetings, reporting, and communications on strategy outcomes.

JAN 2022
DEC 2027

Competitive Average Net Price

Step 1 - Increase the position of the Regental system to that of its regional competitors.

Step 2 - Work toward a competitive tuition and fee model and implement strategies to reduce the default rate by students.

Step 3 - Report to the Board through the Executive Director during meetings, reporting, and communications on strategy outcomes.

JAN 2022
DEC 2023

Technological Advancements

Step 1 - Implement a system Regental policy on interoperability.

Step 2 - Implement an operational Lean process for requisition of technology.

Step 3 - Report to the Board through the Executive Director during meetings, reporting, and communications on strategy outcomes.

Goal 5: Financial Health/Competitiveness Strategic Priorities

Financial Health

Objective:
- The Regental universities shall have a Composite Financial Index (CFI) at or above 3.0 annually.
- The Regental universities shall have an Auxiliary Systems Coverage Ratio greater than 1.2 annually.
- The Regental universities and system office will implement strategies to increase maintenance and repair awareness of system needs.

Actions:
- The System VP of Finance and Administration will measure the financial health of a university sharing with the Board of Regents during its regular meetings.
- Recommend actions for resolution with a campus if the rating is below satisfactory.
- Increase outreach to stakeholders on maintenance and repair.

Performance Measures:
- Government Operations and Audit Committee (GOAC): Financial Health and Competitiveness – Auxiliary Systems Coverage Ratio Reporting.

Competitive Average Net Price

Objective:
- Increase SDBOR competitiveness by analyzing and implementing strategies to increase regional competitiveness (move from seventh to fifth in the regional marketplace).
- Decrease the average default rate for federal student loans to less than 5.2% over the next five-year period, ending in 2027.

Actions:
- Review the regional marketplace to determine competitiveness of the surrounding tuition and fee costs annually.
- Update the Fact Book with the annual costs of tuition and fees in comparison with the surrounding states.
- Recommend changes to practice as warranted from regional review of the tuition and fee comparisons.
- Work in coordination with goal 4, partner on placement opportunities for SDBOR graduates.

Performance Measures:
- Government Operations and Audit Committee (GOAC): Financial Health and Competitiveness – Average Net Price
- Government Operations and Audit Committee (GOAC): Financial Health and Competitiveness – Reduction Student Debt

Technological Advancements

Objective: Increase system leveraging of technological advancements by:
- implementing a governance policy, and
- utilizing the Lean improvement process to implement a requisition practice.

Actions:
- Implement a governance policy on interoperability of technology.
- Implement an operational process and practice for software and technical solutions shared across the system.

Performance Measures:
- Complete policy by December 2023.
- Complete Lean implementation of the operational process by July 2023.

Rationale

Financial Health: The Composite Financial Index (CFI) reflects a picture of the financial health of the institution at a point in time. The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) uses a standard set of ratios as part of accreditation reviews as well as for on-going oversight. The CFI is built with the values of its four component ratios: Primary Reserve, Net Operating Revenue, Return on Net Assets, and Viability Ratio. Once each of the four ratios are calculated, further weighting is conducted to measure the relative strength of the score and its importance in the composite score. The CFI combines the four core ratios identified above into a single score. The combination, using a prescribed weighting plan, allows a weakness or strength in one ratio to be offset by another ratio result. This ratio provides the financial health outlook for each campus and is monitored by the Board of Regents. In addition, the Auxiliary Systems Coverage ratio is required by bonding to be above 1.2. Therefore, as this is a requirement, it is essential to be evaluated annually.

Average Net Price: The Board of Regents aspires to be regionally competitive to ensure tuition and fees are not creating undue obstacles. The Average Net Price, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, is defined as the "average yearly price charged to first-time, full-time undergraduate students receiving student aid at an institution after deducting student aid" …this is the "sticker price" which provides students and families the cost of attendance[i]. By working to keep tuition, fees, and other expenses as low as possible, the university system advances several important goals, such as improving college access for students of all income levels, reducing the long-term debt of student loan borrowers, and helping South Dakota's institutions compete for both in-state and out-of-state students. Combined, these goals are of tremendous importance to the state's long-term economic prosperity.

Technological Advancements: The SB55 Committee on Administration recommended all technological solutions, where appropriate, shall be managed centrally[ii]. The Board of Regents at its June 2020 meeting further communicated the role of system technological solutions. The Board of Regents approved and further substantiated the need to foster system tools with its approval of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) solution.

[i] National Center for Education Statistics. Average institutional net price FAQs. https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/report-your-data/faq-average-net-price
[ii] South Dakota Board of Regents (2021). Senate Bill 55 Task Force Recommended Policy Revision: BOR Policy 2:23 New Programs, Program Modifications, Curricular Requests, and Inactivation/Termination Management (New Policy) (First Reading). https://www.sdbor.edu/the-board/agendaitems/2014AgendaItems/2021%20Agenda%20Items/October21/6_D1_BOR1021.pdf

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Conclusions

This plan summarizes some of the work that the Board of Regents will focus on over the next few of years. This document is a compilation of work from the Board of Regents, Senate Bill 55 Task Force, discussions during system outreach meetings, topics of consideration by academic and finance leadership as well as presidential feedback.

> "Our public universities are working as one to serve the education and workforce needs of South Dakota. Our regental system serves the distinctive needs of our students and demands of industry while being careful stewards of the state's dollars."
>
> Dr. Brian L. Maher
> Executive Director & CEO
> SD Board of Regents

Guide

This document serves as a guideline and directional charge for the Board of Regents. The Board will continue down the path of researching and implementing appropriate recommendations from Senate Bill 55 Task Force, the needs identified by the Regents and the Council of Presidents and Superintendents, feedback from the students and employees, and working cooperatively with stakeholders throughout the state of South Dakota. This document may change and grow with continual feedback.

Employee Excellence

The Board will continue to breathe life into this document to strategize on the future of higher education in South Dakota. The employees (staff, faculty, and administration) of this system continue to drive excellence, strive to foster student engagement, and deliver a top-notch educational system. These great attributes endure to push this educational university and special school system toward continued national levels.

Student Engagement

Students engaged through their South Dakota Student Federation continue to provide feedback and will be another mechanism for which communication channels flow. Students may work directly through their campus on any of the strategies and goals outlined. Student feedback via the presidents should flow to the executive director at the Board of Regents.

Research Universities

The University of South Dakota

Pictured above, USD has the only state medical and law school.

Economic Impact:
- $487.9 Million Impact
- 3,368 Jobs
- $18.7 Million Taxes

Student Statistics:
- 9,920 Students
- 2,145 Graduates Annually
- 67.9% Local SD Students
- 12.6% First Generation

Academic Statistics:
- 97 Undergraduate Programs
- 82 Graduate Programs
- 50 Certificate Programs

Research Universities

South Dakota State University

Pictured below, SDSU is the land grant university.

Economic Impact:
- $936.3 Million Impact
- 4,848 Jobs
- $29.3 Million Taxes

Student Statistics:
- 11,518 Students
- 2,596 Graduates Annually
- 56.3% Local SD Students
- 18.7% First Generation

Academic Statistics:
- 118 Undergraduate Programs
- 94 Graduate Programs
- 35 Certificate Programs

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