

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Academic and Student Affairs

AGENDA ITEM: 6 – B

DATE: May 9, 2023

SUBJECT

SDSBVI School Accreditation and Improvement Plan

CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY

[SDSBVI Strategic Plan](#)

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

The South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (SDSBVI) is accredited through the South Dakota Department of Education. This is a key component of all planning that occurs strategically and annually for the SDSBVI. The SDSBVI approved their last strategic plan in June of 2019 and annually review that plan and strategies for improving the SDSBVI. The evaluation of the strategic plan and the accreditation evaluation facilitate the next years’ growth opportunity for school administration as they are planning for the academic year. Attachment I is the updated evaluation.

IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION

Updating the improvement plan and evaluating the strategic plan on an annual basis will assist SDSBVI staff, administration, and their various stakeholders develop the school’s mission and further support meeting the needs of the students attending or being serviced by SDSBVI. Each year SDSBVI will bring an updated evaluation for the Board of Regents.

This is an informational item for the Board as to the accreditation and strategic planning evaluation that was conducted.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment I – SDSBVI Accreditation and Improvement Plan

INFORMATIONAL ITEM



SD School for the Blind
and Visually Impaired

South Dakota School for the Blind
and Visually Impaired
School Improvement Plan

(Updated 2023)

SDSBVI Programing:

SDSBVI offers a quality teaching and learning environment and outreach services. Our classroom teachers and outreach vision consultants have a South Dakota teaching certificate and obtain the teacher of the visually impaired endorsement as a requirement of their employment with SDSBVI. In addition, we employ nationally certified orientation and mobility specialists, low vision specialists, and speech/language pathologists. SBSBVI is recognized as a K-12 accredited school by the South Dakota Department of Education.

SDSBVI offers two educational environments. Students served on campus in Aberdeen during the school year receive academic instruction which includes special education and the expanded core curriculum incorporating skills of blindness. Public school students, who meet SDSBVI qualifications, can attend SDSBVI during the summer to learn specialized skills of blindness from the school's expanded core curriculum.

SDSBVI also serves children, parents, and teachers across South Dakota. Public school students with vision loss may receive comprehensive functional low vision, academic, cognitive, social/emotional, behavioral, transition, and speech-language educational evaluations performed by expert staff. After students have completed their evaluations, SDSBVI personnel can provide guidance with designing instructional materials and methods that support children who are blind or visually impaired. Outreach vision consultants provide on-site public school assistance to school staff and home visits for families with young children. Services include staff training, technical assistance, educational material loans, and development of Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSP), Individualized Education

the 2000 Legislative Session, funding was earmarked for six weeks of summer programs.

The South Dakota Board of Regents approved the building of the new South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired in October 2017. From the start of the project, Northern State University and the South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired joined together as partners to make the project fit both organization's needs. This collaboration developed into teaching, learning, and student opportunities that dually benefit the two organizations. On January 13, 2020, the South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired started classes at its new home on the former grounds of Jerde Hall located on the east side of the Northern State Campus. The SDSBVI building was financed in collaboration with Northern State University and the Northern State University Foundation. A land swap was completed in order for SDSBVI to move to its new location and provide a repurposing of the former school's location to be the new site for Northern State University's football and softball complex. The approximate cost of the SDSBVI building and grounds was \$13.85 million. Funding was obtained through donations to the NSU Foundation capital campaign and both Governor Noem and Governor Dugaard each pledged \$2.5 million from the State's Future Fund. The South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired building site and architecture was selected based on the needs of the students and staff that utilize the South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Special consideration was given to provide orientation and mobility opportunities for students.

The South Dakota School for the Blind and Visually Impaired has demonstrated a commitment of developing and using the best instructional practices and accommodations to educate students who are blind and visually impaired. The school also introduces new technologies as they became available, braille printers, reading software

IEP Goal Monitoring:

Student IEP goals are reviewed and addressed each year during the students annual IEP meeting. The IEP team makes determinations on the goals to be included in the IEP based on the student's individual strengths and needs. The goal progress is reported to the parent/guardian and the LEA on a quarterly basis.

Strategic Priorities and Goals:

Items to be addressed on an annual basis, and in connection to the current SDSBVI strategic plan.

- A. Expand, deepen, and strengthen continuity of outreach services to assure critical support for children within homes, schools, and communities.
 1. Strengthen model of statewide services for students who are blind and visually impaired.
 2. Expand the assessment program to better serve students.
 3. Further develop consistent procedures organization wide.
 4. Build a collection of resources for parents and school districts to expand learning for children receiving services.
 5. Expand SDSBVI campus-based experiences for students served in their home school districts.

Action Steps to be carried out by SDSBVI staff:

- **Monitor caseload statistics for outreach vision consultants and adjust as needed.**
- **Monitor assessment usage numbers for on campus and off campus students.**
- **Create procedural information for SDSBVI.**

- **Create a learning opportunity for people interested in gaining certifications in Blind and Visually Impaired education and ancillary programming.**

C. Establish a center of excellence in transition resources for children who are blind or visually impaired in South Dakota.

1. Make investments to expand the readiness of staff to meet the unique needs of students of transition age.
2. Market our “Learning to be Equipped for Adulthood Program” (LEAP) that delivers customized transition services for students who are seeking work or post-secondary education after meeting graduation requirements or working towards a certificate of attendance.

Action Steps to be carried out by SDSBVI staff:

- **Create training opportunities for staff to learn new technologies.**
- **Communicate SDSBVI’s LEAP program to eligible students, parents, and schools.**

D. Increase local, state, and national understanding of SDSBVI’s roles and responsibilities as a resource for children in need of specialized vision services.

1. Develop an internal leadership culture within the SDSBVI designed to build capacity and engagement of staff.
2. Use the new SDSBVI facility as a marketing tool to develop a national “Center of Excellence” for educational services and technology use.

Staff Development:

SDSBVI will host staff development sessions for new staff and returning staff each year. The schedule and content of the training will be developed by the administration in consultation with the SDSBVI Professional Development Committee.

SDSBVI Enrollment Data :

Enrollment Year	Outreach	On Campus	Summer
2018	253	23	38
2019	251	28	41
2020	265	27	33
2021	247	28	43
2022	250	30	45
2023	175	24	40
Estimated 2024	180	25	40

Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium Data (SBAC):

Year	# of students administered SBAC	% of students meeting score improvement goal
20-21	5	NO data from SY 19-20
21-22	3	50 %
22-23	3	Data not received yet.

Year	# of students administered the alternate assessment	% of students meeting score improvement goal
20-21	2	No data from SY 19-20
21-22	0	NA
22-23	3	Data not received yet.