

Synopsis: This historical agreement addresses long-time curriculum delivery issues among three of the state’s technical institutes (Lake Area Technical Institute, Western Dakota Technical Institutes, and Mitchell Technical Institute) and the public university system. It addresses issues of governance, institutional mission and roles, and articulation of programs to students. The agreement is built on the willingness of the parties to accommodate their mutual and individual interests.

General Features of the Agreement

1. The partners—Lake Area Technical Institute, Western Dakota Technical Institute, Mitchell Technical Institute, and the South Dakota Board of Regents—recognize the individual missions performed by their respective institutions. The institutes shall retain their mission of providing certificates, diplomas, and Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degrees designed to lead directly to employment or job enhancement in specific careers. The public universities under the Board of Regents shall continue their mission of providing education that leads to baccalaureate and advanced degrees.
2. The universities will provide transfer general education courses at Lake Area, Western Dakota, and Mitchell Tech, ensuring students that all general education classes will transfer to a public university.
3. The universities agree to enter into specific program-to-program articulation agreements for students with AAS degrees. These will facilitate articulation of credit from the student’s AAS-degree program at the technical institute to a specific, related bachelor-degree program at a public university.
4. As invited, Lake Area, Western Dakota, Mitchell Tech, and the regental institutions will make other courses or programs available at a partner’s instructional site.
5. The governance issue is addressed. The Board of Regents expresses that it has no intention to assume nor will it challenge the governance of Lake Area, Western Dakota, or Mitchell Tech, and those institutions shall remain under the governing authority of the respective local boards of education.
6. The universities will use currently qualified Lake Area, Western Dakota, and Mitchell Tech faculty to teach the general education courses. The classrooms and support services at those institutions also will be utilized, and students will be charged the existing Lake Area, Western Dakota, and Mitchell Tech tuition and fees.

Finance Provisions

The agreement is conditioned upon the partners being held financially harmless. For this to work, Lake Area, Western Dakota, and Mitchell Tech need to recover the value of tuition lost

from their general education courses and the universities need to be compensated for teaching those courses.

Specifically for the technical institutes, these amounts were calculated by multiplying the transferable general education credit hours by \$60 (i.e. the technical institute tuition rate), adding to this amount the value of the proportion of the transferable general education credits to the total state reimbursement for general education at the technical institutes, and subtracting the technical institutes' cost of instruction (i.e. salaries and benefits) for those general education courses.

For Lake Area Technical Institute, this amount is \$50,000. For Western Dakota, the amount is \$45,000. For Mitchell Tech, the amount is \$12,000.

For the universities, the amount is calculated based upon the state-supported costs of instructing the specific general education courses using the instructional formula, and netting off tuition revenues from technical institute students at the technical institute rate. Those costs are \$146,000 at Lake Area, \$85,000 at Western Dakota, and \$45,000 at Mitchell Tech.

In summary, \$383,000 is required to hold the technical institutes financially harmless and provide resources to the public university system for the transfer general education instruction.

Is this beneficial to the state?

This agreement puts to rest a long-term struggle over the mission responsibilities of the technical institutes and the public universities.

This agreement responds to concerns over technical institute mission creep into the public university general education curriculum. **By eliminating duplication in the delivery of transferable general education curriculum, the state of South Dakota will save resources.**

This agreement provides educational mobility for technical institute students through specific program-to-program transfer agreements, above and beyond the existing Bachelor of Applied Technical Science degree program. This expands significantly the options open to technical institute graduates. Over time, this will **save the state and individual students significant resources.**

This agreement **puts to rest the potential for expensive litigation** that could be initiated by the Board of Regents under the South Dakota Constitution.

Summary

- This is a win-win for the technical institutes and the Board of Regents.
- This will provide new opportunities for students.
- This will save the state and students money over the long term.
- This solves a problem that has existed for more than two decades.
- This enhances the educational opportunities open to all citizens of South Dakota.

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