



News Release

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Regents Forward FY07 Budget Request to Governor

SPEARFISH, S.D. – The South Dakota Board of Regents has identified its budget priorities for the coming year, with utilities, operating expenses, competitive salaries, and new Ph.D. programs heading the list. The FY07 budget request will be submitted to Gov. Mike Rounds.

The regents will request \$160.7 million in state general funds next year, a \$6.5 million increase, or 4.26 percent, over the current year's budget. Regents President Harvey C. Jewett called it a "modest" request that meets the immediate needs of the public university system.

"We are aware of the many demands upon the state's treasury and the importance of bringing South Dakota's budget into balance," Jewett said. "I am confident that this limited request meets our most critical needs for maintaining a quality higher education system."

The board's highest priorities are funding for increased utility costs and to keep pace with inflationary costs in materials, supplies, and other operating expenses on the campuses. The regents requested an additional \$591,000 to cover utilities and \$500,000 more to shore up operating expense budgets.

Regents are also requesting \$600,000 to provide executive salary adjustments that position South Dakota more competitively with the higher education market. "We have made a conscious effort over the last seven years to bring our faculty and professional staff salaries more in line with the regional average," Jewett said. "But our executive salaries have not been addressed and they lag sorely behind what is paid elsewhere in the region, and especially in comparison to similar institutions across the country."

A fourth priority for the Board of Regents is to build on recent efforts by Gov. Rounds and the Legislature to develop the universities' research capacity. A request will be forwarded for \$1.8 million and 25 FTE to add three more Ph.D. programs and graduate assistant research staff to support them. The board will invite proposals for a new doctorate in information systems from Dakota State University, a Ph.D. in biomedical engineering jointly offered by South Dakota School of Mines & Technology and the University of South Dakota, and a Ph.D. in energy engineering from South Dakota State University.

In addition, there is a one-time request for \$908,711 to pay for facility improvements that will bring all South Dakota public universities into compliance with Title IX equity standards.

Other requests are to fund a statewide Opportunity Scholarship coordinator, support graduate teacher education programs at off-campus sites in Sioux Falls and Rapid City, and create one or two new 2010 Initiative research centers on the campuses. Further general fund requests relate to ongoing funding for instructional technology and library support of Ph.D. programs.