



# News Release

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## **Flickema Plans Retirement from BHSU Helm**

SPEARFISH – Thomas Flickema, president of Black Hills State University since 1994, plans to retire next July 1, Board of Regents President Harvey C. Jewett said. The announcement was made Tuesday on the Spearfish campus at an annual State of the University address.

“Under Tom Flickema’s leadership, Black Hills State University has established itself as the third largest university in South Dakota and a leader in liberal arts education,” Jewett said. “He will be remembered for many things, but especially his efforts to improve student retention and to raise the profile of undergraduate research on this campus.”

Flickema came to BHSU in August 1994, when he was appointed to serve as interim president. He was named to the post permanently in February 1995 following a nationwide search. His 22-year career in the South Dakota public higher education system also includes serving as vice president for academic affairs at Northern State University from 1983 to 1994.

Jewett praised Flickema’s vision for expanding Black Hills State’s reach through more courses and programs offered off campus. Classes are now available at four locations in the Rapid City area and through distance learning. “Dr. Flickema was also instrumental in giving BHSU a full-time presence in Rapid City through the new Higher Education Center-West River,” Jewett said.

Outreach through service and research also has enhanced the university’s regional and national reputation. Jewett credited Flickema for creating campus-based centers for the Advancement of Math and Science Education, Tourism Research, the Conservation of Biological Resources, Business and Entrepreneurship, and Indian Studies.

Academic achievement is driven by quality faculty and a diverse curriculum, and Jewett said Flickema has worked to be sure that BHSU has the best of both. During his presidency, the number of faculty members with the highest degrees available in their field increased from 53 percent to more than 77 percent. “The driving force in an academic institution is the faculty, and Black Hills State is fortunate in that its faculty members are extremely talented, dedicated, and hard working,” Flickema said.

During his tenure, outside grant funding has grown, as has the assets of the university’s two foundations. Grant-funded research increased from \$50,000 in 1997 to more than \$4 million currently. When Flickema first arrived on campus, BHSU awarded \$150,000 in scholarships annually. Last year, it was \$662,000.

A native of Michigan, Flickema received his master’s and Ph.D. degrees in history from Wayne State University in Detroit. Before coming to South Dakota, he held academic or administrative appointments in Michigan, Nebraska, and California. The Board of Regents will announce soon a presidential search process and timeline, Jewett said.