



News Release

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State Assessments Help Students Prepare for College

PIERRE, S.D. – Students headed to one of South Dakota’s six public universities have another good reason to perform well on new state assessment tests in high school: their scores can be used to place them in college English or mathematics courses.

As education officials today announced that student performance on the new state assessment of English language arts and math was better than expected, South Dakota Board of Regents’ officials also acknowledged the importance of these assessments.

“South Dakota is one of six states that will use these assessments as part of a common framework for establishing entry into college-level courses,” said Mike Rush, the regents’ executive director and CEO. “We now have an additional set of metrics available to us to determine a student’s preparation for college-level coursework in English and mathematics.”

Rush noted the importance of using multiple measures to assess students’ mastery of content. “We want more students to graduate from high school with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college and the workplace,” he said. “These state assessments are a key tool for assessing student performance.”

Paul Turman, the regent’s system vice president for academic affairs, said South Dakota is recognized as an early adopter of using assessment data at the statewide level. “Nearly 200 colleges and universities nationwide, and our six South Dakota public universities are among those, will now consider these scores to determine whether students are ready for credit-bearing courses and can be exempted from remedial course taking,” Turman said.

Working with high school teachers and college faculty, the Board of Regents adopted placement guidelines that allow students enrolling in one of the public universities the opportunity to use their performance on the state assessment while in high school as one of four indicators for placement into English 101 or coursework in Math 104 or below. Students earning a score at levels 3 or 4 on the 11th grade state assessment would be allowed to enroll in college-level courses, while a score at levels 1 or 2 requires completion of remedial coursework.