



News Release

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65 Percent Goal is Starting Point to Address Workforce Needs

PIERRE, S.D. – At its meeting last week, the South Dakota Board of Regents discussed the need to equip more South Dakotans with higher levels of education to meet growing workforce demands. Creating a statewide goal for young, working-age residents to hold a postsecondary credential is an important starting point for discussions with other higher education providers, policymakers, community advocates, and business leaders.

The regents decided to look at a provisional statewide attainment goal of 65 percent of South Dakotans, ages 25 to 34, holding some type postsecondary credential by 2025. If agreed to, all postsecondary education partners—public, private, technical, and tribal institutions—would work together to deliver on that goal. The goal addresses a full range of educational attainment from technical certificates to graduate degrees.

Regent Kathryn Johnson of Hill City, who offered a motion to adopt the provisional goal, said, “This is a good starting point for our board’s goal setting, as we talk to other postsecondary education and business partners. We must keep our eye on the end result, which is to deliver a more highly trained and educated workforce for South Dakota.”

In 2013, only 38 percent of working-age South Dakotans held an associate degree or higher. The 65 percent attainment goal is based on projections from the Georgetown University Public Policy Institute’s Center on Education and the Workforce that roughly 65 percent of all jobs in South Dakota will require some level of postsecondary education by 2020.