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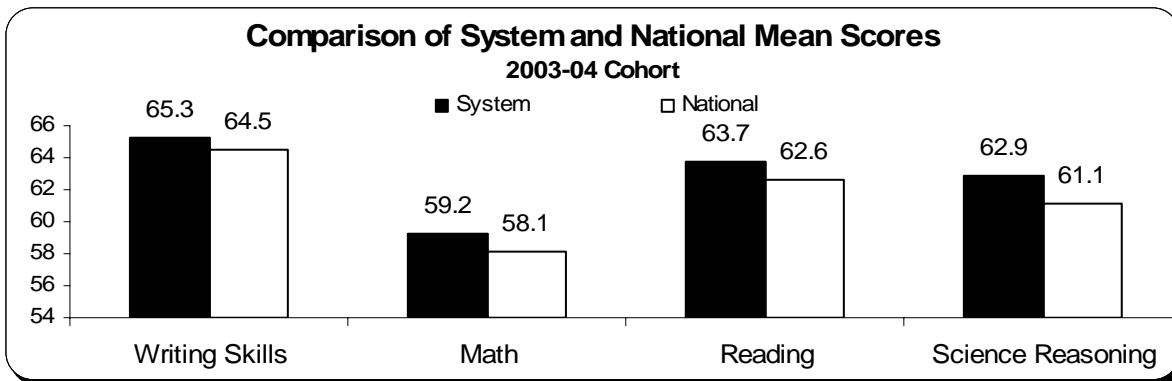
Proficiency Exam Results Show SD Students Exceed National Norms

SPEARFISH, S.D. – Students at South Dakota public universities as a whole score higher on measures of writing skills, mathematics, reading, and science reasoning than their counterparts at other four-year public institutions.

The South Dakota Board of Regents Friday reviewed results from the 2003-04 proficiency examinations. The exam has been administered to second-semester sophomores in the South Dakota system since 1998.

“Our students overall do very well on these assessments,” said Regents President Harvey C. Jewett. “Over the years, seven cohorts of students have now taken these exams. So we can look at the data over time to see whether performance trends can be identified and what areas particular institutions may need to focus on.”

In all four subject areas tested by the exam, South Dakota public university students overall exceeded the average for the national comparison group.



Robert T. Tad Perry, the regents’ executive director, said the proficiency exam is one of the system’s accountability tools.

“Looking at these results, we identify strengths or areas where we can improve,” Perry said. “For example, we know the percentage of students requiring remediation in reading continues to rise, and that is cause for concern.” The report indicates that students needing remedial education in reading have risen from 2.5 percent in 1999-2000 to the current 4.6 percent.