



# News Release

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## **Regents Approve USD Division I Request**

RAPID CITY, S.D. – The South Dakota Board of Regents Thursday voted 9-0 to support The University of South Dakota’s application for Division I-AA status in football and Division I in all other sports.

“The board has carefully considered this request and supports USD in its move to Division I, with the understanding that the university will become a member of an appropriate athletic conference,” said Regents President Harvey C. Jewett. “The University of South Dakota is pleased to receive the board’s approval,” said USD President James W. Abbott. “We were confident that we had conducted a thorough study and fully responded to questions posed about this change. Now we are ready to move forward and transition into an exploratory year as we address such primary issues as alumni and fan support, conference affiliation, and funding.”

In approving the request, regents reiterated support for an athletic policy adopted in December 2002 as South Dakota State University was making its initial move to Division I. The board’s policy has established specific financial and other requirements for any of its institutions that participate at the NCAA Division I level.

The detailed athletics policy sets out clear expectations for funding, student fees, scholarships, and other criteria, and USD will be expected to abide by those requirements as it makes its move to Division I, Jewett said.

Support for intercollegiate athletics from the student general activity fee may only increase at the fee’s annual rate of inflation, as determined by the regents. Additionally, general fund support for salaries, benefits, or operational expenses may only increase at rates equivalent to what is otherwise appropriated for the universities’ base budgets. “This provision limits increases in student fees and state funding to the regular, ongoing costs of operating the institutions, regardless of athletic classification,” Jewett said.

The board’s policy states that the proportion of general activity fees allocated to athletic facilities at the time an institution is approved for Division I status may not be increased to fund new or expanded athletic and support facilities. Monies from the state’s Higher Education Facilities Fund also may not be used to fund or maintain new or expanded athletic and support facilities.

The regents’ action to approve the USD reclassification came after the board took public comment on the request at a hearing Dec. 11 in Sioux Falls.