

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:** Wednesday, January 24, 2007

## **Regents Release Opportunity Plan**

PIERRE, S.D. – Taking a state-level view, a new report from the South Dakota Board of Regents recommends future directions for public higher education. The Opportunities Plan is a comprehensive blueprint that matches up state policy goals in education and economic development with operational decisions and needed investments in the higher education system.

“There is a national urgency to address higher levels of education for the workforce,” Regents Executive Director Robert T. Tad Perry said. “Internationally, many countries understand that a high-tech, knowledge-based economy demands more people with the kind of skills and education to adapt quickly to changing environments. Those countries are making major investments in their education systems.

“Our challenge is immediate and real. The directions in the Opportunities Plan are a guide for South Dakota to take this seriously and to do it now,” Perry said.

The Opportunities Plan is the Board of Regents’ response to a request from the 2006 South Dakota Legislature for a comprehensive plan for the instructional and research missions of the public universities.

Based on the regents’ policy goals for public higher education—access to postsecondary education, academic quality and performance, enhancing the state’s long-term economy, and system efficiencies—the Opportunities Plan identifies the current situation, recent responses from the higher education system, and future directions to pursue. The specific opportunities identified in the plan are:

- Preparing high school graduates for college.
- Retaining and graduating more public university students.
- Competing to keep talented students in South Dakota and attract non-residents to the state.
- Building a research culture that embraces development of South Dakota’s economy.
- Engaging the adult workforce in postsecondary education.
- Effectively using public resources.
- Documenting student success and quality educational experiences.

Printed copies of the Opportunities Plan are available from the Board of Regents’ office in Pierre. The report is downloadable from the Web at [www.sdbor.edu/publications/documents/OpportunityPlan.pdf](http://www.sdbor.edu/publications/documents/OpportunityPlan.pdf).