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## **Student Athletes Do Well in Public Universities**

ABERDEEN, S.D. – A Board of Regents’ report on the academic performance of student athletes shows athletes and non-athletes generally perform at similar levels across the public university system.

The annual report, prepared by Paul Turman, director of academic assessment for the regents, looked at seven indicators, including ACT performance, grade point averages, credit hours completed, and graduation and retention rates.

Among the findings in the report:

- The South Dakota State University women’s basketball team, recently back from playing in the NCAA tournament, posted a 3.62 average GPA last academic year. This is the highest individual sport average in the public university system.
- Athletes across the system averaged a significantly higher GPA of 2.78 last year when compared to a 2.46 for non-athletes. Examining trends across five cohorts of students, GPA continued to remain slightly higher for athletes.
- Athletes scored slightly lower on the reading, science reasoning, and writing portions of the student proficiency exam, but slightly higher on the mathematics portion of the exam. The exam is given to all students in the South Dakota public university system at the end of their sophomore year.
- A higher percentage of athletes (84 percent) either graduated or were retained into their second year when compared to non-athletes (78 percent).
- Athletes averaged a higher number of credit hours taken each term (13.3) compared to non-athletes (12.0).
- Athletes scored slightly higher than non-athletes on the ACT mathematics sub-test (22.3 compared to 22.1), while non-athletes obtained slightly higher ACT English sub-test scores than athletes (21.2 to 20.9).
- Twenty-seven percent of all athletes entering the system last year enrolled at South Dakota State University; however Dakota State University had the largest percentage of athletes when compared to its entering student population (20 percent).