



# News Release

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## **Hansen Awarded Honorary Doctorate for Lifetime of Service to South Dakota Public Education**

ABERDEEN, S.D. – The South Dakota Board of Regents awarded its highest honor Wednesday to James O. Hansen of Pierre for extraordinary service and leadership to the state of South Dakota spanning more than 60 years.

After 18 years, one of the longest records of service by any regent, Hansen’s term on the Board of Regents ends this month. In addition to his work with public higher education, his remarkable career includes time spent as a K-12 educator and serving as secretary of the South Dakota Department of Education and Cultural Affairs in the administrations of Gov. William J. Janklow and Gov. George S. Mickelson.

The honorary degree, Doctor of Public Service, was presented to Hansen in recognition of his “exemplary stewardship of the state’s systems of public higher education and K-12 education.” The title is reserved for individuals whose exceptional personal and professional contributions have merited special acknowledgement.

Regents President Kathryn Johnson said Hansen is always a strong advocate for students. “He leaves as his legacy to the Board of Regents the constant reminder to all of us that public higher education must focus on maintaining high quality while controlling costs,” Johnson said.

In a lifetime of good works dedicated to public education in South Dakota, Hansen began his career as an educator in 1952. As a teacher, coach, and superintendent of schools at Philip, Wessington, Gregory, and Madison, he guided the future success of countless students. He went on to shape statewide K-12 education policy as state superintendent of schools from 1979 to 1987 and as education secretary from 1985 to 1990.

In his time on the Board of Regents, Hansen was elected by his peers as the board’s secretary, vice president, and president. He worked with 22 institutional executives at the campus and special schools level, chaired three presidential search committees, and served on countless building committees for the regents.

His tradition of public service will carry on, as he continues his long-standing appointment to the Capitol Complex Restoration and Beautification Commission and his elected term on the Board of Trustees for the South Dakota Retirement System.

## James O. Hansen Receives Honorary Doctor of Public Service Degree



James O. Hansen of Pierre received the South Dakota Board of Regents' highest honor, an honorary Doctor of Public Service degree, Wednesday for his lifetime of public service to K-12 education and higher education. Hansen ended his term this week on the Board of Regents after serving 18 years; he is also a former K-12 teacher and administrator and served as state Secretary of Education under two governors. Hansen was assisted in the ceremonial hooding ceremony by (from left) Dean M. Krogman, incoming president of the Board of Regents, and Randy Schaefer, the regents' incoming vice president.

(Photo by SD Board of Regents)