



News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Wednesday, June 19, 2013

Teacher Education Redesign Proceeds in South Dakota

VERMILLION, S.D. – Work has progressed on a new model for teacher training across South Dakota, which involves teacher education students in three years of coursework on campus, followed by a full year of residency in a school setting.

This week, the South Dakota Board of Regents was updated on what is being called the “clinical residency model” by officials at the five public universities that prepare teacher candidates.

While a traditional model requires candidates to spend a semester student teaching before they graduate and move into the profession, Black Hills State University has required year-long residencies for a number of years. More recently, with support from the Bush Foundation, the University of South Dakota worked to incorporate this requirement into its teacher education programs. USD and Dakota State University currently partner with the Sioux Falls School District to provide year-long residencies for a set group of students pursuing certification as elementary teachers.

“These changes have been supported by research and are promoted by a number of professional organizations,” said Sam Gingerich, system vice president for academic affairs. “While each of our universities is in varying stages of implementation, plans generally call for redesigned elementary education programs to come online at all institutions next year, followed by secondary and K-12 programs a year later,” he said.

The goal is to achieve this redesign within the parameters of the 120 credit-hour standard for most bachelor-degree programs. A meeting is planned in early August to bring university faculty from math, science, social science, and English together to align disciplinary and professional requirements within the 120 credit hours, taking into consideration a year-long residency component.

In working with K-12 schools to develop this new model, Gingerich said most of those schools so far have been located close to a university campus. In order to bring this concept to more schools, discussions are under way about creating regional “hubs” where multiple campuses could place students in year-long residencies. “Given South Dakota’s geography, there are large regions of this state that rarely have student teacher placements and the related professional development benefits these interactions with campuses provide,” Gingerich said.