



News Release

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Public University System Advances Budget Request

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Board of Regents’ budget request for next year will seek additional state government support to stem higher education cost shifting to students.

The regents will request about \$2.8 million in its base budget to buy down inflation on operating costs and the cost of faculty salaries. “Our goal is to stem the tide of the cost shifting to students as a result of declining state support,” said Regents President Kathryn Johnson. The board is also requesting \$2.3 million from the state to support maintenance and repair of its academic buildings, a cost that is fully bore by students at this time.

In addition, the regents are requesting new state investments in a Ph.D. degree program in physics, funding to reward public universities that meet performance goals, and expanding the state’s medical school to produce more doctors and physician assistants.

The regents also requested new resources to produce more teachers for American Indian reservation schools and to hire additional specialists providing outreach services for blind and visually impaired students.

The budget request overall seeks \$14.5 million in new state resources linked to specific priorities of the public university system, which includes the six state universities and special schools for the deaf and the blind and visually impaired. In addition, the Board of Regents identified about \$4.8 million in one-time budget requests for research innovation and student success initiatives.

In its budget request to Gov. Dennis Daugaard, the regents asked Daugaard to make salary adjustments for all state workers the highest priority when he puts together a recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2014. Other priorities call for increased support for agricultural research and more scholarship aid to college students.

The regents seek about \$3 million for a potential performance funding model that rewards public universities that produce more graduates, improve student retention, and grow research grant activity. A legislative committee is studying higher education performance funding this summer, and the regents hope to dovetail their request with that committee’s recommendations.

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Another ongoing request is for nearly \$2 million to create a cooperative Ph.D. degree program in physics at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology and The University of South Dakota to support the Sanford Underground Research Facility at the former Homestake Gold Mine. South Dakota is one of only two states in the country that does not offer a doctoral degree in physics.

The proposal for the USD Medical School expansion is to increase the number of entering M.D. students by 11 per year over four years and the number of physician assistant students by five each year over three years, for a base budget price tag of nearly \$2.6 million.

Nearly \$1 million of the budget request is targeted to specific research initiatives at the Agricultural Experiment Station at South Dakota State University in the areas of human and animal health, energy independence, and environmental sustainability.

A proposal for \$446,675 seeks to grow a cadre of teachers for American Indian reservation schools in South Dakota by staffing up teacher education programs at five public universities. One faculty position at each of these schools will work directly with tribal colleges, K-12 schools, and reservation and business leaders to produce more home-grown teacher candidates. The focus is on individuals who currently live on reservations and hold bachelor's degrees or are living off the reservation and want to teach at the secondary level back on the reservations.

A request for \$140,000 would add two vision consultants at the School for the Blind and Visually Impaired to improve outreach services to students with vision loss across South Dakota. An independent study in 2008 recommended the additional staffing to provide appropriate levels of service to students who are not enrolled at the residential school in Aberdeen but require specialized assistance.