



News Release

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Student Affordability Again Top Budget Priority for Public Universities

PIERRE, S.D. – For the second consecutive year, the South Dakota Board of Regents has pledged to freeze in-state students' tuition in exchange for more state government support. A \$6.8 million budget request will be forwarded to Gov. Dennis Daugaard to prevent more higher education cost shifting to students, regents said.

In the last legislative session, the public university system was successful in its quest to hold the line on state-supported tuition and mandatory fees for resident students, as well as program and delivery fees. "Our goal remains the same this time: secure an increase in state funding to cover that part of salary and benefit costs, plus inflation, normally covered by tuition and mandatory fees," said Regents President Dean M. Krogman.

In addition, the regents will request state investments to address deferred maintenance on academic buildings, provide additional services and support to the state's blind and deaf students, fund student preparation and success initiatives, and grow the value of the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship.

The budget request overall seeks just under \$13 million in new and ongoing state resources linked to specific priorities of the six public universities and two special schools. The regents have asked Gov. Daugaard to make tuition buy down for resident students the highest priority when he puts together a recommended budget for Fiscal Year 2016.

The request to grow the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship, currently valued at \$5,000 over four years of college study, would cost the state about \$1.6 million. It would set the value of the scholarship at \$6,800 and cover 20 percent of the four-year cost to attend college. Lacking new investments since the scholarship program was created in 2004, the Opportunity Scholarship now pays for just 16 percent of those costs.

The board also identified \$21.8 million in one-time budget requests to purchase high-priority research equipment and help support industry-sponsored research on the campuses, increase scholarship programs for future teachers and needy students, and provide matching funds for capital construction projects. Other one-time priorities are start-up funds for a Chinese language and culture center at Northern State University and expansion of the Graduate Education and Research Center in Sioux Falls for biomedical engineering and good manufacturing practices.