



# News Release

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## **Regents' Executive Director Announces Plans**

PIERRE, S.D. – Michael G. Rush, executive director and CEO of the South Dakota Board of Regents since 2015, announced today his resignation effective May 29, 2018.

“I have appreciated my affiliation with South Dakota and its excellent system of public universities and special schools. I have also enjoyed working with a dedicated board of men and women who are committed to providing quality opportunities to South Dakota citizens,” Rush said. “Finally, I have deeply appreciated working with Gov. Daugaard, legislators, and an exceptional staff. The regents and I came to a mutual decision that the time had come to change gears. This is particularly true for me as I have eight—soon to be nine—grandchildren with whom I have had very little time. I intend to make up for that.”

“Dr. Rush has spent the last three years working to improve the delivery of higher education in South Dakota. He has developed partnerships that will be valuable as we continue to meet the challenges ahead of us,” said Regents President Bob Sutton. “Mike has also led our system through the search process for several university presidents who are leading our institutions. We thank Dr. Rush for his years of service and wish him the very best.”

Sutton will be working with regents' senior staff to transition administrative duties after Rush's departure. A search for the next regents' executive director will begin immediately.

Rush said he is pleased with the progress that the public university system has made over the past three years. “Despite a seriously contrary demographic situation, enrollments and recruitment look to be turning around. Our College Application Week expansion, combined with proactive admissions initiatives, have resulted in more students applying and signing up for college,” he said.

In addition, Native American enrollments have increased and degree production overall has gone up during Rush's tenure. The public universities reworked core courses in general education and improved transfer procedures to enhance the undergraduate experience, while at the same time making it easier for students to transfer into the public university system, taking full advantage of credits already earned.

“Our universities have made significant improvements in campus infrastructure, primarily funded by the generosity of private donors,” Rush said. “We have also undertaken substantial

upgrades in student residence facilities. All of these projects improve on an aging infrastructure that was sorely in need of updating.”

During his time in South Dakota, Rush has presided over the hiring of four new university presidents, and soon a fifth (at the University of South Dakota). “All of these people are capable, innovative leaders who will enhance our university system for years to come,” he said. “I will look back fondly at my time in South Dakota and trust that your next leader will help you meet the future with enthusiasm and resolve.”

Prior to his time in South Dakota, Rush served as the executive director of the Idaho State Board of Education/Board of Regents from 2007 to 2015. He holds a doctorate of education from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, as well as master and bachelor’s degrees in agricultural education, both from the University of Idaho.