



News Release

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Three Finalists Chosen in NSU President's Search

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Board of Regents announced today three candidates who are finalists to become the next president at Northern State University.

Regent Jim Thares, who chairs the presidential search process, said the finalists will be on campus in Aberdeen later this week (June 17-18) for scheduled meetings with constituents and regents.

The finalists, by alphabetical order, are:

- **David P. Jones, Mankato, Minn., vice president for student affairs and enrollment management, Minnesota State University, Mankato.** Since 2011, Jones has provided leadership to a student affairs division with more than 150 full-time employees and a \$45 million budget. As vice president, he is responsible for developing the strategic enrollment plan at Mankato and managing operations to assure student success and a quality campus life. His previous experience includes administrative posts at the University of Alabama, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, College of William & Mary, and the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Jones holds a Ph.D. in educational policy, planning, and leadership from the College of William & Mary, a master's degree in counseling from the University of Nebraska at Kearney, and an undergraduate degree in secondary education from the State University of New York College at Oswego.
- **Alan D. LaFave, Valley City, N.D., president, Valley City State University.** LaFave became president at Valley City State in December 2018, where his leadership has resulted in increased retention rates of nearly 5%. At VCSU, he oversees a \$28 million budget and led efforts to secure legislative approval and funding for a \$32 million arts center, which will open later this year. Before his appointment in North Dakota, LaFave worked on the Northern State University campus for 27 years, including time as an instructor and professor of music, department chair, and dean of the School of Fine Arts. He was provost and vice president for academic affairs at NSU from 2015 to 2018. LaFave's resume at Northern also included the student experience, where he earned his undergraduate degree in instrumental/vocal music. He holds doctoral and master's degrees in clarinet performance from Arizona State University.

- **Neal H. Schnoor, Long Beach, Calif., chief of staff to the president, California State University Long Beach.** As chief of staff to the Long Beach president since 2019, Schnoor represents the president in his work with internal and external constituencies to advance the university’s mission, initiatives, and relationships. He previously served for seven years as a senior advisor to the chancellor for executive affairs at the University of Nebraska at Kearney. Before that, he was dean of the School of Education and Counseling at Wayne State (Neb.) College. His faculty and teaching experience includes appointments at the University of Nebraska’s Kearney and Lincoln campuses and as a band director in Nebraska high schools. He has a Ph.D. degree in education and a master of music degree, both from the University of Nebraska Lincoln. Wayne State College granted his bachelor of fine arts degree in education.

Copies of the finalists’ cover letters and professional vitae [are posted online](#). During their time on campus, the candidates will meet with faculty, students, administrative and professional staff, civil service employees, and representatives of the NSU Foundation, alumni, and the Aberdeen community. The Board of Regents will also meet Friday in executive session with each finalist and with campus representatives of the search committee. No official action is expected to be taken.