



News Release

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Higher Education Task Force Meets Thursday

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Twenty members of a higher education task force meet for the first time Thursday in Rapid City.

In the months ahead, the Senate Bill 55 Task Force will study operations and functions of higher education institutions governed by the South Dakota Board of Regents. The task force was created after state lawmakers passed legislation in the 2020 session directing the study. Findings are to be reported to the Legislature and Gov. Kristi Noem no later than Nov. 15, 2021.

To begin its work, the group will look at how the South Dakota public university system has evolved from its early days until the present. “Our universities have a long history of education, research, and service in South Dakota,” said Brian L. Maher, the regents’ executive director and CEO, who serves as task force chair. “A single Board of Regents for all state institutions of higher education was first organized by the 1890 South Dakota Legislature. The present form of constitutional governance has served us well since 1897.”

The task force will hear perspectives from former regents’ executive director, Robert T. Tad Perry, and a panel of former regents and retired university presidents. The detailed work of the task force is assigned to three subcommittees, which will examine academic programs, administration, and infrastructure and ancillary services.

The Senate Bill 55 Task Force convenes Thursday, Oct. 8, beginning at 8 a.m. (MDT), after the regents’ regular business meeting concludes on Wednesday. Both meetings will be held in Rushmore Room D at Rapid City’s Rushmore Plaza Civic Center, 444 N. Mount Rushmore Road. The public is invited to attend the meetings or access the livestream link through the [Board of Regents’ website](#).

Agendas for the Board of Regents’ and task force meetings are [linked here](#).