

SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS

Academic and Student Affairs

AGENDA ITEM: 6 – E

DATE: October 4-6, 2016

SUBJECT: GEAR UP Update

During the December 2015 meeting, the Board of Regents received an update on the status of the GEAR UP program when Black Hills State University was designated as the lead institution for the grant. Since that time, BHSU has been working to hire staff, preparing for the middle school and high school enrichment programs, and establishing relationships with partner schools in preparation for academic year programming. An additional update was provided to the Board during their June 2016 meeting. To date the Project Manager, Statewide Coordinator of Academic Year Programs, Statewide Coordinator of Summer Programs, and five of the six Regional Coordinators have been hired.

The GEAR UP Summer Honors Program concluded its first year at Black Hills State University on July 1. Of 129 eligible students who applied to the program, 98 students accepted, 69 students started the program, and 52 students completed the program. Students who left the program early left for a number of reasons including homesickness (7), participation in athletic camps (3), personal health issues (5), academic travel opportunity (1), and disciplinary action (1). The first two weeks of the program were held on the BHSU campus. The academic day ran from 8:30am-3:15pm and consisted of structured classes taught by certified teachers. The final week of the program was held at Placerville Camp with a curriculum focused on environmental science, physics, an intensive college planning curriculum called, “Possible Self,” sacred places, and ethnobotany taught in-part by Jace DeCory.

In addition to the high school program, four regional middle school camps were held at McIntosh, Mission, Eagle Butte, and Tiospa Zina. Each middle school program was run as a day camp for rising seventh and eighth graders. The curriculum focused on math, science, language arts, and college and career preparation. The final day of the camp included programming for families, a student showcase, and a recognition ceremony. Sixty-five students participated in the four middle school camps from six middle schools.

During the high school summer honors program, data were collected to evaluate student growth in math, language arts, and science and are currently being evaluated by GEAR UP staff. Student attitudes were also assessed using surveys and a series of focus groups were conducted. A full impact report of the summer program is forthcoming.

(Continued)

INFORMATIONAL ITEM

Intensive planning for academic year programs began after the summer programs concluded. A multi-day meeting for all regional coordinators will be held. The goal for the academic year programming is to work with individual schools and districts to supplement and enhance the current academic programs, college planning, and readiness support offered to each school. The advisory board has expressed a desire to reach out to directors of tribal education departments to engage tribes in the planning process to align with the start of the academic year.