

**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS  
PLANNING SESSION  
AUGUST 8-10, 2017**

**SUBJECT: 65% Degree Attainment Goal**

At the [August 2015](#) retreat the Board of Regents discussed the findings from a 2013 Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce report forecasting changes in South Dakota based on a transition to toward a knowledge-based, service-based economy. The Georgetown data indicated that by 2020, 65% of jobs in South Dakota will require some level of postsecondary credentialing (including certificates, licensing, associate, and baccalaureate degrees).<sup>1</sup> Following this discussion the Board reviewed a formal action item at their October 2015 meeting and adopted a provisional attainment goal of 65% of South Dakotans, aged 25-34, holding some form of postsecondary credential by the year 2025 with the 65%. Work occurred during the 2015-16 academic year to facilitate additional stakeholder engagement consistent with the provisional goal adopted by the Board. The Workforce Development Council voted to support the attainment in December of 2015. The Board of Education gave their support for the goal at their May 2016 meeting.<sup>2</sup> Governor Daugaard voiced his support in his 2016 State of the State address stating, “More than ever before, it’s important for young people to continue their education beyond high school. The Board of Regents recently proposed a goal that 65% of young people in South Dakota achieve a post-secondary credential of some sort, and I think that is a worthy goal to pursue.”<sup>3</sup>

During the [August 2016](#) retreat the Board discussed a number of initiatives linked with BOR Strategic Plan and the 65% Attainment goal (see Attachment I and II of the August retreat item). Representatives from the Lumina foundation participated in a portion of the discussion, and after formal adoption by the Board the Governor signed a proclamation supporting the strategic direction for the state. In October 2016 the Lumina Foundation released a request for states to compete for Attainment Goal Challenge Grants, and the central office was awarded a \$100,000 grant to address support activities tied to the attainment goal focused around: 1) engagement of stakeholders in South Dakota; 2) coordination of the proactive admissions project; 3) evaluation of existing prior learning assessment strategies; and 4) re-engaging ready adult students to return for degree completion.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.sdbor.edu/the-board/2015AgendaItems/August/Retreat/2\\_BORRetreat0815.pdf](https://www.sdbor.edu/the-board/2015AgendaItems/August/Retreat/2_BORRetreat0815.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Although the Board of Education did not take formal action on the attainment goal, the Department of Education supported the initiative and the new school accountability model being developed to comply with Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA) takes more aggressive steps toward ensuring that every student is college and career ready prior to high school graduation.

<sup>3</sup> “State of the State Address of Governor Dennis Daugaard,” 12 January 2016, available from <http://sd.gov/governor/docs/2016%20State%20of%20the%20State.pdf>.

An update on the work associated with this grant was provided to the Board during their May 2017 meeting which was then followed by a Presidents' Panel on student recruitment and success. This item seeks to provide additional background to the Board on the various activities and initiatives underway in the Regental system beginning with work over the past five years through our involvement with Complete College America. Second, current engagement with AAC and the Math Discipline Council related to approaches for improving remedial math performance and options for developing alternative math pathways is explored. Third, the most recent update on the Proactive Admission project is provided outlining the activities that will occur this Fall through partnership with the Department of Education. Finally, ongoing efforts to expand the reach of the College Application Campaign are presented with a goal of reaching all school districts in the state through this program during the 2018-19 academic year. Specific direction from the Board on each of the projects/programs will be sought to assist in setting the agenda for the coming year.

## Completion Agenda History

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Established in 2009, Complete College America (CCA) is a national non-profit organization with a single mission: to work with states to significantly increase the number of Americans with quality career certificates or college degrees, and to close attainment gaps for traditionally under-represented populations. South Dakota has been a participating state in Complete College America's Alliance of States since the beginning, and has been engaged in a variety of projects and initiatives designed to increase student success and college completion rates in our state. The Complete College America initiative has now grown to include 33 states and the District of Columbia, and have worked with states to target five primary completion strategies including:

- Implementation of Performance Funding Models
- Integration of Co-Requisite Remediation
- Engaging Students in 15-to-Finish Messaging
- Formulating Structured Scheduling for Students
- Installing Guided Pathways (Meta-Majors) for Undecided Students

A number of these strategies align with system strategies to achieve the statewide attainment goal, the Regental system has a variety of initiatives aimed at encouraging entering students to complete their degrees in a timely fashion (i.e., the "completion agenda"). Research shows that the longer a student stays in school without completing a credential, the more likely it is for factors to intervene that prevent completion, including but not limited to employment decisions, illness, family issues, and financial difficulties.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, the following initiatives are in place or are in continued development to encourage students to graduate within the shortest time possible.

### Encouraging Fifteen Credits Per Semester/Thirty Credits Per Year

- The Board of Regents reduced the standard credit hours needed for bachelor's degree completion to 120 (formerly 128) and associate degrees to 60 (formerly 64) hours in 2011.<sup>5</sup> This reduction aligned with national practices at public universities and provided pathways for students completing fifteen credit hours a semester to graduate in four years.
- The merit-based South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship requires students to complete at least 30 credit hours of instruction in each academic year to maintain eligibility.

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<sup>4</sup> As one example, see Complete College America, *Time is the Enemy* (2011), available from [http://completecollege.org/docs/Time\\_Is\\_the\\_Enemy.pdf](http://completecollege.org/docs/Time_Is_the_Enemy.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> South Dakota Board of Regents, "BOR Policy 2:29 Definitions of Credits and Related Institutional Requirements (October 12-13, 2011), available from [https://www.sdbor.edu/the-board/agendaitems/Documents/2011/documents/10-2011BOR\\_N.1a\\_BOR\\_2-29\\_creds-reqd.pdf](https://www.sdbor.edu/the-board/agendaitems/Documents/2011/documents/10-2011BOR_N.1a_BOR_2-29_creds-reqd.pdf).

- Two Regental institutions, NSU and USD, have launched formal campaigns using orientation, media, and advising sessions to promote students taking thirty credits per year.

### **Increase Enrollments in Credit Bearing Courses Over Non-credit Remediation Courses**

- The methodology used to determine initial placement in Math and English courses now includes multiple measures, including standardized test scores, placement test scores, and high school GPA and curriculum; formerly, placement tests were the primary method to determine placement.<sup>6</sup>
- Regental institutions have implemented a variety of corequisite remediation models; corequisite remediation courses provide college credit while providing additional assistance and tutoring than regular courses in first year Math and English.
- The Board of Regents and the SD Department of Education collaborated to create the South Dakota Virtual School, allowing state high school students to take English and Math remediation courses *prior* to enrolling in a Regental institution, saving students time and money.

### **Algebra as Required Math Course**

- National success rates for students in college Algebra are poor and student struggles with Algebra can prevent degree completion for otherwise competent students. Many mathematicians recommend movement away from Algebra as the default Math course unless students are in STEM majors, opting instead for math courses aligned with specific majors.<sup>7</sup> In addition to Algebra, students in the Regental system may take MATH 103 “Quantitative Literacy” to complete math general education requirements. Additional math pathways tied directly to individual majors are under consideration.

### **Reducing Accumulation of Credits That do not Apply to a Degree**

- Students need to be encouraged to take whole programs of study rather than random, individual courses. Both BHSU and SDSU have devised programs to aid students who are undecided on a major by establishing broad academic pathways for majors that have common prerequisites. For example, students broadly interested in health fields spend the first year taking courses that apply to multiple health majors, allowing them to explore several potential majors while still making progress to graduation.
- Regental institutions have developed program guides for each major that show recommended course selections to maintain status for on-time completion.

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<sup>6</sup> South Dakota Board of Regents, Academic Affairs Council Guidelines 7.6, available from [https://www.sdbor.edu/administrative-offices/academics/academic-affairs-guidelines/Documents/7\\_Guidelines/7\\_6\\_Guideline.pdf](https://www.sdbor.edu/administrative-offices/academics/academic-affairs-guidelines/Documents/7_Guidelines/7_6_Guideline.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> See for example, Maxine Joselow, “Algebra No More,” *Inside Higher Ed* (July 6, 2016), available from <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/07/06/michigan-state-drops-college-algebra-requirement>.

## Improving Remediation

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The Regental system employs a common placement structure to determine student likelihood for success in entry level English and Mathematics courses. Most recently, AAC and the Board of Regents adopted a Math Index as a multi-measured approach for predicting student capacity for performing well in their entry level course. The adoption of this model required a more consistent approach to both entry and upper level math courses than what had previously been established and campuses continue to work through the implementation of this approach. Despite these most recent efforts, institutions and the system have engaged in an aggressive strategy to improve student preparation and success rates for students who are targeted for remedial coursework in these two areas. For the past four years, the Department of Education has been delivering a [College Algebra Readiness](#) course aligned with the systems Math 095 curriculum where students sit for the Accuplacer diagnostic exam, have modules developed through the Pearson My Foundation Lab product, and then take the Accuplacer to validate their preparation for entry into Math 102 at the completion of the course. NSU has most recently taken on the administration and delivery of this particular program.

Additionally, using one-time funds made available from the Legislature in FY13, representatives from Complete College America traveled to South Dakota and met with Math and English faculty in Pierre to discuss successful strategies underway at institutions around the country. The session concluded with the release of an RFP related to the availability of \$350,000 in state funds to assist campuses in their efforts to create innovative, scalable programs that allow for a more flexible approach to remediation and help students reach credit-bearing courses more quickly. Proposals were received from BHSU, DSU, NSU, SDSU and USD and a brief overview and outcomes associated with the proposals can be found in Attachment II of the [April 2017 AAC](#) agenda item.

**Table 1**  
**English and Math Success Rates for Regental Institution FY07 through FY16**

<b>Courses</b>	<b>BHSU</b>	<b>DSU</b>	<b>NSU</b>	<b>SDSMT</b>	<b>SDSU</b>	<b>USD</b>	<b>System</b>
<i>Remedial Math Success Rate<sup>8</sup></i>	65.3%	56.6%	67.3%	77.8%	42.1%	45.8%	56.1%
<i>MATH 102 Success Rate<sup>9</sup></i>	70.8%	75.1%	81.0%	62.6%	59.8%	58.5%	66.4%
<i>Math Success Rate - All Non-Remedial Courses</i>	72.0%	73.9%	84.1%	69.1%	70.8%	67.4%	71.2%
<i>Remedial English Success Rate</i>	76.3%	85.6%	81.0%	100.0%	73.8%	88.3%	81.0%
<i>ENGL 101 Success Rate</i>	79.5%	75.7%	81.0%	81.0%	75.1%	80.2%	78.2%
<i>English Success Rate - All Non-Remedial Courses</i>	79.2%	77.6%	83.7%	79.6%	76.6%	81.1%	79.8%

Considering that the topic of remediation will continue to be a critical issue with both the Board of Regents and the Legislature in coming years a review of our efforts in this area is

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<sup>8</sup> \*These numbers do not include corequisite remedial courses, which enroll students in sections of MATH 102, as provide the student with additional help through addition remedial hours. There is no way in our Dashboard to distinguish these students, as they are integrated with regular students in traditional MATH 102 sections.

<sup>9</sup> This number includes MATH 102 Corequisite courses. Therefore, some of these students are remedial students.

warranted. Using data available in the SDBOR Grades Dashboard, the slate of remedial courses were evaluated from FY07 to FY16. Table 1 depicts the overall success rates for English and Math courses (remedial and non-remedial) at each institution during this time frame.

Additionally, Table 2 and 3 provide similar data for each of the various academic years referenced in Table 1 above for both Math and English. Overall the system has seen a slight increase this past year in English remediation, but some of that stems from a rather steep decline in success for students in these courses in FY15. Math has clearly been more sporadic in identifying discernable trends for student success. Institutional trends in some circumstances are more pronounced and AAC representatives should review the data in these tables and be prepared to discuss desired approaches for moving forward with institutional or system initiatives.

**Table 2**  
**English Remediation<sup>10</sup> Success Rates for Regental System for FY07 through FY16**

	<b>FY2007</b>	<b>FY2008</b>	<b>FY2009</b>	<b>FY2010</b>	<b>FY2011</b>	<b>FY2012</b>	<b>FY2013</b>	<b>FY2014</b>	<b>FY2015</b>	<b>FY2016</b>
<i>BHSU</i>	77.8%	79.3%	76.1%	78.4%	74.5%	77.2%	74.7%	65.4%	61.8%	76.3%
<i>DSU</i>	57.7%	49.8%	50.2%	55.2%	57.3%	48.1%	68.7%	80.1%	72.3%	85.6%
<i>NSU</i>	72.6%	76.0%	83.4%	91.1%	78.8%	75.4%	73.6%	81.0%	76.4%	81.0%
<i>SDSMT</i>	71.1%	88.4%	76.3%	72.6%	81.4%	95.5%	75.9%	83.3%	83.3%	100.0%
<i>SDSU</i>	71.1%	75.9%	78.0%	71.1%	75.2%	72.2%	75.0%	67.8%	70.1%	73.8%
<i>USD</i>	86.2%	76.8%	76.5%	81.1%	76.9%	76.7%	82.4%	81.9%	70.3%	88.3%
<b>System</b>	<b>74.7%</b>	<b>75.5%</b>	<b>77.4%</b>	<b>78.4%</b>	<b>76.7%</b>	<b>74.3%</b>	<b>76.0%</b>	<b>73.7%</b>	<b>69.4%</b>	<b>81.0%</b>

**Table 3**  
**Math Remediation<sup>11</sup> Success Rates for Regental System for FY07 through FY16**

	<b>FY2007</b>	<b>FY2008</b>	<b>FY2009</b>	<b>FY2010</b>	<b>FY2011</b>	<b>FY2012</b>	<b>FY2013</b>	<b>FY2014</b>	<b>FY2015</b>	<b>FY2016</b>
<i>BHSU</i>	51.3%	50.9%	55.9%	62.6%	73.3%	73.9%	71.9%	74.1%	74.0%	68.1%
<i>DSU</i>	66.6%	65.3%	59.7%	59.0%	56.1%	51.8%	56.1%	54.2%	40.4%	42.0%
<i>NSU</i>	60.8%	54.2%	62.3%	72.5%	63.6%	70.4%	76.7%	74.2%	66.7%	76.9%
<i>SDSMT</i>	75.0%	76.8%	83.7%	75.5%	84.2%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>SDSU</i>	55.0%	56.3%	48.5%	49.5%	22.5%	15.5%	28.6%	41.2%	54.1%	57.9%
<i>USD</i>	54.6%	49.7%	56.0%	52.8%	34.4%	41.5%	48.8%	49.9%	43.4%	38.5%
<b>System</b>	<b>57.8%</b>	<b>55.9%</b>	<b>56.6%</b>	<b>58.4%</b>	<b>47.0%</b>	<b>51.8%</b>	<b>57.7%</b>	<b>57.5%</b>	<b>55.0%</b>	<b>54.7%</b>

<sup>10</sup> Includes all courses below ENGL 101, as well as 101C (BHSU Corequisite Course).

<sup>11</sup> Includes all courses below MATH 102. Does not include corequisite courses.

### ***Potential Math Redesign***

Conversation around math redesign in the Regental system have been unfolding over the past decade beginning with a USD task force intent on reviewing mathematics instruction in Spring 2005. A focus of the initial review was to improve quantitative literacy of the general student population, and the taskforce concluded that a course specifically designed to put math in a real-world context would be more effective in developing quantitative literacy skills for students and increase student success in general education mathematics courses. Consistent with the Mathematical Association of America standards for quantitative literacy a pilot course was developed and offered beginning with the Fall 2007 term on an experimental basis. In December 2008, USD requested approval to have Math 103 included as an approved course for SGR goal #5, and the Board deferred approval until an assessment of the effectiveness of the course could be completed. These data were provided to the Board during their [June 2010](#) meeting at which time the Board approved the addition of Quantitative Literacy to BOR Policy 2:7 and 2:26.

Despite the addition of MATH 103 to general education policy, overall success rates in the introductory math sequence in the Regental system has not experienced significant increases over the past five years. The same can be said for postsecondary institutions around the country as math success continues to be in the spotlight ([Mainstreaming Remedial Math](#) and [No Math Required](#)). While the addition of Math 095, MATH 102/102L, MATH 103/103L, and SP grades have offered new alternatives for students in the Regental system, math gateway courses continue to serve as barriers for student progression and success. During the [Western Academic Leadership Forum](#) in April representatives from the Charles A Dana Center (University of Texas at Austin), and Montana State University, Bozeman outlined methods for improving student Math performance using the [New Mathways Project](#). Representatives from states that are implementing new math pathways in collaboration with the Dana Center provided an overview of the process used, lessons learned, and results from their respective initiatives. Additionally, in 2016 [Michigan State University](#) revised general education requirements to no longer require Algebra, and replaced the requirement with two quantitative literacy courses. This information is provided as background to for the Board to facilitate discussion around options for exploring alternatives for the Regental system. The Board of Regents prioritized two math initiatives from SDSU and SDSM&T in the budget request to the Governor for FY17 which may raise broader questions about comprehensive strategies underway in the system.

## Proactive Admissions & College Application Campaign

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In 2011, AAC discussed the option of establishing an alternate approach to admission that would grant provisional admission to students as a mechanism to both better facilitate application processing and encourage students to eliminate any remedial deficiencies they might have before they complete their first semester. Despite considerable discussion, the proposal was set aside due to the adverse implications it might have on student enrollment interests. However, more recently states have begun to explore an alternative model of proactive admission that does not place any barriers on students once they have been admitted. For instance, in 2015 the state of Idaho began a process for directly admitting students from Idaho high schools into its public colleges and universities without them needing to fill out an application. With the first group of students to benefit from the program on campus, Idaho's institutions saw an overall enrollment growth of 3.1% and the number of first-time, instate first year students who enrolled immediately following graduation grew 6.7%.<sup>12</sup> Since the fall, central office staff have been engaged in discussions with the South Dakota Department of Education (SD DOE) on making a similar program work for South Dakota.

Proactive admissions decisions will be made using SBAC and ACT scores as available through Infinite Campus. During their [June 2017](#) meeting, the Board approved the first reading of the updated admissions policy to provide the policy framework that would allow for the admission of high school students just based on their performance on the Smarter Balanced assessment test administered to all South Dakota students at the conclusion of the 11th grade. Data agreements between SDBOR and SD DOE as well as those between SD DOE and school districts have been updated to be able to utilize the necessary data fields, and parents will have the option to “opt-out” on Infinite Campus if they do not want their student's information shared for these purposes. Proactive admissions letters (see Attachment II) will be mailed at the beginning of September with an application deadline of December 1 to allow students and their families time to make an informed decision. It is important to note that proactive admission provides guaranteed general acceptance, but students will still need to meet any additional requirements for specific programs. Those students enrolled at high schools participating in College Application Week will be eligible for a fee waiver during the designated week, while those students at other districts will still need to pay the application fees.

The American College Application Campaign (ACAC) is a national effort to increase the number of students from underrepresented and underserved populations pursuing a postsecondary education. The program helps students navigate the often confusing and complex college admissions process and encourages them to apply to at least one postsecondary institution. The first College Application Day was held at a GEAR UP high school in North Carolina in 2005 and has since grown to an estimated 5,000 high schools nationwide. South Dakota joined the ACAC in the fall of 2014, piloting South Dakota College Application Week at nine schools. The expanded pilot in 2015 included 20 schools, and in the third year grew to include nearly 40 South Dakota high schools. The initial pilot was coordinated through the staff of the College Access Challenge

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2016/11/23/idaho-universities-see-enrollment-rise-after-killingadmissionsapplication#.WDWc7y2V4ts.twitter>



Grant (CACG) program. After the CACG program was discontinued by the U.S. Department of Education, the Board of Regents central office took over coordination of the program.

During the designated week, graduating seniors at participating high schools are granted the opportunity to apply to up to three Regental institutions and other partner institutions at no cost. Over the course of the week, students participate in a variety of activities culminating in their applying to college. Schools are free to determine their own programming during the week with some schools putting together panels of teachers and staff to speak with students about their college experience and answer any questions students may have. Other activities include completion of a college decision map, scholarship essay practice, interest inventories on SDMyLife, and speaking with admissions representatives at college fairs prior to the application week. Participating schools are identified using historic matriculation trends as illustrated in the SDBOR Matriculation Dashboard.<sup>13</sup> Those schools with historically low rates of college-going are of greatest emphasis as well as schools with high populations of students from underrepresented and underserved backgrounds including racial/ethnic minorities, first-generation, and low-income. An analysis of the first two years of the program found that College Application Week yielded nearly 450 students enrolling in postsecondary education with an 82% matriculation rate for participating students.<sup>14</sup>

The goal for South Dakota College Application Week 2017 is to expand to 80 schools, doubling the number of participating schools from the 2016 campaign. Expanding to 80 schools should allow the program to reach all of the tribal/BIE high schools, nearly all high schools that participate in GEAR UP and/or TRIO programs, the majority of schools whose matriculation rate is below the state average of about 67.7%, and many of the more rural districts that don't often receive services or attention. As the program grows, with the ultimate goal of expanding state-wide, staff will need to explore options for continuing the fee waiver component of the program.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.sdbor.edu/dashboards/Pages/College-Matriculation.aspx>

<sup>14</sup> [https://www.sdbor.edu/the-board/agendaitems/2014AgendaItems/2017%20Agenda%20Items/March2817/6\\_O\\_BOR0317.pdf](https://www.sdbor.edu/the-board/agendaitems/2014AgendaItems/2017%20Agenda%20Items/March2817/6_O_BOR0317.pdf)

Dear student,

Congratulations! You're starting your senior year. As if that weren't exciting enough, you have **already** been accepted to each of South Dakota's public universities and technical institutes listed down the side of this letter.

**What does this mean?** South Dakota's public postsecondary institutions now use student performance on the Smarter Balanced Assessment and the ACT to determine automatic eligibility for admission. Your score of Level 3 or 4 on the English language arts and math portions of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade Smarter Balanced assessment and/or your ACT composite score of 18 or higher have earned you guaranteed general acceptance into the South Dakota public university or technical institute of your choice. (Note: SD Mines requires an ACT composite of 20 and an ACT math subscore of 20)

**Wondering what to do next?** Visit [sdmylife.com/gotocollegeSD](http://sdmylife.com/gotocollegeSD) to learn more about each school and how to apply. You must complete your application for admission, pay the application fee, and submit your official high school transcript by Dec. 1, 2017, in order to take advantage of your guaranteed acceptance. After Dec. 1, you may still apply, but your acceptance would no longer be guaranteed. You must also graduate high school this school year.

**College Application Week is Oct. 30-Nov. 3, 2017.** Ask your school counselor or principal if your school is participating in this special week, during which application fees are waived!

Please note that this is a *general* admission acceptance to the institutions. If you're thinking about going into a specific field like Pharmacy, Nursing, Radiology, Theater, or Music, you may still need to meet additional admission requirements.

Also be sure to complete your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) at <https://fafsa.ed.gov/>. Millions of students each year take advantage of financial aid opportunities that help cover the cost of their education. The FAFSA for school year 2018-19 becomes available Oct. 1, 2017.

On behalf of the South Dakota Department of Education, the South Dakota Board of Regents, and the South Dakota Board of Technical Education, I wish you all the best. Your future is bright in South Dakota!

Sincerely,

Dr. Melody Schopp  
Secretary of Education

