SUBJECT:  Starfish Update and Go Live Progress

History:
During the final week of the 2011 Legislative Session, House Bill 1235 passed through both the House and the Senate garnering approval for the creation of a one-time $1.5 million Performance Enhancement Fund for the South Dakota Regental system. As the bill was being prepared, the Board of Regents provided guidance to shape the legislation focusing on two critical areas of need that could be addressed through the use of a one-time appropriation.

The first focused on the creation of a performance fund to help institutions leverage non-state grant funding and continue efforts to build the state’s research infrastructure. Specifically, funds would be used to target high-tech research initiatives to advance the future of wind, energy, the biofuels industry, medical research, information technology, and/or the financial services sector.

Secondly, funds were requested to assist institutions in their efforts to further improve upon existing early alert systems. As student retention continues to be a critical issue for postsecondary institutions nationwide, colleges and universities have begun to invest in robust “early-alert” systems that target at-risk students by fully integrating and analyzing existing data sources. Currently, the Regental system has policies and practices in place that assist in capturing reports from individual faculty members at various points in the semester. However, integration with live data from the common Learning Management System (LMS) and historical data from the common Student Information System (SIS) has not been targeted to assist in these efforts.

The recommendation to select Starfish as the system vendor was discussed during the March 2012 Council of Presidents and Superintendents meeting and approved at the March 2012 BOR Meeting.

Update:
Over the past several months, the campuses have worked diligently in implementing the Student Early Alert System for a Spring 2013 Pilot. The project team working with this

(Continued)
Implementation included stakeholders from multiple cross-functional departments and sectors of the university system including: Academic Affairs, Student Affairs, Instructional, Student (via Student Federation) and Technical.

As you may recall, the Student Early Alert System is a tool that provides a new way to connect students to their advisors, instructors, and student services resources. Ultimately, the goal is to increase awareness and connect students with advisors, instructors and other university services because research of this connection contributes to student success, learning, and satisfaction. In order for this tool to be effective, the universities will need to ensure effective engagement strategies are underway during the implementation phase, during the pilot and then in the following transition of system-wide go live.

The pilot includes first year students; and the implementation and early adoption focuses primarily on the following general education course sections: Math 21, 095, 101, 102, 123; ENGL 101; SPCM 101; PSYC 101; SOC 100; BIOL 101; WEL 100; CHEM 112; POLS 100; CSC 105; HIST 121, 151; SPAN 101; GS 143. It was appropriate for a pilot implementation ensuring configuration and to ensure adequate resource allocation.

As the universities are in the final stages of the implementation, the project team has identified a core number of action steps the campuses are taking to guarantee proper implementation and a smooth go live for January 2013. They include the following:

1. Functional and End User Training
2. Student Engagement Strategies
3. Faculty Engagement Strategies
4. Workflow and Resource Allocation Strategies
5. Pilot Review (to make necessary enhancements for Fall 2013)

As the system is being utilized during Spring of 2013, the project team will review the following agreed upon metrics:

1. Adoption – Early adoption of the Student Early Alert system for the Pilot Courses will be measured during the pilot and upon completion of the semester. Specifically, activity will be monitored to identify enhancement strategies and training opportunities for implementation in the Fall of 2013.
2. Progress Survey - A progress survey is a method for faculty to respond on their students via an email survey. This allows the faculty member a reasonable process to get information into the system. A progress survey will be submitted during the first 6 weeks of the semester to increase awareness of the system and to engage students and staff on early alerts for student success.
3. Focus Group Review - At the end of the semester, conducting a survey/focus group with the advising centers to measure the outcomes of the student success initiatives.
Summary:
The overall system functionality will be reviewed after the pilot and modified to best practices for the university. An updated report will be provided to Committee A sometime during the Fall of 2013.