

# South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship



2011 Annual Report



***Terry Baloun***  
Highmore, SD  
President

***Kathryn Johnson***  
Hill City, SD  
Vice President

***James O. Hansen***  
Pierre, SD  
Secretary

***Randy Schaefer***  
Madison, SD  
Member

***Harvey C. Jewett***  
Aberdeen, SD  
Member

***Dean Krogman***  
Brookings, SD  
Member

***Randall K. Morris***  
Spearfish, SD  
Member

***Carole Pagonis***  
Sioux Falls, SD  
Member

***Patrick Weber***  
Vermillion, SD  
Student Regent

***Executive Director & CEO***  
Jack Warner

***Chief Academic Officer***  
Samuel B. Gingerich

Copyright 2011  
by the South Dakota Board of Regents  
All rights reserved

Additional copies of this report are available by contacting:

South Dakota Board of Regents  
306 East Capital Avenue, Suite 200  
Pierre, SD 57501  
605-773-3455  
<http://www.sdbor.edu>

# Table of Contents

---

<i>Executive Summary</i> .....	3
<b>Program Overview</b>	
<i>Background</i> .....	6
<i>Scholarship Recipients</i> .....	7
<i>Recipient Institutional Distributions</i> .....	8
<i>County Distribution</i> .....	9
<i>Major Enrollments</i> .....	11
<i>Pre-Professional Program Enrollments</i> .....	12
<b>Recipient Continuing Eligibility</b>	
<i>Completed Cohort Eligibility</i> .....	14
<i>Current Cohort</i> .....	15
<i>Eligibility Trends</i> .....	16
<i>Continuing Eligibility Indicators</i> .....	17
<i>Executive Director Exemptions</i> .....	19
<b>Impact Analysis</b>	
<i>Impact of Rigorous Curriculum</i> .....	21
<i>School District Remedial Trends</i> .....	22
<i>ACT Performance</i> .....	23
<i>College Readiness</i> .....	24
<i>Retention Rates</i> .....	25
<b>Opportunity Scholarship Graduation Survey</b>	
<i>Respondent Characteristics</i> .....	26
<i>Future Career Objectives</i> .....	27
<i>Recipient Perceptions of Program</i> .....	27
<i>Campus Support</i> .....	28
<i>Student Hardships</i> .....	28
<i>Perceived Influence</i> .....	30
<i>Legislative Policy Issue</i> .....	31
<b>Appendices</b>	
<i>A: South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship Legislative Statutes</i> .....	32
<i>B: South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship Administrative Rules</i> .....	34

## List of Tables & Figures

<i>Table 1: Regent Scholar Curriculum</i> . . . . .	6
<i>Table 2: Distinguished Graduation Requirements</i> . . . . .	6
<i>Figure 1: Fall Opportunity Scholarship Recipients – Seven Year Trend</i> . . . . .	7
<i>Table 3: Recipients Funded Across First Seven Academic Years</i> . . . . .	8
<i>Figure 2: Percentage &amp; Frequency of the SDOS Recipients by County</i> . . . . .	9
<i>Figure 3: Percentage &amp; Frequency of SDOS Recipients by County for 2010-11 Academic Year</i> . . . . .	10
<i>Table 4: Twenty Most Common Majors for SDOS Recipients</i> . . . . .	11
<i>Table 5: Ten Most Common Majors for Scholarship Program Graduates</i> . . . . .	12
<i>Table 6: SDOS Recipients Enrollment in Pre-Professional Tracking Programs</i> . . . . .	12
<i>Figure 4: Continuing Eligibility Status for Initial Scholarship Recipients</i> . . . . .	14
<i>Table 7: Recipient Ineligibility Across All SDOS Institutions</i> . . . . .	15
<i>Table 8: Cohort Continuing Eligibility Into Each Academic Term</i> . . . . .	16
<i>Table 9: Recipient Ineligibility Across All SDOS Institutions for Fall 2010 Term</i> . . . . .	16
<i>Table 10: Frequency/Percentage of SDOS Eligibility by Composite ACT Score</i> . . . . .	17
<i>Figure 5: Percentage of SDOS Recipients Losing Eligibility by Composite ACT Score</i> . . . . .	17
<i>Figure 6: Percentage of Recipients Maintaining Eligibility by High School GPA</i> . . . . .	18
<i>Table 11: Executive Director Exemption Requests</i> . . . . .	19
<i>Figure 7: Number of Exemption Waivers Granted by Academic Term</i> . . . . .	20
<i>Table 12: Exemption Waiver Requests by Exemption Justifications</i> . . . . .	20
<i>Table 13: SD Graduates Entering Regental Institutions Between 2003-2009</i> . . . . .	21
<i>Table 14: Seven Year Trend for SD Graduates Enrolled in Remedial Courses</i> . . . . .	22
<i>Figure 8: Comparison of High Schools with No Remedial Enrollments</i> . . . . .	22
<i>Table 15: SD Graduates with 24 or Higher on the ACT</i> . . . . .	23
<i>Figure 9: Graduates with 24 or Higher on the ACT Entering Regental System</i> . . . . .	23
<i>Figure 10: ACT College Readiness Benchmark Scores</i> . . . . .	24
<i>Table 16: Percentage of SD Students Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmarks</i> . . . . .	24
<i>Figure 11: Percentage of Students Retained Based on Time Within the System</i> . . . . .	25
<i>Table 17: Retention Rates for Pre-SDOS and SDOS cohorts</i> . . . . .	25
<i>Figure 12: Additional Financial Support From Awarding Institutions</i> . . . . .	26
<i>Table 18: Graduation Survey Respondents by Awarding Institutions</i> . . . . .	26
<i>Table 19: Intended Geographic Placement for Employment &amp; Graduate Work</i> . . . . .	27
<i>Table 20: Student Interaction with Campus Personnel Regarding SDOS Program</i> . . . . .	28
<i>Table 21: Recipient Difficulty Maintaining Eligibility in SDOS Program</i> . . . . .	29
<i>Table 22: Perceived Influence of the SDOS Program</i> . . . . .	30
<i>Table 23: Fiscal Year Inflation Increase</i> . . . . .	31
<i>Figure 13: Actual Purchasing Power of the SDOS Based on Inflation Trends</i> . . . . .	31

# Executive Summary

---

The South Dakota Legislature authorized the development of the Opportunity Scholarship program in 2003 to provide financial support to South Dakota high school graduates who pursue their post-secondary careers in the state. Beginning with the 2004 graduating class, those students who obtained a 24 or higher on the ACT, and completed the Regents Scholar curriculum are eligible to receive up to \$5000 in funding during their four years of college. The purpose for the program was to encourage students to complete a rigorous high school curriculum and remain in the state to pursue their post-secondary education. The *South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship Annual Report* is designed to provide a comprehensive overview of the program during its seventh year.

## ***Program Overview***

A total of 7,342 South Dakota high school graduates have established initial eligibility in the scholarship program since the first cohort began during the Fall 2004 semester. A total of 828 recipients became eligible during the first semester, and the program has experienced a 42% increase in enrollments during the past seven years. The largest percentage increase occurred between the 2006-07 and 2007-08 academic years when the number of Fall recipients increased by 16%. This past year the program experienced a 5% incline after last year's slight drop in enrollment growth. The largest number of recipients enrolled during the most recent Fall 2010 semester.

South Dakota State University has enrolled the most SDOS recipients during

each year of the program (40%), followed by USD, SDSMT, Augustana and BHSU who accounted for more than 82% of all recipients. Engineering emerged as the most common major (8.9%), followed by Humanities (6.1%), Business/Business Administration (5.3%), Biological Sciences (4.5%), and Nursing, (3.3%). Overall, Opportunity Scholarship recipients are more likely to enroll in majors resulting in career areas such as medicine, science, mathematics, engineering, and business.

## ***Continuing Eligibility Status***

Students can lose their eligibility for six reasons which include: 1) temporarily falling below the required GPA; 2) falling below the required credit hours; 3) falling below the required credit hours and failing to meet established GPA requirements; 4) withdrawing/transferring out of the program; 5) failure to pass the Collegiate Assessment of Academic Proficiency (CAAP) exam; and/or 6) graduation. When examining the eligibility of the cohort of recipients who entered during the 2004-05 academic year, a total of 56% (469 out of 840) were able to maintain eligibility into the final semester. This percentage increased slightly for the 2005-06 cohort with 59% maintaining eligibility until the final term (502 out of 858), but then decreased again for the 2006-07 cohort (56% or 552 out of 983).

Of the 4,575 recipients who have established initial eligibility since the 2007-08 academic year, a total of 1,294 students have failed to meet the continuing eligibility requirements. For these cohorts, the largest majority has failed to meet GPA and credit

hour requirements (41%), followed by those who fell below the required credit hours (25%), and the GPA requirements (20%), withdrew (14%), or graduated (.3%). Eligibility trends for each of the cohorts indicate that an average of 72% of recipients are able to maintain eligibility into the second year of the program. This declined to 63% when examined at the start of the third year, and only 58% have been able to sustain eligibility into their final year.

Student ACT and high school GPA continue to serve as strong predictors for student continuing eligibility. Forty-eight percent of those students with an ACT of 24 have lost eligibility, with those students who scored a 30 or higher on the ACT having at least a 70% likelihood of maintaining eligibility into their second, third or fourth year of funding. Students obtaining a 4.00 GPA in high school have maintained eligibility 80% of the time, and only 29% have remained eligible if they had achieved the baseline threshold required for the program (3.24-3.00 GPA).

State statute has granted the Executive Director of the Board of Regents the authority to grant exceptions from the continuing eligibility requirements when good cause is shown. As of January 1, 2011 a total of 1,106 exemption requests have been received from students in the first ten cohorts. One-Hundred and thirty-one exemption requests have been denied, and 885 requests have been granted for students across sixteen institutions. The most common exemption waiver has been granted for students' inability to meet *Credit Hour* requirements (88%). In addition to these six waiver classifications, six justifications have been attributed to student appeals for exemptions from the Executive Director. Sixty-six percent of the exemptions were granted because of student *Program of Study*

*Requirements*, with a majority of these waivers granted for students not meeting the Credit Hour Requirements. Considerable growth has also occurred in the number of exemption requests received by the executive director. A total of 34 requests were received during the 2005-06 academic year. This number doubled to 78 in 2006-07, and then tripled in 2007-08 to 234 exemption requests. Last year the number rose to 343. The primary reason for the increased number of exemption requests have come from seniors in the final year of the program who do not require 15 credit hours each semester to meet graduation requirements.

### ***Impact Analysis***

A variety of data elements were evaluated to determine the impact of the Opportunity Scholarship for meeting program objectives. Each year the Board of Regents creates the *High School to College Transition Report* to document the first year performance of students from the state's school districts. When comparing the most recent graduating class against those graduates who enrolled in the Regental system prior to the start of the scholarship program, the level of remedial enrollments has shown a continuous decline. Those students requiring remediation in math has dropped by 8%, and English remediation has declined by 3.4% during the past seven years. Unduplicated enrollments have also experienced a 5% decrease. The number of school districts with no students requiring remediation has increased to 14%, compared to 12% of the school districts in 2003.

Twenty-two percent of South Dakota high school graduates obtained a 24 or higher on the ACT the year leading into the implementation of the Opportunity Scholarship program. This percentage increased to 23% in 2004, with the state

experiencing a marked increase to 29% for 2010. In relation to the overall state percentage, the percentage of high school graduates with a 24 or higher ACT score entering the Regental system also experienced similar positive trends. A year before the program was implemented, roughly 46% of all graduates achieving a 24 or higher attended one of the six Regental institutions the year after graduation. This percentage has increased to approximately 52% over the past academic year. Graduates have also been able to meet *College Readiness Benchmarks* at higher rates than the national average, and a 5% increase has occurred on all four content areas of the ACT since the scholarship program began.

Retention rates for high achieving students have also increased when comparing Opportunity Scholarship recipients to cohorts of students who had achieved a 24 or higher on the ACT prior to the start of the program. Eighty percent of a pre-SDOS cohort of students were retained into their fourth year, while 88% of Opportunity Scholarship recipients had been retained within the state. Fifteen percent of pre-SDOS students dropped out prior to the start of the second year, compared to only 7% of Opportunity Scholarship recipients.

### ***Opportunity Scholarship Graduate Survey***

At the end of the Spring 2008, 2009 and 2010 semesters an Opportunity Scholarship Graduation Survey was distributed to obtain feedback from recipients about the institutional services they received, future goals after graduation, as well as concerns they had about the program. A total of 803 recipients (32% response rate) completed the survey, with the majority of the recipients (35%) indicating they received \$2500 or more in additional financial support from their campus. Only one-quarter of the respondents indicated they received less than

\$1000 each year from their institution in additional financial aid.

A total of 350 respondents indicated they planned to enter the workforce directly after graduation, and 196 (56%) had already secured employment with 72% of them intending to work in South Dakota. Three hundred and fifty-nine respondents indicated they planned to pursue graduate work. Of these, 258 had already been accepted, and 67% of these planned to attend institutions in South Dakota. A total of 454 (57%) respondents had secured employment or been accepted in a graduate program after completing their under-graduate program. Approximately 69% chose to remain in South Dakota. When responding to a series of survey questions, recipients indicated they received appropriate levels of support from campus personnel when it came to working with the Opportunity Scholarship requirements. Many of the recipients did not experience difficulties meeting the requirements of the scholarship program.

Overall, data depicted in this report demonstrates how the Opportunity Scholarship program has served to provide financial support for South Dakota high school graduates. Additionally, the requirements established by the Legislature when developing the program has resulted in a number of positive results for the overall academic preparation of graduates as they make the transition into their post-secondary experience. Establishing the rigorous curriculum requirements has resulted in a decline in the need for remedial education, increased ACT performance and *College Readiness*, as well as enhanced student retention once they transition into the higher education environment.

# Program Overview

## Scholarship Program Background

In 2003 the South Dakota Legislature authorized the Regents Scholarship Program to allow South Dakota’s most academically accomplished high school graduates to receive an affordable education at any university, college, or technical school in South Dakota that is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The following year, the Legislature renamed the scholarship the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship (SDOS) and authorized funding from the state of South Dakota’s Education Enhancement Trust Fund, beginning with high school graduating classes in 2004. The purpose for developing the Opportunity Scholarship program was to accomplish three primary objectives including the desire: 1) to persuade students to complete a rigorous high school curriculum that would enhance college readiness for high school graduates as they pursue post-secondary careers; 2) to encourage high achieving South Dakota graduates to remain in the state; and 3) enhance the likelihood that these students would remain in the state after graduation from their post-secondary education to become a part of the workforce.

South Dakota high school graduates, who are residents of South Dakota at the time of graduation, receive an ACT composite score of 24 or higher, and complete high school course requirements consistent with the Regents Scholar curriculum (see Table 1) are eligible for the Opportunity Scholarship. The purpose of the *South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship Annual Report* is to provide a comprehensive overview of recipients

**Table 1**  
**Regents Scholar Curriculum**

<b>Course Requirements</b>	<b>Units</b>
<i>English</i>	4.0
<i>Social Studies</i>	3.0
<i>Mathematics</i>	4.0
<i>Science</i>	4.0
<i>Fine Arts</i>	1.0
<i>World Languages</i>	2.0
<i>Computer Studies</i>	0.5
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>18.5</b>

involved in the scholarship program since the first cohort of students enrolled in Fall 2004.

During the 2008 Legislative session, the curriculum provision was modified to align with the new distinguished graduation requirements established by the South Dakota Department of Education. Beginning with the 2010 graduating class, all recipients will be required to complete the “distinguished” graduation track to meet the high school curriculum requirements (see Table 2). These curriculum provisions were further modified

**Table 2**  
**Revised Graduation Requirements**

<b>Course Requirements</b>	<b>Units</b>
<i>English &amp; Communication Arts</i>	4.0
<i>Social Studies</i>	3.0
<i>Mathematics (Algebra I or Higher)</i>	4.0
<i>Science (3 Units of Lab Science)</i>	4.0
<i>Fine Arts</i>	1.0
<i>Health or Physical Education</i>	0.5
<i>Economics or Personal Finance</i>	0.5
<i>World Languages/CTE*</i>	2.0
<i>Computer Studies</i>	0.5
<i>Electives</i>	2.5
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>22.0</b>

\*For students entering high school beginning Fall 2010.



in 2010 to align with the newly established graduation requirements approved by the Board of Education prior to the start of the 2010 legislative session. Changes implemented in 2010 allow for students that enter high school during Fall 2010 to take either Foreign Language or Career and Technical Education coursework to meet initial eligibility requirements.



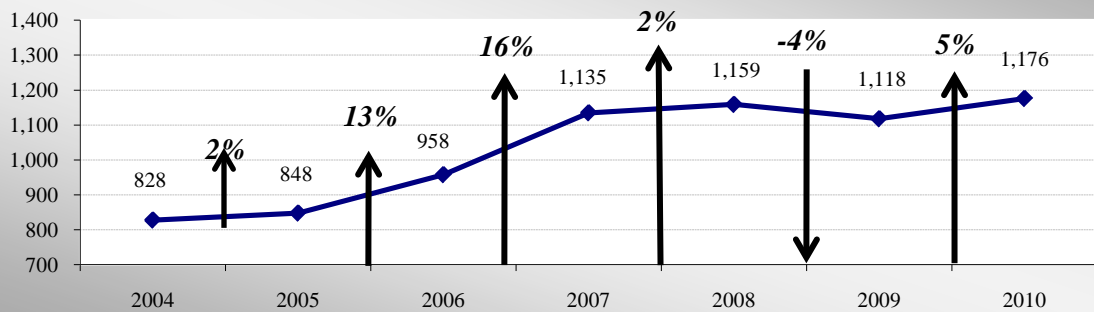
### Scholarship Recipients

Governor Rounds established his 2010 Education Initiative in 2006 to provide a vision for the future of education in South Dakota. The 2010 initiative set forth five measurable goals, each with objectives and action steps in three major areas including starting strong, finishing strong, and staying strong. Goal Three of this initiative speaks specifically to the important impact that the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship has for ensuring a post-secondary education system that will meet the state’s needs. Governor Rounds established an objective to “Double the number of students receiving the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship” by 2010. Since the initial recipients entered the Opportunity Scholarship program during the Fall 2004 semester, a total of 7,342 South Dakota high school graduates have established

their initial eligibility.

A moderate increase in the number of Opportunity Scholarship recipients occurred between the first two academic years (2%) and the number of recipients who established eligibility between 2007 and 2008 (2%). The largest percentage increase in the number of recipients emerged when comparing the 2005 and 2006 cohorts (13%), and the following year when the largest percentage growth in the program was obtained (see Figure 1). Overall, there has been a 42% increase in the number of recipients compared with the 828 recipients who established initial eligibility during the Fall 2004 semester.

**Figure 1**  
**Fall Opportunity Scholarship Recipients– Seven Year Trend**



### ***Recipient Institutional Distributions***

The most recent cohort of SDOS recipients for 2010-11 academic year includes 1,176 South Dakota graduates, which is an increase of 36 recipients when compared to the 2009-10 academic year. The distribution of recipients has remained relatively consistent over seven years of the program and has aligned primarily with enrollment trends at the colleges and universities throughout South Dakota. For this past Fall cohort, the top five institutions enrolling the largest number of recipients were SDSU followed by USD, SDSMT, Augustana, and BHSU who accounted for more than 82% of the recipients for the 2010-11 academic year (see Table 3).

Overall, SDSU (40.2%) has enrolled the most SDOS recipients in each of the seven academic years since the program began (see Table 3). The 2010 cohort resulted in the largest cohort of recipients since the scholarship program was established. The

increase signals that the program continues to serve as an important tool for encouraging South Dakota students to attend institutions in the state.

Although the highest percentage of scholarship recipients are awarded during the Fall semester, a small percentage of recipients will establish initial eligibility during the Spring term. The administrative rules that govern the program specify that a student may wait up to five years from the point of high school graduation to establish initial eligibility. Also, students who attend a regionally accredited institution outside South Dakota and return within two years may receive partial funding if they have maintained continuing eligibility requirements while they attended outside the state. As a result, you will note in Table 3 below that a slightly higher number of recipients have become eligible beyond the Fall recipients identified in Figure 1 on the preceding page.

**Table 3**  
***Recipients Funded Across First Seven Academic Years***

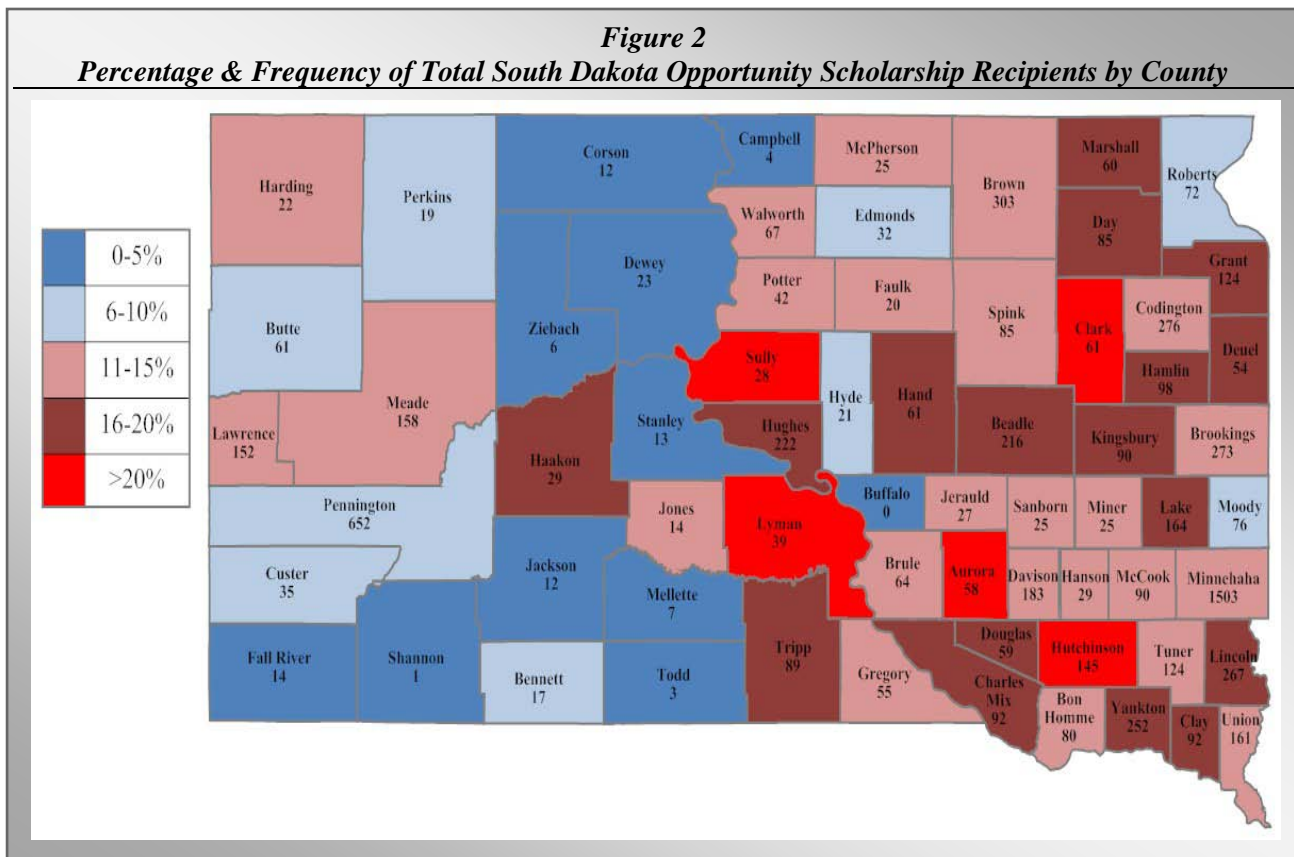
<b><i>Participating Institution</i></b>	<b><i>2004-05</i></b>	<b><i>2005-06</i></b>	<b><i>2006-07</i></b>	<b><i>2007-08</i></b>	<b><i>2008-09</i></b>	<b><i>2009-10</i></b>	<b><i>2010-11</i></b>	<b><i>7 Year Total</i></b>	<b><i>7 Year %</i></b>
Augustana College	79	58	82	90	100	97	97	603	8.2%
Black Hills State U.	36	52	56	61	65	55	79	404	5.5%
Colorado Technical U.	2	1	0	0	1	1	0	5	0.1%
Dakota State U.	23	30	46	48	36	45	55	283	3.9%
Dakota Wesleyan U.	8	9	17	22	11	24	28	119	1.6%
Lake Area Tech. Inst.	2	6	7	11	15	9	16	66	0.9%
Mitchell Tech. Institute	3	0	2	5	5	4	8	27	0.4%
Mount Marty College	15	15	10	15	15	9	12	91	1.2%
National American U.	3	0	0	0	1	0	0	4	0.1%
Northern State U.	30	35	45	53	50	52	51	316	4.3%
Presentation College	4	7	11	7	7	9	1	46	0.6%
SD Sch. of Mines/Tech	64	77	72	101	97	92	105	608	8.3%
SD State U.	339	361	387	459	484	480	434	2,944	40.2%
Southeast Tech Inst.	3	6	7	7	15	12	4	54	0.7%
U. of Sioux Falls	27	28	35	48	46	41	33	258	3.5%
U. of South Dakota	201	172	204	239	228	209	252	1,505	20.6%
W. Dakota Tech. Inst.	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	9	0.1%
	<b>840</b>	<b>858</b>	<b>983</b>	<b>1,167</b>	<b>1,178</b>	<b>1,140</b>	<b>1,176</b>	<b>7,342</b>	

## County Distribution

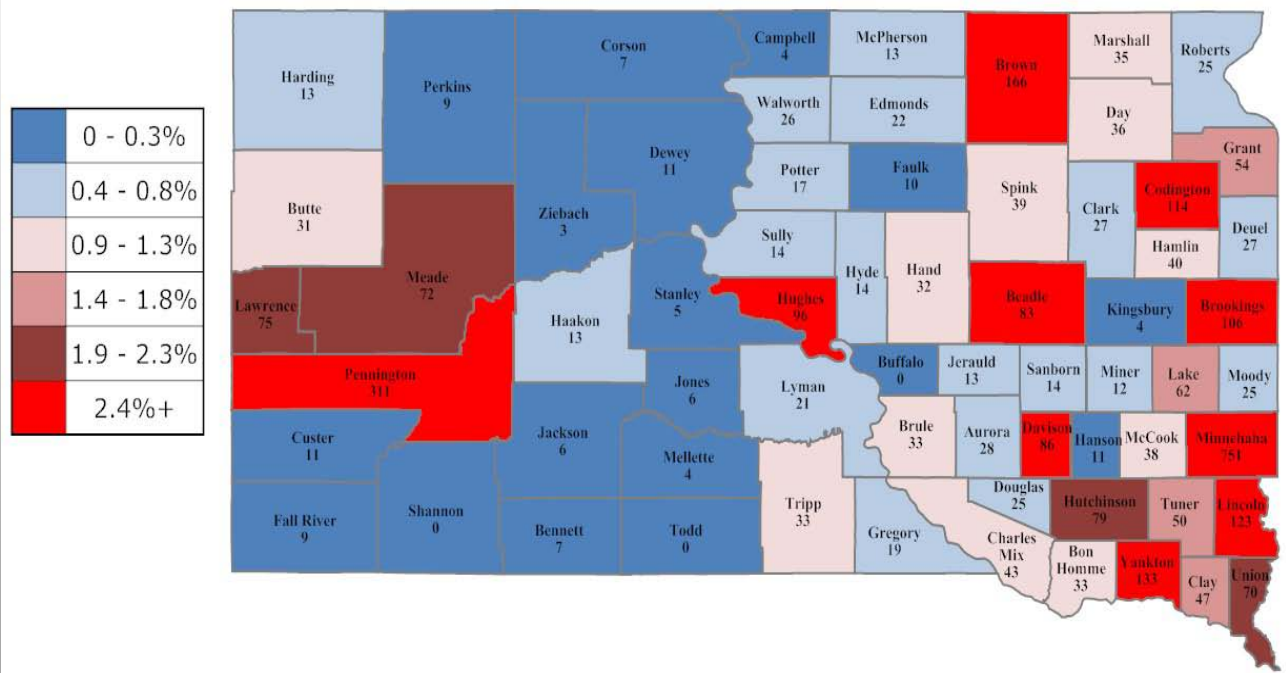
To establish initial eligibility, a student must be a South Dakota resident and graduate from an accredited high school. A spatial map was generated to visually depict the geographic distribution of the 7,342 Opportunity Scholarship recipients throughout South Dakota. The recipients' high school code was used to determine the county where they had graduated from prior to entering their postsecondary career. Figure 1 provides both the total number of recipients from each county in South Dakota with the largest number of recipients coming from the largest population centers in the state including Minnehaha (1,503), Pennington (652), Brown (303), Codington (276), Brookings (273), and Lincoln (267).

distribution of recipients based on the total number of graduates from each county. Data available from the South Dakota Department of Education (2010) were used to determine an average number of graduates from each school district throughout the state. An average was then created for each county, and these county averages were then compared against the total number of recipients that have established initial eligibility over the past seven years. The five counties with the highest percentage of graduates receiving the scholarship include Aurora (25%), Lyman (23%), Clark (22%), Sully (21%), and Hutchinson (21%). The complete distribution by county can be determined by using the heat legend depicted in Figure 2.

Additional analysis was also performed to further explore the geographic



**Figure 3**  
**Percentage & Frequency of the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship Recipients by County for Those Maintaining Eligibility into the 2010-11 Academic Year**



Each year the Board of Regents provides the Bureau of Finance Management with a set of projections that are used to anticipate the total number of recipients that will be eligible for the Opportunity Scholarship program during the upcoming fiscal year. These projections are established by comparing existing attrition rates with the anticipated growth in new cohorts for each academic term since the program was established in 2004. Using these formulas, projections indicated that approximately \$4.02 million dollars would be needed from the state’s general fund to cover the funding needs for eligible students in the scholarship program.

At the start of each term, campus representatives are asked to verify student initial and continuing eligibility criteria and submit a funding request for all eligible recipients to the Board of Regents office. Funding allocations are then distributed to

eligible recipients during both the Fall and Spring term. A total of 3,383 students were eligible at the start of the Fall 2010 semester and Figure 3 provides a spatial representation of the originating county home locations for these students. The numbers depicted for each county signify the total number of eligible recipients receiving funding during the 2010-11 academic year. The legend to the left specifies the percentage of the \$4.02 million being allocated to recipients from each of the counties across South Dakota. For example, a total of 14 students from Sully county (Sully Buttes high school) are recipients of the scholarship program this year, which accounts for approximately \$17,000 in scholarship funding, or 0.4% of the total expenditures in the program. Overall distributions for each county are highly correlated with the total county population.

## SDOS Major Enrollments

Participating institutions are asked to identify recipients' major enrollments on their campus, and those recipients who maintain eligibility have their major status updated in the SDOS database each semester. In the past, major enrollments have been reported for all students in the SDOS program, with majors for those recipients who have lost eligibility documented at the point of their last eligible semester. However, to more accurately depict the range of student majors (e.g., recipient enrollment in double and triple majors), data for this year reflects only those students who are classified as eligible or temporarily eligible in the SDOS database representing 3,383 major enrollments.



<b>Major</b>	<b>#</b>
1. Engineering	348 (8.9%)
2. Humanities	240 (6.1%)
3. Business/Business Admin.	208 (5.3%)
4. Biological Sciences	178 (4.5%)
5. Nursing	128 (3.3%)
6. Elementary Ed.	94 (2.4%)
7. Mathematics	85 (2.2%)
8. Art & Graphic/Int. Design	80 (2.0%)
9. Comp. Science/Network	79 (2.0%)
10. Economics/Finance	75 (1.9%)
11. English	67 (1.7%)
12. Wellness Management	66 (1.7%)
13. Secondary/Special Ed.	65 (1.7%)
14. Journalism/Comm.	59 (1.5%)
15. Biochemistry/Chemistry	48 (1.2%)
16. Earth Sciences	45 (1.1%)
17. Agricultural Sciences	44 (1.1%)
18. Accounting	43 (1.1%)
19. Foreign Languages	41 (1.0%)
20. Music	41 (1.0%)
	<b>2,034 (61%)</b>

For reporting purposes, an unduplicated major enrollment report was developed to represent the recipient's primary major at his/her institution. An analysis of data reveal that SDOS recipients are more likely to enroll in majors resulting in career areas such as medicine, science, mathematics, engineering, and business. Table 4 provides frequency and percentages for the top twenty majors across the eligible Opportunity Scholarship recipients. Engineering (348 or 8.9%) was the most common major going into the seventh year of the program, with student enrollment in these 20 majors representing 61% of the 3,383 enrollments.

Similar major enrollment trends existed for those recipients who were able to maintain eligibility throughout the duration of the scholarship program after entering during the 2004-05, 2005-06, and 2006-07 academic years. Specifically, Engineering was the primary major for approximately 11% of these recipients followed by Humanities (10.1%), Nursing, (6.6%),

Biological Sciences (6.1%), and Business/Business Administration (5.7%). Table 5 provides an overview of the ten most common majors for graduates from the initial academic cohort. These ten majors constitute roughly 52% of the 2681 recipients who were eligible for the scholarship program during its first three years. Biological science as well as Biochemistry/Chemistry both represent programs where students admitted into these major are likely to continue their post-secondary education as they go on to complete graduate work.

### ***Pre-Professional Program Enrollments***

Most professional schools and universities throughout the United States require a baccalaureate degree for admission to programs such as medicine, dentistry and law. To help prepare students for these programs, institutions have created a number of pre-professional programs designed to prepare students to apply to various types of professional schools. Recipient enrollment in these pre-professional tracking programs results in 20% of the majors reported by institutional representatives.

For the Fall 2010 semester, Medicine (178 or 5.4%) had the highest pre-professional enrollments followed by Pre-Nursing (5.2%), Pre-pharmacy (3.5%), Pre-physical Therapy (2.2%), and Pre-Veterinary Medicine (1.3%). Table 6 provides a complete list of pre-professional majors across the 16 institutions taking part in the Opportunity Scholarship program. South Dakota institutions provide professional programs in eight of these majors (excluding Veterinary, Dentistry, Chiropractic, and Optometry).

However, the state currently operates under a memorandum of agreement with

**Table 5**  
***Ten Most Common Majors for Scholarship Program Graduates***

<b><i>Major</i></b>	<b><i>#</i></b>
<b>1.</b> Engineering	288 (10.7%)
<b>2.</b> Humanities	272 (10.1%)
<b>3.</b> Nursing	177 (6.6%)
<b>4.</b> Biological Sciences	163 (6.1%)
<b>5.</b> Business/Business Admin.	152 (5.7%)
<b>6.</b> Economics/Finance	72 (2.7%)
<b>7.</b> Pharm. Sciences	68 (2.5%)
<b>8.</b> Biochemistry/Chemistry	62 (2.3%)
<b>9.</b> Comp. Science/Network	59 (2.2%)
<b>10.</b> Mathematics	59 (2.2%)
	<b>1,372 (52%)</b>

Iowa State University that allows six South Dakota students to attend the Veterinary program and pay in-state tuition. South Dakota pays the difference between the cost for in-state and out-of-state rates for these students with the requirement that students return to practice in the state for each year of financial support obtained.

**Table 6**  
***SDOS Recipients Enrolled in Pre-Professional Tracking Programs***

<b><i>Major</i></b>	<b><i>Frequency</i></b>
<b>1.</b> Medicine	178 (5.4%)
<b>2.</b> Nursing	171 (5.2%)
<b>3.</b> Pharmacy	114 (3.5%)
<b>4.</b> Physical Therapy	72 (2.2%)
<b>5.</b> Veterinary Med.	43 (1.3%)
<b>6.</b> Dental	22 (0.7%)
<b>7.</b> Law	16 (0.5%)
<b>8.</b> Occupational Th.	14 (0.4%)
<b>9.</b> Optometry	13 (0.4%)
<b>10.</b> Physicians Ass.	9 (0.3%)
<b>11.</b> Chiropractic	8 (0.2%)
<b>12.</b> Mortuary	2 (0.1%)
	<b>662 (20.1%)</b>

## Recipient Continuing Eligibility Status

---

After a student establishes initial eligibility in the Opportunity Scholarship program, he/she must meet a number of continuing eligibility requirements each semester. Recipients must maintain a cumulative 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale as well as attempt and complete enough credit hours of instruction to meet the credit hour threshold for the forthcoming year (30 credit hours for 3rd and 4th term funding, 60 credit hours for 5th and 6th term funding, and 90 credit hours for 7th and 8th term funding). Any recipient who loses eligibility because the student's cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 may reestablish eligibility by raising the cumulative grade point average to 3.0 or greater. Recipients failing to attempt or complete 15 credits in a given Fall or Spring semester become permanently ineligible in the scholarship program.

Do to the fact that the new credit hour thresholds did not take effect until Fall 2010, data for continuing eligibility reflects the impact stemming from the “15 credit hour per semester” model that was put in place when the program was enacted. For reporting purposes, recipient ineligibility has been categorized into six areas using the above criteria. Ineligibility occurs when a: 1) Recipient fails to attempt or complete 15 credit hours; 2) Recipient is no longer enrolled resulting from persistence issues (stop-out, transfer, withdrawal); 3) Recipient falls below the 3.0 cumulative grade point average; 4) Recipient fails to attempt and complete 15 credit hours and maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average; 5) Recipient fails one or more of the content areas for the proficiency examination (Reading, Writing Skills, Science

Reasoning, Mathematics), fails to sit for the exam during the semester established in Board of Regents Policy; or 6) Recipient has graduated.

Each semester the 16 South Dakota institutions monitor recipient continuing eligibility in the Opportunity Scholarship program and upload recipient data into a



database maintained by the Board of Regents. These data are carefully monitored at both the institutional and system level to ensure that all students have met the continuing eligibility requirements specified in legislative statute (see Appendix A) and the administrative rules (see Appendix B) that govern the scholarship program. For instance, campus personnel review recipient credit hours attempted at the start of each semester, and notify those students who are in jeopardy of not meeting their credit hour threshold. Those students who fail to meet their respective credit hour

benchmark are ineligible for funding unless an executive director exemption is granted.

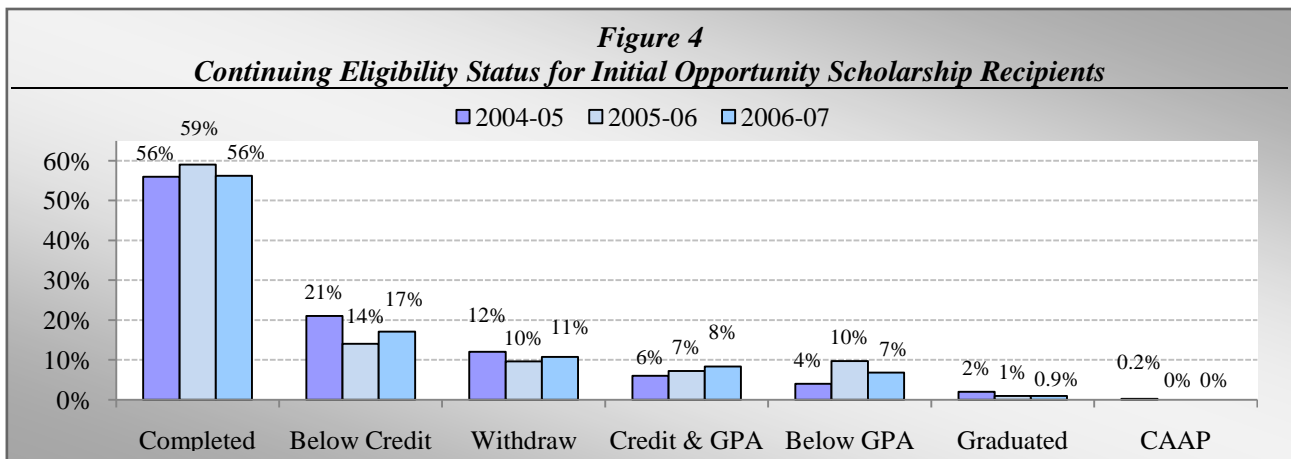
### Completed Cohort Eligibility

The first three cohorts of Opportunity Scholarship recipients entered during the 2004-05 (840), 2005-06 (858) and 2006-07 (983) academic years. A total of 2,681 recipients became eligible during this time period, and the Spring 08 academic year marked the first time when a cohort of recipients met the maturation period for receiving the total award allocated to eligible South Dakota high school students. The largest percentage of recipients from these three groups were able to successfully maintain their continuing eligibility in the program and receive funding during their final semester (56%, 59% & 56%). Roughly two percent of the recipients did not receive funding during this final semester because they had already graduated prior to the conclusion of their fourth year. A large number of these students represent graduates from one of the four technical institutions, as well as a small number of students who completed undergraduate work before beginning graduate level programs in South Dakota.

Maintaining eligibility in the scholarship program was an issue for the remaining

students from the initial cohorts (see Figure 4). The most significant factor was a student's inability to maintain the 15 credit hour requirement with 21%, 14% and 17% of the initial recipients failing to register for or complete the required number of hours each semester. The second most common justification for failing to maintain continuing eligibility was student withdrawal (12%, 10% & 11%) followed by a recipient's inability to maintain his/her cumulative grade point average while also meeting the 15 credit hour load. Approximately seven percent of students failed to meet both of these requirements, while about seven percent did not meet cumulative grade point average. Only a small portion of the students either graduated (2%) or failed to take the proficiency exam as required (0.2%).

A small portion (10 or 0.6%) are still eligible for funding during the Fall 2010 semester after receiving persistence waivers through the Executive Director exemption process. These included instances of medical hardship, military deployment, and internships that caused these ten students to go unfunded for one semester and continue to receive funding upon their return to one of the 16 participating post-secondary institutions.





**Current Cohort Eligibility**

A total of 4,575 recipients are represented in the seven cohorts that have established eligibility since the 2007-08 academic year. From these seven cohorts, a total of 3,281 recipients (72%) have maintained their eligibility into the Fall 2010 semester. Included in this calculation are the 1,176 recipients who had just established initial eligibility during the Fall 2010 semester, all of whom are currently eligible in the program. The remaining 1,294 recipients (28% of the 4,575 total) who were unfunded during the Fall 2010 semester were either permanently or temporarily ineligible for the Opportunity Scholarship. Of these 1,294 students, a total of 264 (20%) are temporarily ineligible due to their failure to maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average and could be reinstated and funded in the future.

The GPA and credit hour requirements (41%) served as the primary justification for recipient failure to maintain on-going eligibility. This was followed by a student's inability to meet the 15 credit hour requirements (25%), followed by GPA (20%), student withdrawal (14%), and graduation (0.3%).

Table 7 depicts the frequency of ineligible students across the five classification areas by each institution. The final column in the table provides both the frequency and percentage of recipients who have maintained their eligibility since initial enrollment in the program. It is important to note that student graduation as a classification for lost eligibility is included as a cause for ineligibility for percentage calculations so that institutions are not adversely impacted by successful degree completion.

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Credit &amp; GPA</i>	<i>Below Credit</i>	<i>Below GPA</i>	<i>Withdraw</i>	<i>Grad.</i>	<i>Eligible</i>
Augustana	67	32	5	1	0	202 <sup>(66%)</sup>
Black Hills State	28	30	18	11	0	188 <sup>(68%)</sup>
Colorado Technical	0	0	1	1	0	0 <sup>(0%)</sup>
Dakota State	23	11	11	2	0	134 <sup>(74%)</sup>
Dakota Wesleyan	8	3	3	5	0	66 <sup>(78%)</sup>
Lake Area Technical	3	3	0	18	0	30 <sup>(56%)</sup>
Mitchell Technical	0	3	0	5	1	8 <sup>(47%)</sup>
Mount Marty	3	0	1	4	0	44 <sup>(85%)</sup>
National American	0	0	0	0	0	0 <sup>(0%)</sup>
Northern State	10	11	9	9	0	176 <sup>(82%)</sup>
Presentation	1	2	0	0	0	18 <sup>(86%)</sup>
SD Mines & Tech.	61	28	31	7	0	249 <sup>(66%)</sup>
SD State U.	228	130	139	54	1	1,332 <sup>(71%)</sup>
Southeast Technical	5	2	3	12	1	15 <sup>(39%)</sup>
U. of Sioux Falls	6	4	5	16	1	134 <sup>(81%)</sup>
U. of South Dakota	82	64	38	31	0	681 <sup>(76%)</sup>
W. Dakota Technical	0	2	0	0	0	4 <sup>(67%)</sup>
	<b>525</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>264</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3,281 <sup>(72%)</sup></b>

## Eligibility Trends

Examination of the continuing eligibility trends over the past seven years demonstrates moderate consistency across each of the academic terms. However, an inverse trend appears to exist when comparing recipient eligibility in the second and third year of the program. During the transition from year-one to year-two of the program, the highest percentage of ineligible recipients was from the first cohort which had 73% maintain eligibility. A modest decline occurred for the following five cohorts with only 69% of the recipients from the 2008-09 cohort able to maintain eligibility into the second year.

An inverse trend occurred between years two and three of eligibility. A smaller percentage of the initial 2004-05 cohort was able to maintain eligibility into the third year (63%), while the 2005-06 and 2006-07 cohorts appeared to gain ground. A higher percentage of the recipients from these two cohorts were able to maintain eligibility into the third year of the program, despite having a small percentage of eligible recipients at the start of the second year. Specifically, the

<i>Cohort</i>	<i>Year One</i>	<i>Year Two</i>	<i>Year Three</i>	<i>Year Four</i>
2004-05	840	614 <sup>(73%)</sup>	551 <sup>(63%)</sup>	469 <sup>(56%)</sup>
2005-06	858	620 <sup>(72%)</sup>	549 <sup>(64%)</sup>	502 <sup>(59%)</sup>
2006-07	983	701 <sup>(71%)</sup>	643 <sup>(65%)</sup>	590 <sup>(60%)</sup>
2007-08	1,167	825 <sup>(71%)</sup>	735 <sup>(63%)</sup>	663 <sup>(58%)</sup>
2008-09	1,178	817 <sup>(69%)</sup>	729 <sup>(63%)</sup>	**
2009-10	1,140	815 <sup>(72%)</sup>	**	**
2010-11	1,176	**	**	**
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,342</b>	<b>4,392<sup>(73%)</sup></b>	<b>3,207<sup>(65%)</sup></b>	<b>2,224<sup>(60%)</sup></b>

initial cohort lost an additional 10% of its recipients compared to 6-8% for the other cohort groups (see Table 8).

Since it started, three cohorts have achieved the point of maturation for funding in the Opportunity Scholarship program. Sixty percent of these students in the third cohort were able to maintain their eligibility throughout their final semester (as reported in spring 2010). When comparing with Fall 10 eligibility, 58% of those who first enrolled during the 2007-08 academic year were able to continue eligibility into the fourth year. It is important to note that these 663 students must also meet the eligibility criteria into the Spring 11 semester, and a number of these students may still become ineligible for the final installment (see table 9).

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Below Credit</i>	<i>Withdraw</i>	<i>Below GPA</i>	<i>Credit &amp; GPA</i>	<i>Lost-CAAP</i>	<i>Grad.</i>	<i>Ineligible</i>
2004-05	176 <sup>(21%)</sup>	98 <sup>(12%)</sup>	35 <sup>(4%)</sup>	51 <sup>(6%)</sup>	2 <sup>(0.2%)</sup>	9 <sup>(1.1%)</sup>	<b>371<sup>(44%)</sup></b>
2005-06	118 <sup>(14%)</sup>	82 <sup>(9.6%)</sup>	83 <sup>(9.7%)</sup>	62 <sup>(7.2%)</sup>	3 <sup>(0.3%)</sup>	8 <sup>(0.9%)</sup>	<b>356<sup>(31%)</sup></b>
2006-07	168 <sup>(39%)</sup>	67 <sup>(16%)</sup>	82 <sup>(19%)</sup>	105 <sup>(34%)</sup>	0 <sup>(0%)</sup>	9 <sup>(2%)</sup>	<b>0<sup>(0%)</sup></b>
2007-08	170 <sup>(33%)</sup>	85 <sup>(16%)</sup>	58 <sup>(11%)</sup>	204 <sup>(40%)</sup>	0 <sup>(0%)</sup>	0 <sup>(0%)</sup>	<b>0<sup>(0%)</sup></b>
2008-09	117 <sup>(26%)</sup>	52 <sup>(12%)</sup>	88 <sup>(20%)</sup>	186 <sup>(42%)</sup>	0 <sup>(0%)</sup>	3 <sup>(0.7%)</sup>	<b>0<sup>(0%)</sup></b>
2009-10	38 <sup>(12%)</sup>	35 <sup>(11%)</sup>	118 <sup>(36%)</sup>	135 <sup>(41%)</sup>	0 <sup>(0%)</sup>	1 <sup>(0.3%)</sup>	<b>0<sup>(0%)</sup></b>
	<b>787</b>	<b>419</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>743</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>727</b>

### Continued Eligibility Indicators

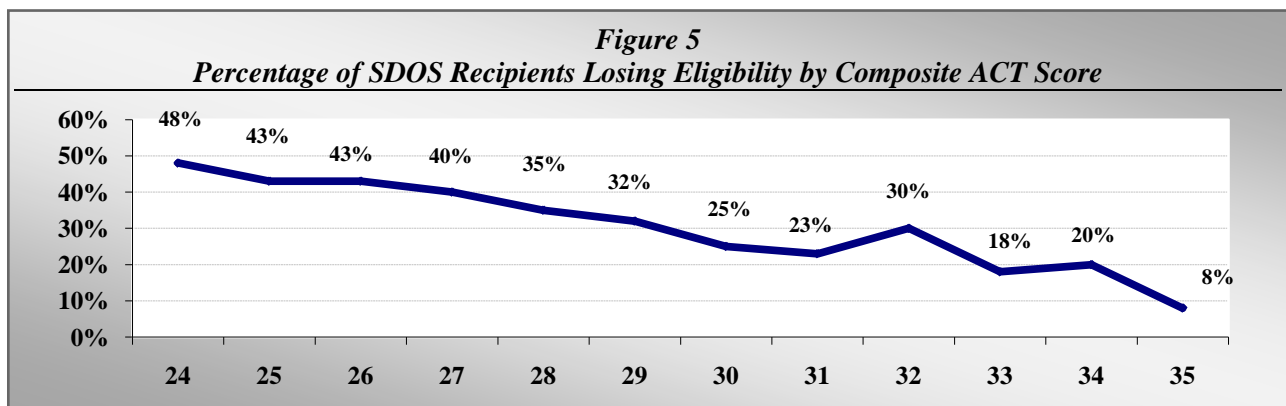
Various performance indicators were examined to determine factors that may serve as predictors for recipient eligibility loss in the scholarship program. The initial eligibility requirements specify that all students must obtain a 24 or higher on their ACT composite score. Students have until the official ACT testing date in June following their high school graduation to achieve this score, and the students highest scores are reported in the Opportunity Scholarship database. Data were excluded from the 1,176 students who became eligible during the Fall 10 semester since these students were all eligible during their initial term in the program. Those recipients (establishing eligibility during the first four academic years of the program) who became ineligible scored significantly lower on the ACT when compared to recipients who have been able to maintain eligibility (26.8 vs. 26.1)<sup>1</sup>. Although these findings depict statistical significance on face value, the difference between these two groups does not appear to meet established levels of practical significance.

After further review of the data from the first four academic years, it was evident that a strong linear trend existed when examining composite ACT scores and continued eligibility (see Table 10). Only 52% of those recipients who entered the program

**Table 10**  
**Frequency and Percentage of SDOS Eligibility by Composite ACT Score**

Composite ACT Score	Ineligible Recipients	Eligible Recipients
24	670 (48%)	721 (52%)
25	466 (43%)	627 (57%)
26	413 (43%)	558 (57%)
27	321 (40%)	482 (60%)
28	212 (35%)	396 (65%)
29	135 (32%)	283 (68%)
30	97 (25%)	287 (75%)
31	52 (23%)	172 (77%)
32	45 (30%)	103 (70%)
33	14 (18%)	62 (82%)
34	8 (20%)	33 (80%)
35	1 (8%)	12 (92%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,434 (39%)</b>	<b>3,736 (61%)</b>

with a composite score of 24 have maintained their eligibility. Fewer than half (48%) of those who entered during the Fall 2004-05 academic year with a 24 ACT were able to maintain eligibility throughout the duration of the program. The overall percentage gradually increases as the composite ACT score increases with those students obtaining a 30 or higher having at least a 70% chance of maintaining eligibility into the second, third or fourth year of the program (see Figure 5).

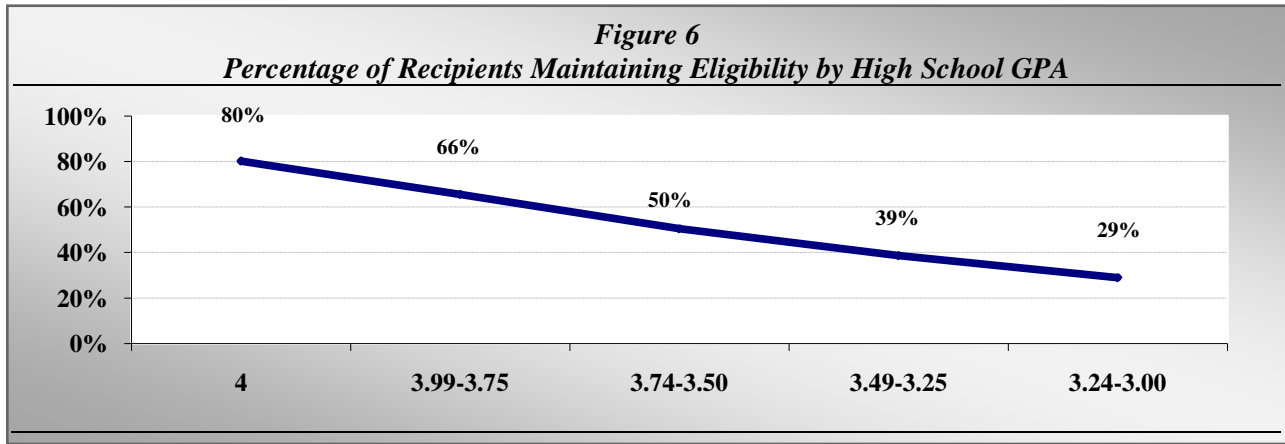


In addition to completing the Regents Scholar curriculum, all recipients are required to obtain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average on all high school coursework. Statistical analysis<sup>2</sup> indicates that those students who have failed to maintain eligibility in the scholarship program are significantly more likely to have a lower high school GPA when compared to those who have remained eligible (3.85 vs. 3.68). However, from a practical stand-point the difference between these two groups warrants further analysis to determine the extent that a recipient's GPA does successfully predict his/her ability to attempt and complete the credit hour requirements each semester while maintaining the 3.0 cumulative GPA in their post-secondary coursework.

For further analysis, student high school GPA was aligned into one of five classifications. Eighty percent of the students who achieved a 4.00 GPA were able to maintain eligibility, while only 29% of those who had been able to meet the high school GPA threshold (3.24-3.00) were able to achieve continuing eligibility requirements. The students in the highest GPA classification were over 2 times more likely to continue receiving scholarship funding into the second year and beyond when compared to those students who had just met the 3.0 threshold prior to their high



school graduation (see Figure 6). Furthermore, there appeared to be a noticeable decline when examining the post-secondary performance of those students who had scored between a 3.99 and 3.75 GPA during high school which accounted for the largest percentage of scholarship recipients for the first six academic year cohorts (1,645 or 44%). Only 66% of these recipients had maintained their eligibility.



### ***Executive Director Exemptions***

State statute (see Appendix A) and administrative rules (see Appendix B) grants the Executive Director of the Board of Regents the authority to grant exceptions to continuous eligibility requirements when good cause is shown. As a result, when a situation arises that hinders a student from meeting the eligibility requirements for the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship, he/she has the opportunity to request an exemption waiver from the Executive Director. Exemption waivers can be granted for student inability to meet *Credit Hour*, *GPA*, or *Persistence* requirements. Furthermore, instances have and will continue to occur that represent unique situations where the Executive Director has granted a waiver to ensure that the intent of the scholarship program is best served. In these situations, the classification of *other* has been assigned. In addition to these three waiver classifications, six justifications have been attributed to student appeals for exemptions from the Executive Director that include:

1. Situations where *Medical Hardship* has hindered a student's progress;
2. Student participation in an approved *Exchange Program* through their institution;
3. Conflict with *Program of Study Requirements* that dictate student credit hours;
4. Instances where *Administrative Error* has occurred;
5. Participation in an institution approved *Internship* program;
6. *Military Deferral* for National Guard or military service;

Since Fall 2004, the Executive Director has received 1,106 exemption requests from students across the seven cohorts. One

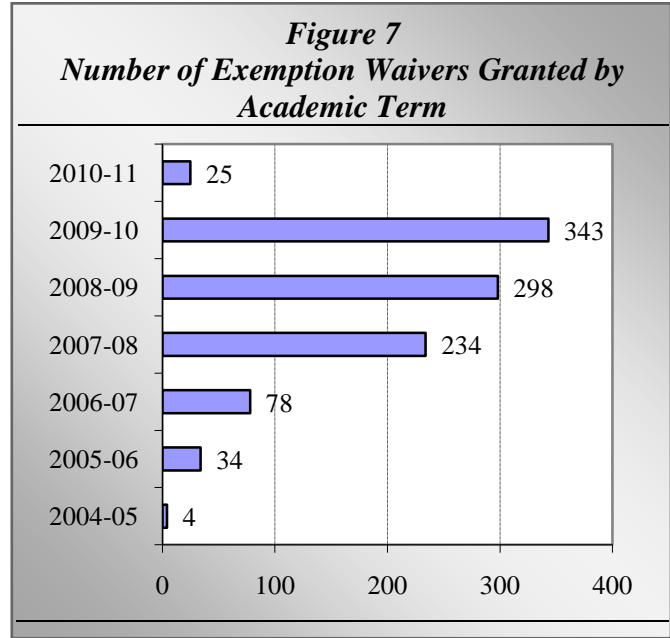
hundred and thirty-one (13%) of these exemption requests have been denied; while 885 have been granted to students across 16 institutions (see Table 12). To this date, Western Dakota Technical Institute is the only institution that has not had a student seek an exemption request to waive the continuing eligibility requirements for the program. Consistent with the initial eligibility distribution across the 16 participating institutions, recipients from SDSU (430 or 42%) have requested the highest number of waivers, but have also accounted for more than 49% of the requests denied by the Executive Director. As the exemption request process has unfolded over the past seven years, a series of guidelines and resource materials have been developed to aid students as they pull together materials to make their appeal. These resources can be found on the Opportunity Scholarship website.

**Table 11**  
***Executive Director Exemption Requests***

<b><i>Institution</i></b>	<b><i>Requested</i></b>	<b><i>Denied</i></b>	<b><i>Granted</i></b>
<i>AUG</i>	104	11	93
<i>BHSU</i>	38	7	31
<i>DSU</i>	15	1	14
<i>DWU</i>	4	0	4
<i>LATI</i>	8	0	8
<i>MTI</i>	3	1	2
<i>MMC</i>	14	3	11
<i>NAU</i>	1	0	1
<i>NSU</i>	29	2	27
<i>PRE</i>	7	1	6
<i>SDSMT</i>	93	8	85
<i>SDSU</i>	430	64	366
<i>STI</i>	4	2	2
<i>USF</i>	23	6	17
<i>USD</i>	241	25	216
<i>WDTI</i>	2	0	2
	<b><i>1,016</i></b>	<b><i>131</i></b>	<b><i>885</i></b>

As the total number of recipients in the program has grown over the past seven years, the total number of exemption requests each year has also increased. During the first academic year (2004-05), a total of four exemption requests were granted by the Executive Director (see Figure 6). This number increased significantly during the 2005-06 academic year when 34 recipients sought waivers to the continuing eligibility requirements. The largest growth occurred during the 2009-10 academic year when 343 exemption requests were submitted. Sixty-five percent of these requests were from recipients who had maintained eligibility since entering the program during the Fall 2004 semester and had sought an exemption because they required fewer than 15 credit hours to meet degree completion requirements.

When examining the type of waivers granted by the Executive Director since the scholarship program began, the largest percentage has gone to students seeking to fall below the *Credit Hour* requirement (88%). For this particular waiver, the largest percentage of students sought exemptions resulting from conflicts that existed with their unique program of study requirements (e.g., student teaching experience, not requiring 15 hours to meet



graduation requirements, having met all elective/general education curriculum requirements, etc.). The second most common waiver was *Persistence* (7%), followed by *Other* (2%), *Proficiency Exam* (1%), and *Medical Hardship* (0.9%). Overall, inability to meet *Program of Study Requirements* (66%) was the most common justification for the Executive Director to grant a waiver to students seeking exemptions (see Table 13).

**Table 12**  
**Executive Director Exemption Waiver Request by Exemption Justifications**

<i>Exemption Justification</i>	<i>Exemption Waiver Request</i>							<i>Total</i>
	<i>Credit Hour</i>	<i>GPA</i>	<i>Medical Hardship</i>	<i>Persist</i>	<i>Proficiency Exam</i>	<i>Reconsider Award</i>	<i>Other</i>	
<i>Administrative Error</i>	20	0	0	0	1	3	15	<b>39</b>
<i>Exchange Program</i>	76	1	0	17	6	0	3	<b>103</b>
<i>Internship</i>	48	0	0	10	1	0	1	<b>60</b>
<i>Medical Hardship</i>	53	1	8	9	4	0	2	<b>77</b>
<i>Military Deferral</i>	5	0	0	20	0	0	0	<b>25</b>
<i>Program of Study Req.</i>	576	0	0	4	0	0	1	<b>580</b>
	<b>778</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>885</b>

# Impact Analysis

The purpose for developing the Opportunity Scholarship program was to accomplish three primary objectives including the desire: 1) to persuade students to complete a rigorous high school curriculum that would enhance college readiness for high school graduates as they pursue post-secondary careers; 2) to encourage high achieving South Dakota high school graduates to remain in the state; and 3) to enhance the likelihood that those students would remain in the state after graduation from their post-secondary education and become a part of the workforce. Data are presented below to track the impact of the program.

## *Impact of a Rigorous Curriculum*

For the past 15 years, the South Dakota Board of Regents has been producing the *High School to College Transition Report* which has served as a valuable tool for providing South Dakota high school administrators with information about their graduates' performance during their first year of college. A narrative report is

prepared each Fall to depict South Dakota graduate readiness for postsecondary education, along with individual reports to each school district that provide a snapshot of the graduates' first year at one of the six public universities in South Dakota. When compared against the data prior to the year the Opportunity Scholarship program was implemented, a higher percentage of South Dakota graduates have remained in the state and attended one of the six public institutions (up 2% despite a decline in the number of graduates). Student performance on the ACT exam has also increased as the average score for students entering the system has increased from 22.2 to 23.0 over the past seven years. Additionally, as noted in Table 14 below, the level of remedial enrollments (unduplicated for mathematics and English) has also experienced a continuous decline, dropping to roughly 29% this past year after a high of 34% in 2003. Specifically, graduates requiring remediation in English has dropped by 3.4% during this seven year period, and 6% for those requiring remediation in mathematics.

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<i>Entering Regental</i>	3,000	2,961	2,929	2,925	2,950	2,934	<b>2,736</b>
<i>% Enter Regental</i>	30%	31%	31%	32%	32%	33%	<b>32%</b>
<i>ACT Composite</i>	22.2	22.5	22.5	22.7	23.2	23.1	<b>23.0</b>
<i>Remedial English</i>	17%	13%	14%	13%	9%	14%	<b>13.6%</b>
<i>Remedial Math</i>	30%	27%	25%	25%	21%	22%	<b>24.2%</b>
<i>Both Remedial</i>	34%	32%	31%	30%	26%	27.9%	<b>29.1%</b>
<i>Average GPA</i>	2.73	2.79	2.82	2.82	2.85	2.80	<b>2.84</b>

**Table 14**  
**Seven Year Trend for South Dakota Graduates Enrolled in Remedial Courses**

<b>Percent of Students</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>
0%	19 <sup>(12%)</sup>	14 <sup>(9%)</sup>	24 <sup>(13%)</sup>	27 <sup>(15%)</sup>	32 <sup>(18%)</sup>	21 <sup>(12%)</sup>	<b>24</b> <sup>(14%)</sup>
1 - 9%	3 <sup>(2%)</sup>	2 <sup>(1%)</sup>	1 <sup>(1%)</sup>	3 <sup>(2%)</sup>	6 <sup>(3%)</sup>	1 <sup>(1%)</sup>	<b>2</b> <sup>(1%)</sup>
10 - 24%	21 <sup>(13%)</sup>	30 <sup>(18%)</sup>	43 <sup>(23%)</sup>	41 <sup>(23%)</sup>	47 <sup>(26%)</sup>	47 <sup>(27%)</sup>	<b>34</b> <sup>(19%)</sup>
25 - 49%	87 <sup>(54%)</sup>	82 <sup>(50%)</sup>	74 <sup>(41%)</sup>	73 <sup>(40%)</sup>	59 <sup>(33%)</sup>	64 <sup>(36%)</sup>	<b>73</b> <sup>(42%)</sup>
50 % - Above	30 <sup>(19%)</sup>	35 <sup>(22%)</sup>	42 <sup>(22%)</sup>	35 <sup>(20%)</sup>	35 <sup>(20%)</sup>	45 <sup>(26%)</sup>	<b>41</b> <sup>(24%)</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>179</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>174</b>

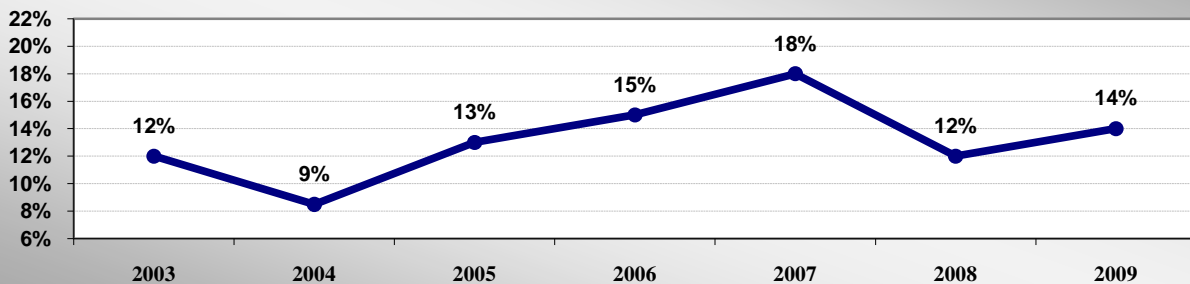
**School District Remedial Trends**

Data on graduate remedial placement were further examined to determine the percentage of students required to take remedial coursework from each of the 174 high schools in South Dakota that had students enter the Regental system. This past year 24 (14%) of the South Dakota high schools had no students required to enroll in remedial courses (see Table 15). This represents a slight incline in the percentage of high schools requiring no remedial coursework when compared to the previous year, and comparable to the 2003 high school graduates when the scholarship program was implemented.

During the years 2005-2007, the percentage of the high schools with no students enrolled in remedial courses steadily increased (see Figure 8). Previous

*High School Transition to College Report* data removed high schools that had fewer than three students when determining the percent of high schools with no students enrolled in remedial education courses. However, the data depicted in Table 15 and Figure 8 reflect all schools regardless of the number of students enrolled from a particular high school (e.g., includes those schools with 1 and 2 students). Note that this produced a dramatic increase in the total number of schools with no students (13%) when compared to the previous two years. Despite this change in reporting structure, modest gains were made during the following two academic years with an increase of 5% in the number of high schools that had students who required no form of remediation in math or English. Major fluctuations are likely in these numbers from year-to-year based on two

**Figure 8**  
**Comparison of High Schools with No Remedial Enrollments**

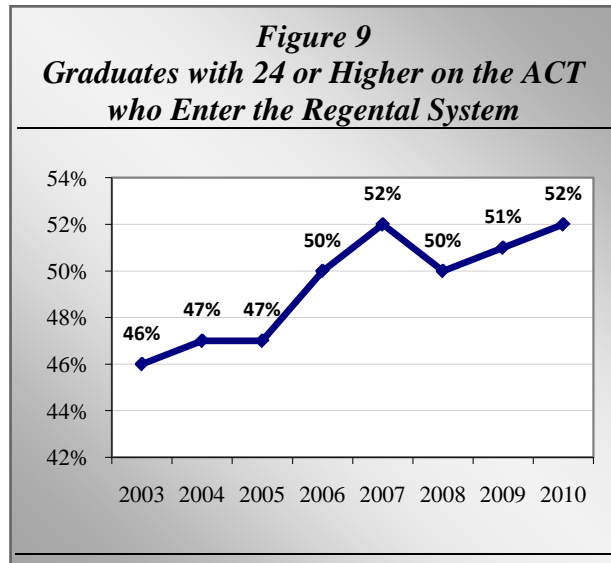




factors: 1) the total number of high schools included in the report; and 2) the total number of part-time students which varies from year-to-year.

### ACT Performance

ACT Inc. (2005a) recommends that all students take a college preparatory curriculum that includes four years of English and three years each of mathematics, social studies, and science. The ACT is designed to measure students' academic achievement and their readiness for college-level work. Research has continually demonstrated that students who complete a college preparatory curriculum achieve higher scores on the ACT. A rigorous college preparatory curriculum has been a cornerstone of the Board of Regents since it implemented its Regents Scholar curriculum in 1990. This curriculum was later adopted by the South Dakota Legislature as it established initial eligibility requirements for the Opportunity Scholarship program in 2004. In 2006 the South Dakota Department of Education (DOE) implemented new minimum graduation requirements, which will apply to all seniors graduating in 2010. The *Distinguished* track aligns with the Opportunity Scholarship curriculum.



In addition to establishing rigorous curriculum requirements for the Opportunity Scholarship Program, the South Dakota Legislature requires students to obtain a 24 or higher on the ACT to become eligible for the program. Including this requirement has produced a significant increase in the number of South Dakota high school graduates who meet or exceed this qualifying score.

Twenty-two percent of South Dakota high school graduates obtained a 24 or higher on the ACT the year leading into the implementation of the Opportunity Scholarship program. This percentage increased to 23% in 2004, with the state seeing marked increases to 29% for 2010. In relation to the overall state percentage, the percentage of high school graduates with a 24 or higher ACT score entering the Regental system also experienced similar positive trends (see Figure 9). A year before the program was implemented, roughly 46% of all South Dakota high school graduates who obtained a 24 or higher on the ACT attended one of the six Regental institutions the year after graduation. This percentage has increased to approximately 52% this past academic year.

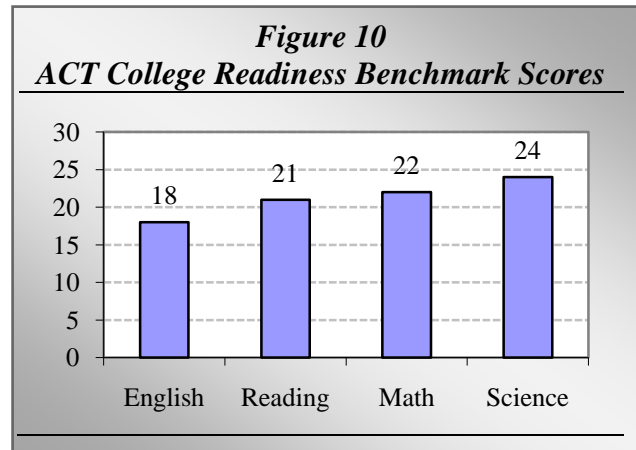
**Table 15**  
**South Dakota High School Graduates with 24 or Higher on the ACT**

Year	SD Graduates	Above 24 on ACT	Entered Regental
2003	10,591	2,334 (22%)	1,084 (46%)
2004	10,722	2,511 (23%)	1,172 (47%)
2005	10,442	2,411 (23%)	1,136 (47%)
2006	9,908	2,443 (25%)	1,229 (50%)
2007	9,340	2,530 (27%)	1,322 (52%)
2008	9,136	2,556 (28%)	1,287 (50%)
2009	8,802	2,478 (28%)	1,272 (51%)
2010	8,697	2,493 (29%)	1,300 (52%)

## College Readiness

In conjunction with this college preparatory curriculum, ACT Inc. established *College Readiness* benchmark scores (see Figure 10) in 1997 to enhance the practical value for students and high school administrators as they attempt to evaluate the significance of exam scores. Using student actual performance in college, ACT Inc. developed benchmarks in English, reading, mathematics, and science test scores that correspond to high chances of success in entry-level college courses. These Benchmarks are the minimum ACT scores a student must achieve on an ACT test to ensure at least a 50% chance of scoring a B or higher, or at least a 75-80% chance of achieving a C or higher in specific first-year college level courses (Allen & Sconing, 2006). For example, a student who obtains an ACT Mathematics score of 22 or higher has a 50% chance of earning at least a B or higher grade in college algebra.

The ACT *College Readiness Standards*, content standards in the four areas of English, reading, mathematics and science, indicate the skills and knowledge possessed by students obtaining particular ACT scores. These standards are organized into a series of “strands” that describe specific knowledge and skills that can be aligned with standards established within a given high school curriculum.



When comparing South Dakota graduates’ college readiness prior to the start of the Opportunity Scholarship program, there has been modest growth in all four content areas. College readiness in Science has experienced the largest growth with an increase of 5% of those students tested. This was followed by a 4% increase in English, a 3% increase in Mathematics, and a 3% increase in Reading (see Table 17). When comparing the percentage of students in South Dakota who were able to meet all four college readiness benchmarks, an overall increase of 5% has occurred during just the past seven years. In 2003, only 23% of students had met all college readiness benchmarks, compared to more than 28% this past year. When comparing these numbers against the national data, students in the state have made stronger gains in this area than the rest of the students throughout the country.

**Table 16**  
**Percentage of South Dakota Students Meeting ACT College Readiness Benchmark**

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<i>English</i>	71	71	72	74	75	75	74	74
<i>Mathematics</i>	47	47	46	50	50	50	49	50
<i>Reading</i>	55	56	55	58	58	59	60	58
<i>Science</i>	30	31	31	34	34	35	36	35
<i>All Subscores</i>	23	25	24	27	27	28	28	28
<i>National</i>	20	21	21	21	23	22	23	24

**Retention Rates**

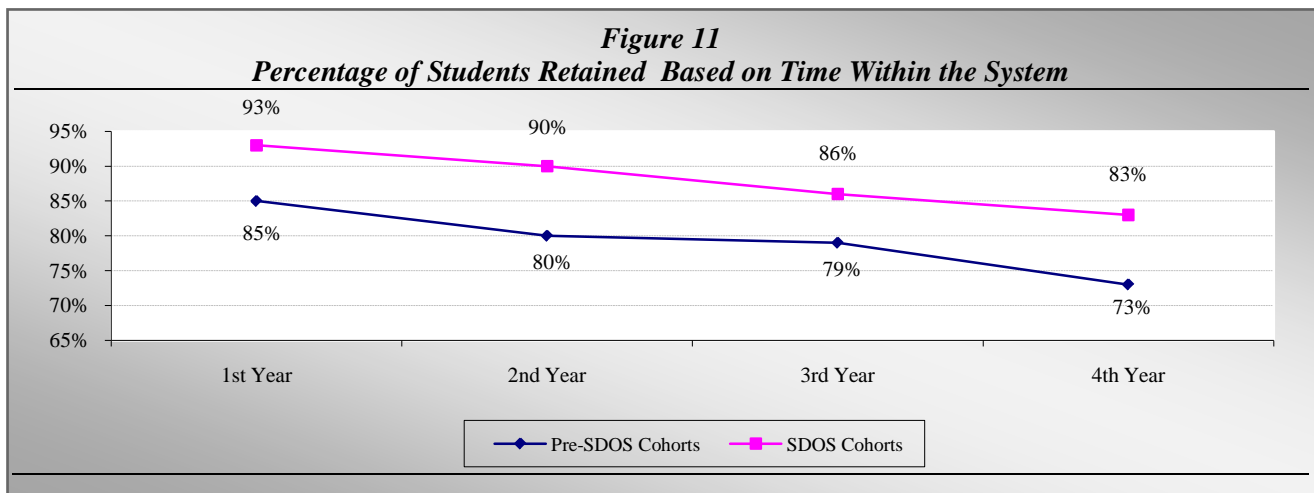
Retention data also depicts positive implications for the funding provided by the legislature toward the Opportunity Scholarship program. To establish a benchmark to compare the success of the program, data from a set of Pre-SDOS cohorts were evaluated to establish a baseline for high achieving students within the Regental system. Beginning with the 2000-01 entering class of South Dakota high school graduates, students with an ACT of 24 or higher were flagged and tracked through the four following academic years. The unique student identifiers employed in the Regents Information System were used to compare student retention beginning with the start of the Fall 2004 semester.

Data in Table 18 depicts the number of students entering in 2000-01 with an ACT of 24 or higher and their retention rate four years later at the start of the 2004-05 semester. The 2002-03 cohort represents student retention after two years, and 2003-04 depicts this percentage after just one year in the system. Using this data, a total of 80% of these students had been retained within the system throughout the four-year time period (see Table 18). Analysis of SDOS recipient data, using the same general

**Table 17**  
**Retention Rates for Pre-SDOS and SDOS Cohorts**

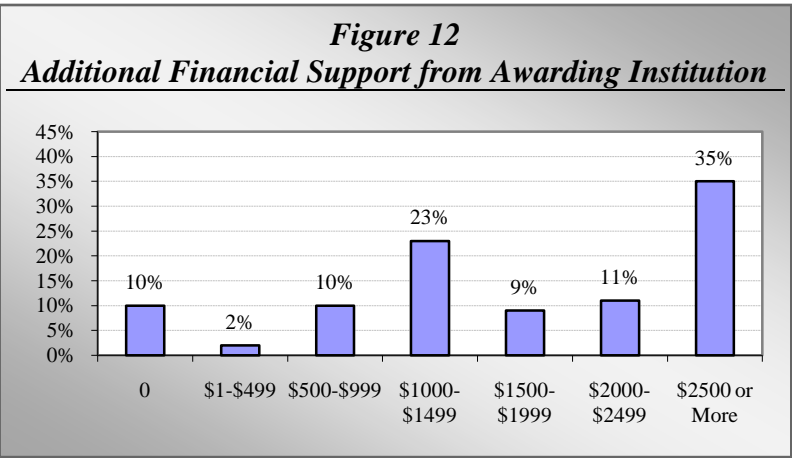
<i>Pre-SDOS</i>	<i>Enrolled</i>	<i>No Longer Enrolled</i>	<i>Total</i>
2000-01	627 (76%)	198 (24%)	825
2001-02	665 (79%)	179 (21%)	844
2002-03	847 (80%)	218 (20%)	1,065
2003-04	1,022 (85%)	181 (15%)	1,203
	<b>3,161 (80%)</b>	<b>776 (20%)</b>	<b>3,937</b>
<b>SDOS</b>			
2004-05	697 (83%)	143 (17%)	840
2005-06	738 (86%)	120 (14%)	858
2006-07	885 (90%)	98 (10%)	983
2007-08	1,085 (93%)	82 (7%)	1,167
	<b>3,405 (88%)</b>	<b>443 (12%)</b>	<b>3,848</b>

time frame parameters, indicates that 88% of SDOS recipients have been retained by a post-secondary institution within the state. More specifically, Figure 11 demonstrates that recipients in the scholarship program were retained at higher levels than pre-SDOS cohorts at all time periods. Fifteen percent of students dropped out prior to the start of the second year, compared to only 7% of SDOS recipients. When extending to the fourth year, 10% more of the SDOS recipients were retained (83% vs. 73%). This is the case despite the fact that 29% (1,116 out of 3,848) of recipients in these four academic cohorts have lost their eligibility in the scholarship program.



# Opportunity Scholarship Graduation Survey

An *Opportunity Scholarship Graduation Survey* was developed once the first cohort reached the point of graduation to obtain feedback from recipients about the institutional services they received, future goals after graduation, as well as concerns they had about the program. Across the three cohorts a total of 1,507 recipients had maintained their eligibility into the final semester, and a total of 1,404 active email addresses were obtained for seeking recipient participation in the data collection efforts. A total of 803 students ultimately completed the survey instrument resulting in a 32% response rate. A strong relationship appears to exist when comparing the percentage of responses from each institution, and then aligning those with the percentage of recipients who had established initial eligibility at that institution during the



2004-05, 2005-06 and 2006-07 academic years (see Table 19).

The scholarship program funds each student \$500 each fall and spring semester during the first three years, and then \$1,000 during the final two terms. A number of institutions have developed matching scholarship programs with similar initial and continuing eligibility requirements that provide students with added financial support. Respondents were asked to indicate the level of support they received each year from the awarding institution. The majority (35%) of the respondents noted that they received \$2,500 or more in additional financial support from their campus (see Figure 12). Only about one-quarter of the students indicated they received less than \$1,000 each year from their institution in additional financial compensation. Overall, more than 78% of the recipients receive an additional \$1,000 or more of financial support in the form of merit or need base funding, or discipline/activity based financial assistance.

**Table 18**  
**Graduation Survey Respondents by Awarding Institution**

Institution	Responded	Cohort
SDSU	340 (42%)	1087 (43%)
USD	201 (25%)	577 (23%)
AUG	73 (9%)	219 (9%)
SDSMT	62 (8%)	213 (8%)
DSU	31 (4%)	99 (4%)
BHSU	30 (3.7%)	144 (6%)
NSU	30 (3.7%)	110 (4%)
MMC	20 (2.5%)	40 (1.5%)
PRE	14 (2%)	22 (0.8%)
DWU	1 (0.1%)	34 (1%)
NAU	1 (0.1%)	3 (0.1%)
	<b>803 (32%)</b>	<b>2,548</b>

**Future Career Objectives**

Recipients were asked to indicate their future intentions after graduation by specifying employment or the continuation of their post-secondary education through graduate work. A total of 350 respondents (44%) indicated they planned to enter the work force directly after graduation, and a total of 196 (56%) of these respondents had already secured employment. Those that had secured employment after graduation were further asked to identify the state in which they intended to work, with 72% (141 out of 196) specifying they intended to enter the workforce in South Dakota (note that seven of these students will be reporting for active military service which required deployment outside of the state).

A large portion of the respondents (359 or 45%) indicated they intended to pursue graduate work after completing their post-secondary undergraduate experience. Two hundred and fifty-eight (72%) of these recipients had already been accepted into graduate programs, and 174 (67%) had been accepted in graduate programs offered at a post-secondary institution in South Dakota. When considering these two pools of students a total of 454 (57%) respondents

had secured employment or been accepted into a graduate program after completing their under-graduate program. Approximately 69% of these recipients chose to remain in South Dakota. Nebraska appeared to attract the largest number of recipients when further examining the geographic placement for those who had obtained employment or graduate school placement (see Table 20). Of the students who planned to move to Nebraska, all 18 planned to attend graduate programs at either Creighton University or the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in either Law, Dentistry, Physical Therapy, Physician Assistant, or Chemistry. Minnesota had the next highest with 16 recipients split in areas of graduate work and employment. It is important to note that at the time the survey was completed a number of recipients may still have had additional credit hours to complete before successfully completing their under-graduate studies (e.g., those with double and triple majors, changing degree tracks, etc.). A small portion of the recipients were undecided (38 or 4%), or planned to continue their undergraduate degree (54 or 7%).

**Recipient Perceptions of Program**

Fourteen survey questions were developed to measure three general issues regarding the Opportunity Scholarship program including: 1) campus support of scholarship recipients; 2) recipient hardship with continuing eligibility policies; and 3) perceived influence of the scholarship program. Recipients were asked to read each of the statements and specify their level of agreement (Strongly Disagree,

**Table 19**  
**Intended Geographic Placement for Employment and Graduate Work for 2004-05, 2005-06 & 2006-07 Opportunity Scholarship Recipients**

<i>State</i>	<i>Graduate Work</i>	<i>Employment</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>South Dakota</i>	174 (67%)	141 (72%)	315 (69%)
<i>Minnesota</i>	10 (4%)	6 (3%)	16 (3.5%)
<i>Iowa</i>	12 (5%)	5 (3%)	17 (4%)
<i>Wyoming</i>	0 (0%)	5 (3%)	5 (1%)
<i>Colorado</i>	3 (1.2%)	4 (2%)	7 (1.5%)
<i>North Dakota</i>	1 (0.4%)	4 (2%)	5 (1%)
<i>Montana</i>	1 (0.4%)	2 (1%)	3 (1%)
<i>Nebraska</i>	17 (7%)	2 (1%)	19 (4%)
<i>Outside Region</i>	40 (15%)	27 (14%)	67 (15%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>454</b>

Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree). Four to five statements were developed to address each of these issues to eliminate the potential for overreliance on a single item when making policy based interpretations. These statements were then inserted randomly into the survey instrument to ensure that recipient response to the preceding item would not have an effect on subsequent responses. Lastly, the items were both positively and negatively worded to ensure that recipients took the time to read each item before responding. This final section of the report will focus on each of these issues separately in an attempt to highlight recipient opinions related to these topics.



**Campus Support.** First, recipients responded to five items regarding their interaction with campus personnel about the Opportunity Scholarship program (see Table 21). A sizable number of the recipients specified that they had limited contact with personnel at their campus (44%), and the majority specified that personnel responsible for administering the program were helpful when it came to identifying strategies to ensure that they maintained their ongoing eligibility in the program. Recipients indicated that personnel were

knowledgeable about the requirements for the program (61%), with a similar number of respondents specifying that they were able to obtain appropriate answers to questions they had about the program (57%). However, recipients suggested mixed results when responding to the statement about requests for assistance. Forty-six percent of recipients were neutral in their opinion of the response rate they received, while 49% indicated appropriate response rates. Overall, recipients appeared to be satisfied with the assistance they received from campus personnel as they worked to maintain eligibility in the program.

**Student Hardships.** Second, recipient ability to maintaining 15 credit hours each semester continues to be the single biggest

**Table 20**  
**Student Interaction with Campus Personnel Regarding Opportunity Scholarship Program**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>
1. I found personnel at my institution to be knowledgeable about the requirements for the scholarship program.	78 <sup>(10%)</sup>	231 <sup>(29%)</sup>	489 <sup>(61%)</sup>
2. Personnel at my institution assisted in identifying strategies to ensure that I maintain my eligibility in the scholarship program.	247 <sup>(31%)</sup>	238 <sup>(30%)</sup>	314 <sup>(39%)</sup>
3. I have had frequent contact with personnel from my institution regarding the scholarship.	353 <sup>(44%)</sup>	277 <sup>(35%)</sup>	170 <sup>(21%)</sup>
4. My institution was helpful in addressing my questions about the scholarship program.	58 <sup>(7%)</sup>	282 <sup>(35%)</sup>	458 <sup>(57%)</sup>
5. I have always received timely responses to my requests for assistance regarding the Opportunity Scholarship.	37 <sup>(5%)</sup>	366 <sup>(46%)</sup>	394 <sup>(49%)</sup>

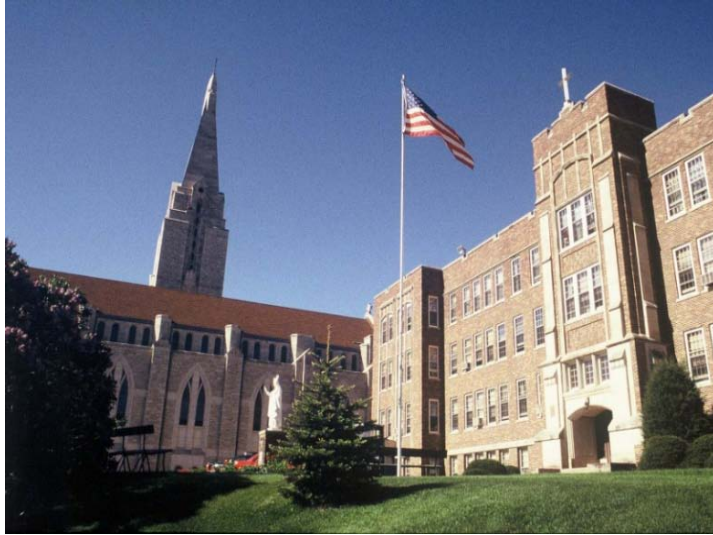
concern expressed by SDOS recipients. Students desire some degree of flexibility in managing their credit load each semester. At any given time they may be confronted with whether to complete a particularly difficult course versus maintaining their GPA. When examining continuing eligibility data, failure to attempt and complete 15 credit hours remains the primary cause of lost eligibility. Analysis performed for the 1,174 recipients that have lost eligibility across the first three initial cohorts shows that 679 (45%) have become permanently ineligible because they failed to complete 15 or more credit hours during their final semester of eligibility. However, student GPA and credit hour completion appear to be highly correlated producing two possible by-products. First, a number of students fall below the required GPA, and then make a choice to bring that GPA up by taking fewer credit hours the following semester. Second, students will intentionally drop a course that might be lowering their GPA to maintain their GPA requirements for other scholarship programs.

To determine the extent these recipients were inversely influenced by the continuing eligibility requirements, respondents were asked to react to five statements. Only a small number specified they had difficulty maintaining their eligibility in the program (9%), with the largest majority (78%) disagreeing that existing eligibility requirements were difficult to maintain. Additionally, 60% of the recipients

**Table 21**  
**Recipient Difficulty Maintaining Eligibility in the Opportunity Scholarship Program**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>
1. It has been difficult to maintain my eligibility in the scholarship program.	629 <sup>(78%)</sup>	97 <sup>(12%)</sup>	73 <sup>(9%)</sup>
2. At times I found it difficult to understand the guidelines for maintaining my eligibility in the scholarship program	482 <sup>(60%)</sup>	170 <sup>(21%)</sup>	148 <sup>(18%)</sup>
3. The eligibility requirements for the scholarship program have been helpful in ensuring that I finish my degree in a timely fashion.	160 <sup>(20%)</sup>	192 <sup>(24%)</sup>	442 <sup>(55%)</sup>
4. The continuing eligibility requirements had an impact on the degree I ultimately selected to pursue.	573 <sup>(71%)</sup>	142 <sup>(18%)</sup>	81 <sup>(10%)</sup>
5. I found it difficult to manage a schedule of at least 15 credit hours each semester.	588 <sup>(73%)</sup>	79 <sup>(10%)</sup>	131 <sup>(16%)</sup>

disagreed that the eligibility requirements were difficult to understand, and many of them (55%) felt that having to complete 15 credits each semester was helpful in ensuring that they finish their degree in a timely fashion. College financial aid counselors and university presidents noted that students pursuing particular degrees and majors are also disadvantaged by this requirement (engineering, pharmacy, education, etc.). Unexpected demands of internship or student teaching obligations, or unique course-taking requirements based on their field of study further complicate the situation for students. To address this concern, respondents were asked to indicate whether the credit hour requirements had an unintended impact on the degree they chose to pursue. Only 10% agreed with this statement, with a sizable number (71%) specifying that they disagree or strongly disagree with this statement. It is important to note that the results from the survey instrument only reflect those students who have been able to maintain eligibility.



**Perceived Influence.** Finally, four items were used to help measure the perceived influence the Opportunity Scholarship program had on recipients' choice of institution and for remaining in South Dakota. A sizable portion of the recipients (53%) indicated they had chosen their institution because of the financial assistance provided, while 25% disagreed with this statement. A small percentage appeared to be unaffected by the financial assistance, suggesting that these students were probably more directly influenced by the degree program offered at the awarding institution.

Two additional questions were used to determine the impact of the scholarship program for encouraging recipient geographic placement within South Dakota. Fifty-five percent of recipients noted that the scholarship program was a critical factor for choosing to remain at an institution in the state. One-fifth of the recipients indicated that the scholarship program was not critical, and more

interestingly about 21% of the respondents who said the scholarship was an important factor indicated they would have attended an institution outside South Dakota if they had not received the additional funding the program allowed. Of more critical importance is the recipient response to the final question which asked whether they were more likely to remain in South Dakota after graduation due to the financial support they received from the scholarship. Only 30% of the students felt this type of obligation, with a large number of respondents neutral to the idea. This may be explained by the potential for employment or graduate degree programs of interest for students, but additional information is warranted to better determine student perceptions related to this particular objective of the scholarship program. With such a large portion of the recipients making the choice to remain in the state, one would anticipate that the scholarship program had an impact on this decision, even though it may not have been a conscious decision.

**Table 22**  
**Perceived Influence of the Opportunity Scholarship Program**

<i>Item</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Agree</i>
1. I chose my institution based on the financial assistance it provided me to attend.	200 <sup>(25%)</sup>	167 <sup>(21%)</sup>	428 <sup>(53%)</sup>
2. Receiving the Opportunity Scholarship was a critical factor in my choice to attend an institution in South Dakota.	157 <sup>(20%)</sup>	200 <sup>(25%)</sup>	441 <sup>(55%)</sup>
3. I would have attended an institution outside of South Dakota without the financial support I received from the scholarship program.	492 <sup>(49%)</sup>	236 <sup>(29%)</sup>	169 <sup>(21%)</sup>
4. I am more likely to remain in South Dakota after graduation because of the financial support I received from the scholarship program.	275 <sup>(34%)</sup>	283 <sup>(35%)</sup>	239 <sup>(30%)</sup>



**Legislative Policy Issue**

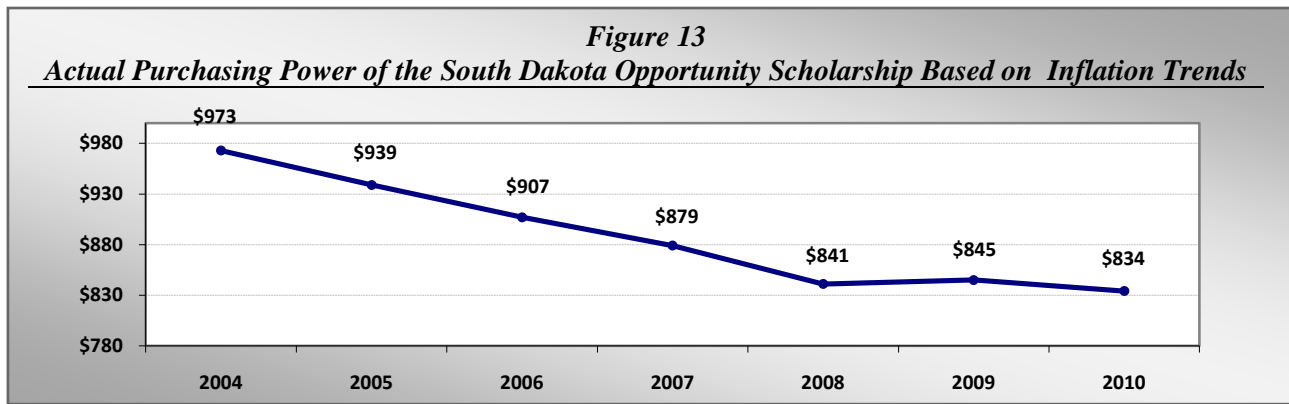
One important policy issue appears to be at the forefront for on-going dialogue regarding the future of the Opportunity Scholarship program. The early history of the Opportunity Scholarship (SDOS) program dates to 2001, when Gov. Bill Janklow introduced Senate Bill 239 to establish the Regents Scholarship Program and provide for its funding. As Gov. Janklow originally envisioned, the scholarships would be available only to students who attended public universities or the state-supported technical institutes. By the time SB 239 reached the Governor’s desk, the bill had been amended to include non-public universities, colleges, and technical schools as well. Gov. Janklow vetoed the bill, and the Legislature sustained his decision.

During the 2003 Legislative session, a bill nearly identical to the one vetoed in 2001 actually became law but was not funded. The total value of the scholarship over four years had been set at \$6,000. In 2004, the Legislature renamed the scholarship the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship and authorized funding from the state’s Education Enhancement Trust Fund, beginning with high school graduating classes in 2004. The Legislature also reduced the scholarship amount, to be

<b>Fiscal Year</b>	<b>Percentage Increase</b>
2004	2.7%
2005	3.4%
2006	3.2%
2007	2.8%
2008	3.8%
2009	-0.4%
2010	1.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>16.6%</b>

earned over four years, from \$6,000 to \$5,000.

With this historical background in mind, it is important to consider the financial impact of the state support for high achieving students. National data indicates that the rate of inflation has increased by an average of 2.3% over the past seven years (see Table 24). More specifically, since the first cohort took advantage of the SDOS seven years ago, the buying power of the \$1000 scholarship has decreased by 16.6% (US Inflation Calculator, 2011). As a result, students are provided approximately \$834 in actual purchasing power toward college expenses (see Figure 12). Although this past year the program continued to experience an increase in the overall number of new recipients, the program fell below projections anticipated to meet the objective for doubling the number of Opportunity Scholarship recipients by 2010.



## Appendix A: South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship Legislative Statutes

---

**13-55-30.** Opportunity scholarship program established. There is established the South Dakota opportunity scholarship program to be administered by the Board of Regents. The purpose of the program is to allow South Dakota's most academically accomplished high school graduates to receive an affordable education at any university, college, or technical school that is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and that provides instruction from a campus located in South Dakota.

**13-55-31.** Eligibility requirements for opportunity scholarship. In order to be eligible for a South Dakota opportunity scholarship award, a student shall:

- (1) Be a resident of South Dakota at the time of graduation from high school;
- (2) Have a composite score of 24, or higher, on the test administered by the American College Testing Program or an equivalent score as determined by the Board of Regents on the Scholastic Assessment Test. The student shall take the ACT or SAT test before beginning postsecondary education;
- (3) Meet the high school course requirements for graduation as provided in § 13-55-31.1;
- (4) Attend a university, college, or technical school that is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and that provides instruction from a campus located in South Dakota; and
- (5) Enter into the program within five years of graduation from high school or within one year of the student's release from active duty with an active component of the armed forces if the release is within five years of the student's graduation from high school. If a student attends full-time a regionally accredited university, college, or technical school located outside South Dakota and within two years following high school graduation or within two years following release from active military service returns to the state to attend full-time a regionally accredited university, college, or technical school, the student is eligible to receive a partial award.

A student is eligible to participate in the South Dakota opportunity scholarship program for the equivalent of four academic years (eight consecutive spring and fall terms) or until the attainment of a baccalaureate degree, whichever comes first. However, the executive director of the Board of Regents may grant exceptions to the continuous enrollment requirements for good cause shown.

A student who would have been eligible for the scholarship, but who applies after completing one or more semesters of full-time work at an accredited institution, may be admitted to the program only if the student has complied with the same grade point and credit hour requirements that would apply to program participants. Admission granted under these circumstances may not be retroactive, and eligibility for participation in the program shall be reduced by one semester for each semester of work completed prior to admission to the program.

**13-55-33.** Allocation of scholarship funds--Proration in cases of insufficient funds--Total scholarship amount set. One-half of the annual scholarship award shall be paid to public institutions on behalf of eligible students there enrolled or directly to eligible students enrolled at nonpublic institutions at the beginning of the fall semester and the other half shall be paid at the beginning of the spring semester. The amount of the annual award shall be as follows:

- (1) One thousand dollars for the first year of attendance;
- (2) One thousand dollars for the second year of attendance;
- (3) One thousand dollars for the third year of attendance;
- (4) Two thousand dollars for the fourth year of attendance unless the student attended full-time a regionally accredited university, college, or technical school located outside South Dakota prior to admission to the program, in which case the award shall be one thousand dollars.

If, in any year, the total funds available to finance the scholarship awards are insufficient to permit each eligible recipient to receive the full amount provided in this section, the available moneys shall be prorated and distributed to each recipient in proportion to the entitlement contemplated by this section. The total amount of the scholarship may not exceed five thousand dollars.

**13-55-34.** Continuing eligibility requirements for scholarship recipients. In order to maintain eligibility, a student shall:

- (1) Maintain a cumulative 3.0 grade point average on a 4.0 scale. Cumulative grade point average shall be calculated after the second semester and every semester thereafter. The student shall complete consecutive spring and fall terms in order to remain eligible for continuation of the scholarship program from term to term. A student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 on a 4.0 scale shall forfeit the scholarship for the subsequent semester and for subsequent semesters until the student has reestablished eligibility. To reestablish eligibility, the student shall comply with all course load, enrollment, and proficiency examination requirements for continued eligibility stated in §§ 13-55-30 to 13-55-35, inclusive, and the student shall achieve a cumulative grade point average of 3.0, or greater, on a 4.0 scale. The scholarship shall be reinstated beginning the semester following that in which the student achieves a cumulative grade point average of 3.0, or greater, on a 4.0 scale. Reinstatement of a scholarship does not extend the time allowed under the scholarship program; any scholarship award forfeited cannot be reclaimed after a student has regained eligibility. A student whose cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 on a 4.0 scale a second time forfeits the scholarship for all subsequent semesters; and

- (2)
  - (a) Enroll in and complete at least fifteen credit hours of instruction in each consecutive spring and fall term if the student completed ninth grade prior to the 2010-2011 school year; or
  - (b) Enroll in and complete at least thirty credit hours of instruction in each academic year if the student completed ninth grade in the 2010-2011 school year or thereafter. For purposes of this subdivision, an academic year consists of consecutive fall and spring terms.

Earn thirty credit hours prior to the beginning of the second year of instruction, sixty credit hours prior to the beginning of the third year of instruction, and ninety credit hours prior to the fourth year of instruction. If the executive director of the Board of Regents determines that a student's failure to enroll or to maintain continued enrollment occurred as a direct result of

legitimate factors outside the student's control, or has resulted from the student's participation in an activity that in the executive director's judgment provides knowledge or experience that will enhance the student's academic pursuits, the executive director may extend the student's eligibility to participate in the program for up to two additional years, if the student does not enroll in a noneligible institution.

**13-55-35.** Board of Regents to allocate appropriated funds and other funds received for program. The Board of Regents may allocate funds appropriated by the Legislature or funds generated by gifts, donations, grants, or endowments for the purposes of §§ 13-55-30 to 13-55-36, inclusive, to students qualifying pursuant to § 13-55-31.

**13-55-36.** Board of Regents to promulgate rules. The Board of Regents shall promulgate rules, pursuant to chapter 1-26, to accomplish the purposes of §§ 13-55-30 to 13-55-36, inclusive.

## Appendix B: South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship Administrative Rules

---

**24:40:13:01. Definitions.** Terms used in this chapter mean:

- (1) "Board," the South Dakota Board of Regents;
- (2) "Credit hour," the unit of measure employed by an institution to track progress toward degree completion. Only units that satisfy graduation requirements under institutional rules may be recognized as credit hours under this chapter;
- (3) "Cumulative grade point average," the grade point average based upon the numeric grades or their letter equivalents for all credits earned by the student. For purposes of continuing eligibility, the cumulative grade point average is the average of grades assigned in courses attempted after admission to the scholarship program, with the exception of courses for which no credit hours would be awarded by the participating institution that enrolled the student as a regular student;
- (4) "Executive director," the executive director of the South Dakota Board of Regents, or the executive director's designee;
- (5) "Full-time attendance," enrollment in a participating institution as a regular student for at least 15 semester credit hours;
- (6) "Grade on a 4.0 scale," the numeric designation of grade equivalencies shown on the following conversion table:

Letter Grade	Grade Point
A or A+	4.00
A-	3.66
B+	3.33
B	3.00
B-	2.66
C+	2.33
C	2.00
C-	1.67
D+	1.33
D	1.00
D-	0.67
F	0.00

- (7) "High school," a school as defined in § 24:03:01:01(32) that has been approved or accredited by the secretary of the Department of Education to provide instruction through grade twelve;
- (8) "Institution," any university, college, or technical school that is accredited by a regional accrediting agency, or, in the case of institutions located outside the United States of America, any university, college, or technical school recognized by governmental authorities as adhering to comparable quality standards in matters of curriculum, resources, and business practices;
- (9) "Participating institution," any university, college, or technical school that is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools providing instruction from a campus located in South Dakota and that executes an agreement pursuant to this chapter;
- (10) "Regular student," a person who is enrolled or accepted for enrollment at an institution for the purpose of obtaining a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential offered by that institution;
- (11) "Scholarship," any grant-in-aid awarded pursuant to this chapter;
- (12) "Scholarship program," the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship program established to allow South Dakota's most academically accomplished high school graduates to receive an affordable education at any participating institution;
- (13) "Student," any person who has not received a baccalaureate degree.

**24:40:13:02. Initial eligibility requirements.** In order to be eligible to receive a South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship, a student must:

- (1) Be graduated from high school with a cumulative average grade of "B" (3.0 on a 4.0 scale), or greater, for all work attempted and completed as designated on the official high school transcript at the time of graduation;

- (2) Be a resident of South Dakota at the time of graduation from high school;
- (3) Take the test administered by the American College Testing Program (ACT) or the Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) examination while in high school or the summer following graduation from high school and before postsecondary enrollment;
- (4) Receive a composite score on the ACT of at least 24 or an equivalent score on the SAT as determined by the Board of Regents;
- (5) Complete the required number of high school courses in the following subjects effective for 2004-2009 high school graduates:
  - (a) Four units of English: courses with major emphasis upon grammar, composition, or literary analysis. One year of debate instruction may be included to meet this requirement;
  - (b) Four units of algebra or higher mathematics: algebra, geometry, trigonometry, or other advanced mathematics, including accelerated or honors mathematics (algebra) provided at the 8<sup>th</sup> grade level. Arithmetic, business, consumer or general mathematics, or other similar courses, are not included;
  - (c) Four units of science, including three units of approved laboratory science: courses in biology, chemistry, or physics in which at least one regular laboratory period is scheduled each week. Accelerated or honors science (biology, physics, or chemistry) provided in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade are accepted. Qualifying physical science or earth science courses (with lab) may be accepted on a case-by-case basis;
  - (d) Three units of social studies: history, economics, sociology, geography, United States or South Dakota government, American Problems, and similar courses;
  - (e) Two units of a modern or classical language, including American Sign Language. The two units must be in the same language;
  - (f) One unit of fine arts: effective for the fall 2005 semester for students graduating from South Dakota high schools, one unit in art, theatre, or music. Such credit may be in appreciation, analysis, or performance. Through the fall 2004 semester for students graduating from South Dakota high schools, one-half unit of art, theatre, or music is required. Such credit may be in appreciation, analysis, or performance;

- (g) One half unit of computer science: students must have basic keyboarding skills, experience in using computer word processing, database, and spreadsheet packages, and experience in using the Internet or other wide area networks.

No course in which a student received a final grade below a "C" (2.0 on a 4.0 scale) may be counted for purposes of this subdivision. If a student who receives disqualifying grades in courses required under this subdivision retakes those courses while in high school, the student may still qualify for eligibility if the student has the required number of courses with grades of C or above in each subcategory;

- (6) Meet the high school course requirements for graduation from the distinguished high school program (§ 24:43:11:05) effective for the persons graduated from high school in 2010 or thereafter high school graduates;
- (7) Attend a participating institution; and
- (8) Enter into the scholarship program within five years of the date of graduation from high school. A student who entered active military duty immediately after the date of graduation from high school may qualify for the scholarship if the student's release from military service occurs within five years from the student's graduation and the student enters the scholarship program within one year of the student's release from active military duty.

**24:40:13:03. Loss of eligibility due to attendance outside South Dakota.** A student is not eligible for the scholarship program if the student attends an institution located outside South Dakota for one or more semesters or quarters. Enrollment in a distance education program offered by an institution located outside South Dakota constitutes attendance outside South Dakota for purpose of this rule. However, if a student attends an institution out of state and then returns to South Dakota to attend a participating institution starting no later than the beginning of the fall term within two years of the student's high school graduation and has met all initial and continuing eligibility requirements for the scholarship program, the student may qualify for a partial scholarship award. A student who entered active military duty immediately after attending an institution out of state may qualify for the scholarship if the student enters the scholarship program within one year of the student's release from active military duty.

**24:40:13:04. Exceptions to attendance restrictions.**

Notwithstanding the provisions of § 24:40:13:03, full-time attendance at an institution located outside South Dakota is permitted in the following circumstances:

- (1) If the attendance occurs during a summer term or an interim term;
- (2) If the attendance occurs as part of a formal exchange program sponsored or approved by the participating institution where the student is enrolled as a regular student;
- (3) If the participating institution where the student is enrolled as a regular student has outsourced a portion of its curriculum to an out-of-state institution and the attendance occurs in completing that portion of the curriculum; or
- (4) If the executive director has granted an exception for good cause shown.

**24:40:13:05. Credit hour threshold requirements for continuing eligibility.** To maintain eligibility, each student in the scholarship program must meet the following credit hour thresholds for the respective term of enrollment: 30 credit hours before the start of the third semester, 60 credit hours before the start of the fifth semester, and 90 credit hours before the start of the seventh semester.

Failure to complete the required number of credit hours before the start of the specific semester disqualifies the student from further participation in the program, effective at the start of the semester in which the student fails to meet the established credit hour threshold. In calculating the student's credit hour total, the participating institution shall factor in all credit hours completed and transcribed whether or not the receiving institution otherwise accepts the credit hours and counts them towards satisfaction of its degree requirements. However, credit granted for remedial coursework will not be counted. Disqualification is subject to the following exceptions:

- (1) A student who fails to meet the credit hour threshold requirement because the student must report for active military service does not thereby lose his or her eligibility. In such situations a persistence waiver may be granted by the executive director;
- (2) The executive director may grant a waiver of the credit hour threshold requirement for good cause shown and may place such conditions upon the waiver as may be necessary and prudent to achieve the objectives of the scholarship program.

**24:40:13:06. Persistence requirements for continuing eligibility.** Upon entering the scholarship program, each student shall maintain continuous attendance, enrolling in consecutive spring and fall terms, subject to the following exceptions:

- (1) A student may petition the executive director to be excused from strict compliance with this regulation during semesters in which the student participates in institutionally sponsored or approved exchange programs, internships, or similar structured, supervised, credit-bearing learning experiences that preclude enrollment in the participating institution's standard curriculum;
- (2) A student who fails to complete continuous enrollment requirements because the student must report for active military service will not thereby lose his or her eligibility;
- (3) The executive director may waive continuous enrollment requirements for good cause shown and may place such conditions upon the waiver as may be necessary and prudent to achieve the objectives of the scholarship program.

**24:40:13:07. Grade point requirements for continuing eligibility.** Numeric grades or their letter equivalents must be assigned for each credit hour that each student attempts and completes after admission into the scholarship program. Each student must maintain a cumulative grade point average for all credit hours completed of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale to remain eligible to receive benefits under the scholarship program.

**24:40:13:08. Payment of benefits to students participating in the scholarship program.** Upon a student's admission to the scholarship program, the executive director shall make scholarship payments for the benefit of the student who complies with course load requirements for two consecutive semesters without regard to the student's grade point average. Thereafter, payments may only be made if the student has met the credit hour threshold and persistence requirements and if the student's cumulative grade point average for all coursework completed is at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. The executive director shall make the payments each semester for each student whose compliance with credit hour threshold, persistence, and grade point requirements has been verified by the participating institution that enrolls the student as a regular student. No payment may be made on behalf of any student who fails to comply with credit hour threshold, persistence, and cumulative grade point requirements or whose compliance has not been verified by the participating institution that enrolls the student as a regular student.

**24:40:13:09. Reinstatement of eligibility lost due to failure to maintain grade point average.** Any student who loses eligibility because the student's cumulative grade point average falls below 3.0 on a 4.0 scale may reestablish by raising the cumulative grade point average to 3.0, or greater, on a 4.0 scale and complying with all requirements for continued eligibility relating to credit hour threshold and persistence. The following requirements related to reinstatement also apply:

- (1) The student must apply to the participating institution the student attends as a regular student for reinstatement of eligibility before the rosters of eligible regular students are submitted by participating institutions on October 1 for the fall semester or by February 25 for the spring semester;
- (2) After verification by the participating institution where the student attends as a regular student that the student qualifies for reinstatement, the executive director shall disburse payments on behalf of the student for the term following that in which reinstatement is earned and for all subsequent terms during which the student remains eligible;
- (3) Any student who loses eligibility a second time may not be reinstated a second time.

**24:40:13:10. Treatment of special enrollments for purposes of eligibility: summer sessions, interim sessions, repeated courses, asynchronous distance education courses.** The following conditions for purposes of eligibility apply to special enrollments:

- (1) **Summer and interim sessions.** Credit hours completed during summer sessions or interim sessions are counted as part of a student's cumulative grade point average. Credit hours earned during the summer or interim sessions do count toward meeting the credit hour thresholds established for the third, fifth, and seventh term of eligibility;
- (2) **Repeated courses.** A student who fails to maintain the required cumulative grade point average may repeat courses as part of the student's effort to secure reinstatement of scholarship benefits eligibility under § 24:40:13:07. Repeated courses may not count for purposes of compliance with the credit hour threshold requirement. Upon completion of the repeated course, the grade assigned in the repeated course replaces that assigned in the original course for purposes of calculating the cumulative grade point average;

- (3) **Internships and similar external placements that affect load or grade assignment.** A participating institution may request that the executive director issue standing persistence waivers from credit hour thresholds established under §§ 24:40:13:05 and 24:40:13:07, respectively, where institutional policy requires participating students to take a reduced course load during the semester in which an internship occurs.

**24:40:13:11. Progression examination requirements for continuing eligibility.** Repealed.

**24:40:13:12. Transfer among participating institutions.** A student may transfer among participating institutions without losing eligibility if the student makes timely application to transfer before September 1 for the fall semester or by January 15 for the spring semester. The student must also document continued compliance with course load, persistence, grade point, and proficiency examination requirements.

**24:40:13:13. Equivalencies.** For any requirement in this chapter that is stated in terms of semester, semester credit hours, grade point averages, or other technical terms commonly employed by institutions of higher education, the executive director shall establish an equivalency to determine the initial and continued eligibility of each student who attends an institution that uses an alternative calendar, grade system, or other means of tracking academic progress and accomplishment. The equivalency standards are used to assure equal treatment of each student who attends an institution that uses an alternative system.

**24:40:13:14. Application for admission to the scholarship program or for transfer between participating institutions.** The following application and transfer requirements apply to the scholarship program:

- (1) Any student who requests to participate in the scholarship program must apply to the admissions office of the participating institution that the student intends to attend. The executive director shall specify the application forms:
  - (a) Each student is responsible for arranging the submission of official high school transcripts and official test score reports from the ACT or SAT unless the high school includes these scores on its official transcript;
  - (b) An application is not complete until the participating institution has received the

official high school transcripts and official test reports;

- (c) Each application must be complete by September 1 for the fall semester or by January 15 for the spring semester;
- (2) Each student who requests to transfer between participating institutions must apply to the admissions office of the participating institution that the student intends to attend on forms specified by the executive director:
  - (a) Each student is responsible for arranging the submission of all official transcripts and documents needed to demonstrate compliance with credit hour threshold, persistence, and grade point requirements;
  - (b) An application is not complete until the participating institution has received the official transcripts and required documents;
  - (d) Each application must be complete by September 20 for the fall semester or by February 15 for the spring semester.

**24:40:13:15. Tentative acceptance into the scholarship program and tentative approval of continued eligibility for transfer students.** The participating institution shall notify the prospective student whether it is likely that the student will qualify to participate in the scholarship program. Notice of final acceptance is given after receipt and review of a final official transcript from the student's high school to confirm satisfactory completion of all high school courses and graduation.

The participating institution will notify a transfer student whether it is likely that the student will qualify to participate in the scholarship program. Notice of final acceptance is given after receipt and review of all official transcripts and documents submitted to demonstrate compliance with credit hour thresholds, persistence, and cumulative grade point average requirements. In calculating the cumulative grade point average, the participating institution shall factor in all credit hours attempted and completed and transcribed by the participating institution from which the student transferred, whether or not the receiving institution otherwise accepts the credit hours and counts them towards satisfaction of its degree requirements.

**24:40:13:16. Agreement to conditions of the scholarship program.** Participation in the scholarship program is limited to each student who abides by all conditions and requirements of the program, including any requirements for cooperation and release of information that the executive director may prescribe to assess the operation and effectiveness of the scholarship

program or to audit program administration. Each student also agrees that, if the student withdraws or otherwise terminates enrollment and is entitled to a refund, the student authorizes the participating institution that the student attends to pay to the executive director that portion of the student's refund that reflects monies received by the participating institution from the scholarship program.

**24:40:13:17. Grievance procedures.** The student shall be permitted to bring a grievance to challenge institutional actions involving the determination of eligibility to participate in the program or of compliance with program requirements. Grievances shall be limited to alleged violation, misinterpretation, or misapplication of specific terms or conditions of the laws or rules that govern the program, to be arbitrary or capricious or to discriminate on a basis proscribed under law.

- (1) Participating institutions shall establish procedures to adjust grievances permitted under this section;
- (2) Students may appeal institutional decisions to the board, which, at its discretion, may accept the grievance and conduct its own review or refer the grievance to an independent hearing examiner for review and recommendations concerning the proper resolution of disputed legal or factual matters as provided under the contested case provisions of SDCL chapter [1-26](#);
- (3) Participating institutions shall comply with any order issued to resolve a student grievance, subject to the exercise of the right to appeal from the board's resolution of the grievance as provided under law;
- (4) Participating institutions shall be responsible for all costs for hearing examiners retained by the board to review such grievances or related expenses reasonably incurred for such reviews.

**24:40:13:18. Institutional agreements.** Any institution that is accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and that provides instruction from a campus located in South Dakota may enter into a written agreement with the board to permit its eligible regular students to participate in the scholarship program. Until such an institution has agreed to comply with the requirements of this chapter, the board may not recognize it as a participating institution and no student enrolled at the institution as a regular student may participate in the scholarship program. The executive director shall develop a standard contract document for execution by such institutions. The standard contract shall obligate a participating institution, at a minimum, to do the



following:

- (1) Comply with all requirements placed upon participating institutions in this chapter;
- (2) Review existing institutional procedures and policies and provide any special assistance that may be necessary to permit students to comply with the scholarship program requirements;
- (3) Notify prospective students of the program availability and of procedures employed by the participating institution to implement the program;
- (4) Process student applications for each school term by distributing and collecting student applications and verifying eligibility of applicants;
- (5) Submit to the executive director a roster of its eligible regular students on October 1, or the first working day thereafter, and on February 28, or the first working day thereafter;
- (6) Permit participating students to attend classes without obligation to make payment toward that portion of tuition and fee charges that will be covered by scholarship program funds and without any interest or penalty if funds are disbursed after the time when tuition and fee charges ordinarily accrue interest or penalties;
- (7) Allocate funds transferred by the executive director to the benefit of each eligible student participating in the scholarship program;
- (8) Document the application of all funds received;
- (9) Administer the program under the same procedures employed to administer other financial aid programs that the participating institution offers to its students, subject to such adjustments as may be needed to comply with scholarship program requirements;
- (10) Treat mid-semester withdrawals of program participants in the same manner that the institution treats withdrawal of students who receive federal financial aid, prorating the aid allocable to the student based upon active attendance and remitting to the board such sums as have not been earned by the student prior to the last day of attendance;
- (11) Expedite the preparation of official transcripts and other documentation required by participating students who transfer to other participating institutions, unless, under institutional policy, a transferring student is ineligible for the release of academic records pending settlement of outstanding debts to the institution;
- (12) Cooperate with the executive director in all matters relating to assessment of the operation and effectiveness of the scholarship program;

- (13) Cooperate with the executive director in all matters relating to the audit of program administration;
- (14) Provide prompt assistance to the executive director in responding to legislative inquiries; and
- (15) Accept such amendments or modifications to the standard contract terms as the executive director may subsequently prescribe.

**24:40:13:19. Duties of the executive director.** The executive director shall oversee the creation, operation, effectiveness, and adjustment of the scholarship program. To these ends, the executive director may delegate functions, appoint assistants, or contract for services to assure the prudent and efficient operation of the program. The executive director shall do the following:

- (1) Develop all terms, conditions, and required forms or contracts for the scholarship program;
- (2) Prorate available appropriations if the appropriations are insufficient to permit each participant to receive a full scholarship payment;
- (3) Transfer funds on October 15, or the first working day thereafter, and March 15, or the first working day thereafter, to participating institutions to cover scholarship awards for each participating regular student whose eligibility for benefits under the scholarship program has been verified by the participating institution.

<sup>1</sup> An independent sample t-test was performed to determine the extent that recipients who had failed to meet continuing eligibility requirements obtained significantly lower ACT composite scores. Findings from the analysis ( $t = 9.15, p < .001$ ) indicate that students who were able to maintain their eligibility scored significantly higher ( $M = 26.85, SD = 2.54$ ) on the ACT when compared to those who became ineligible in the program ( $M = 26.16, SD = 2.09$ ).

<sup>2</sup> An independent sample t-test was performed to determine the extent that recipients who had failed to meet continuing eligibility requirements obtained significantly lower high school grade point averages. Findings from the analysis ( $t = 19.29, p < .001$ ) indicate that students who were able to maintain their eligibility achieve a significantly higher GPA ( $M = 3.84, SD = .22$ ), when compared to those who became ineligible in the program ( $M = 3.67, SD = .27$ ).