



May 27, 2020

John Bastian, Board President
Board of Regents
306 E. Capitol Ave., Suite 200
Pierre, SD 57501-2545

Dr. Timothy Downs, President
Northern State University
1200 S. Jay St.
Aberdeen, SD 57401

Letter of Intent Regarding Dual Credit Course Offerings Through the E-Learning Program at NSU

Dear President Bastian,

This Letter of Intent sets forth a particular view held by the Joint Committee on Appropriations (JCA) in approving your appropriation in the 2020 Legislative session. As such, this Letter of Intent seeks to supplement that legislation with specific policy guidance as approved on May 27, 2020.

While the guidance does not have the direct force of statutory law, it rests solidly on a long-standing tradition of Legislative-Executive relationships in South Dakota and it will be used by the Joint Committee as one basis for the fiscal oversight of your agency and its continued funding.

During the 2020 Legislative session, the BOR workgroup reviewed aspects of the E-Learning program at Northern State University (NSU). The workgroup found no other public university has the ability to offer dual credit courses through an established program like E-Learning. The E-Learning program creates an unfair advantage for NSU to offer dual credit courses. The offering of dual credit courses through the E-Learning program creates a double funding concern. The concern is the State provides general funds to NSU for the operation of the E-Learning program, while at the same time, the State provides general funds to the NSU E-Learning program through a subsidy for dual credit courses. The result is the State pays twice, once through a direct appropriation for the program and again through a subsidy for providing a dual credit course.

Therefore, the JCA requests NSU to refrain from using general funds appropriated for the E-Learning program for any dual credit course offering through the E-Learning program.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Representative Chris Karr
Lead Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Appropriations

Senator John Wiik
Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Appropriations

cc: Marty Guindon, Auditor General
Liza Clark, Commissioner, Bureau of Finance and Management