

**SOUTH DAKOTA BOARD OF REGENTS**

**AGENDA ITEM: 4 – F**  
**DATE: May 13-15, 2024**

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**SUBJECT**

**System Civics Initiative**

**CONTROLLING STATUTE, RULE, OR POLICY**

[SDBOR Strategic Plan](#)

**BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION**

Higher education itself is one of the most effective ways to prepare citizens for civic literacy and engagement. Research has long established a direct connection between college attendance and voting, demonstrating that higher education increases an individual’s interest and engagement in politics through social and political capital accumulation (Ahearn, Brand, and Zhou 2022). Designing and offering intentional programming around civic knowledge and engagement at the postsecondary level adds measurable value. Research establishes a clear connection between civic education and degree completion, employer-valued skill development, and student motivation to solve public problems (Schneider 2022).

During the 2024 legislative session, an additional \$926,406 in general funds for base funding was allocated to Black Hills State University (BHSU). In a letter of intent regarding the Center for Civic Engagement, the Joint Committee on Appropriations (JCA) instructed the South Dakota Board of Regents to use a portion of these funds to create the BHSU Center for Civic Engagement. The letter instructs BHSU to use the center to:

1. Develop and provide curricula and programs;
2. Sponsor and host civic-focused events;
3. Provide experiential learning opportunities;
4. Provide civic programming;
5. Provide other resources in support of the center.

President Elliott, Provost Kilpinen, and Dr. Carriveau have been meeting weekly to discuss how best to coordinate the efforts of the BHSU center and the system initiative.

**IMPACT AND RECOMMENDATION**

This item provides an initial update on the status of the initiative.

**ATTACHMENTS**

None

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**INFORMATIONAL ITEM**