

2023 Graduate Letter

August 2022

Post Secondary Visitation Days - During the final year, a student will be allowed two visitation days for shadowing and/or college exploration. This is an excellent way to explore careers and schools and is highly encouraged. If a student would like to visit a college or to shadow, he or she should fill out a form, have his/her parent/guardian sign the form, bring the sheet to the Counseling Office, and set up the appointment. Rules for visitation days include: all make-up work must be complete before visitation is made, a student must be eligible, students cannot have reached or exceeded the absence rule, visitation days are counted as excused absences, and visitations need to be planned in advance.

Visitation In School with College, Tech, and Armed Forces Representatives - A notice will be put in the school announcements at least one week before the representative is scheduled to visit. Students will need to let their teachers know that they would like to meet with the representative in the Counseling Office. If a student cannot come when the representative will be there, please let Mrs. DeMent know ahead of time.

Individual Planning - The students have been provided copies of any test results. If you and your student would like to meet individually with me, please call me at 439-3142 to set up a time to meet before, during, or after school. I am also available at fall conferences.

Scholarship – A list has been provided of scholarships that are available as well as search sites that can be utilized. Students are expected to take the initiative to research and apply for these. Only the awards and scholarships a student is able to accept will be recognized during the graduation ceremony. Please have your child let me know if he/she receives any scholarship.

Careers & Internet - All juniors and seniors have been given a listing of useful internet sites. There are many excellent sites for scholarships, financial planning, and career planning. We use some of these in school, but there are many sites that are worth spending more time on such as the SDMyLife, www.SDMyLife.com site.

Testing - Remember, all students planning to attend college should consider taking the ACT. Several technical schools also require the test or the ACCUPLACER. Many of our students choose to retake the ACT test. ACT research has shown that of students who took the ACT more than once: 55% increased their composite score, 23% decreased their score, and 22% had no change.

ACT Information - ACT Fee waivers are available if students and their families meet income guidelines. Several ACT study books and practice test materials are available to check out in the counselor's office. In addition, www.actstudent.org has on-line practice tests available. The ACT test also offers an additional writing assessment. Currently, no SD schools require the writing portion. If a student is considering an out-of-state school, it is best to check with the school's admission personnel about taking the additional

writing test component. If students do not meet set ACT sub-test scores, remedial (College Ready) courses may be required.

National ACT Testing Dates

<u>Test Date</u>	<u>Registration</u>	
October 22	Sept. 16	Time: 4 hours
December 10	Nov. 4	Start: 8 a.m.
February 11	Jan. 6	Location: various
April 15	March 10	ACT Cost: \$63.00
June 10	May 5	ACT + Writing: \$88.00
July 15	June 16	

ACT District Testing

Leola School has a district test date set for March 2023. The cost will be slightly lower than the national dates above but no fee waivers can be used. Registration for the district test is done through Mrs. DeMent in December 2022.

Testing Hints - Prepare early - don't cram, confirm date and location, Get sleep the night prior and eat breakfast, Be equipped, Dress in layers, Don't spend too much time on any one question, Read directions and questions carefully, Guess aggressively, Review work

SAT Testing - This is another college entrance exam. Most schools will accept either the ACT or the SAT. The ACT is the most common test taken in this state. The web site for the SAT is <http://sat.collegeboard.org>.

College Entrance Requirements - Most colleges now require three credits in math (Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II) and science (Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry) for admission. In SD, students must also score an 18 on the corresponding ACT sub-test in reading, 20 on the math subtest, 18 on the science subtest, and 18 on the English subtest. Students may also qualify through Smarter Balanced scores (see Proactive Admissions below). All other graduation requirements must be met (see Curriculum Guide).

Proactive Admissions – This fall, any senior who qualifies should receive a letter about Proactive Admissions. The **Proactive Admissions** letter details how the student qualifies for *guaranteed general admittance* to any of the state's six public universities and four technical institutes, as long as they meet certain eligibility criteria. (NOTE: Certain programs or majors may have additional admission requirements.). Here are the **Proactive Admissions Eligibility Criteria**: Students meet eligibility criteria in one of two ways: 1) Achieve a Level 3 or 4 on the 11th grade Smarter Balanced test (English *and* Math) OR 2) Achieve an ACT composite score of 18 or higher (NOTE: South Dakota School of Mines & Technology's requirement differ slightly.) Please remember that although this letter indicates the student qualifies for admission, the student must still apply and be accepted.

College Ready Coursework, ACT scores, and Remediation: If you do not have these required subscores you may have to take remedial (college ready) courses in college (they often don't count toward graduation). These scores are:

ACT English	18	ACT Math	20
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The state has an online program and exam, the College Readiness Curriculum, which students may take to bring up their English and Math scores –two areas SD requires remediation. The program length is flexible and has a fee associated with it (fee is returned if student completes the curriculum). Students must finish the online curriculum and then pass a test in order to waive remedial coursework in college. Please call me for more information. All the public, SD 4-year schools also use a math index score (<https://www.sdstate.edu/mathematics-statistics/math-placement>) for placement – please talk to your admissions rep to make sure your child is eligible for regular placement.

ACT and Admissions: The composite scores the colleges require for entrance:

ACT 18 - most 4 year colleges

ACT 21 - USD

ACT 25 - School of Mines and Technology (will accept a lower ACT if have higher GPA)

Applications - Students should start applying soon to colleges and technical schools. Applications are available online. Applying by November will usually assure that students will be accepted into programs and have access to all scholarship opportunities. Reminder that out-of state schools have different deadlines – the University of Nebraska Lincoln has a November deadline for many programs. In addition, many technical school programs fill up in the fall of the student’s senior year.

Free College Application Week – Our Dakota Dream: Students will have access to apply to SD post-secondary institutions during this time period for free. It is set for October 3-November 30th. Here’s the website information:

<https://ourdakotadreams.com/>

Housing – Some schools such as SDSU have now started basing housing application dates on the date students apply for college. So, plan to apply early to college so that you can be receive priority for admission, housing, and scholarships.

Minnesota Reciprocity - South Dakota students can attend Minnesota post-secondary institutions and pay SD in-state tuition through the reciprocity program. Reciprocity forms are available in the counseling office after mid-April.

Western Undergraduate Exchange Program - Through WUE, students in western states may enroll in many post-secondary programs at a reduced tuition level (150% of the institution's regular resident tuition). States participating are: Alaska, Arizona, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, SD, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. If you are interested go to <http://wiche.edu/wue> .

Transcripts - Transcripts are available in the office. Students may request a transcript to be sent through completing the transcript release form located on the counselor’s website. At the end of the senior year, all students will be asked where they would like a final transcript sent after graduation.

Legislative Page Information - Each session of the South Dakota legislature utilizes high school seniors as pages for service in the House of Representatives or the Senate. Information is available on-line at <https://sdlegislature.gov/Students/Page> If you are interested, talk with Mrs. Kappes. All applications must include a recommendation from a legislator or legislator-elect in the student's district. The preferred deadline is October 8th.

Intercollegiate Sports - If students intend to participate in college athletics, they might need to fill out a NCAA or NAIA eligibility application. The requirements can be rigorous and students should consider following the SD Regents Scholar Curriculum. The core curriculum for acceptance into Division I and II colleges can be found on the website NCAA www.eligibilitycenter.org. NAIA information is found at <http://www.naia.org/>

Scholarships – Students receive a list of scholarships that are available to them and search engines to find more. There are many scholarships at the national, state, and local level. It is really a good idea to put together a list of accomplishments, school activities, and volunteer work. This list makes it easy to fill in scholarship applications and is great to give to the people who write references for you. When asking someone to be a reference for you, please try to give that person two weeks to complete the recommendation. We have some wonderful local scholarship opportunities so plan to apply!

Scholarship Hints - Play the numbers game - the more you apply, the better your chances of winning, Create inventory lists of accomplishments, school activities, and volunteer work, Strive for reusability, Learn by example, Type all applications, Apply early, Keep copies of all scholarships and recommendations, Use the internet to search for scholarships – www.fastweb.com, www.unigo.com or www.scholarships.com are great places to start.

Volunteer Work – Many scholarships ask about community volunteer hours. Students can obtain volunteer hours through many venues. Volunteer hours usually include any hours *except* those spent fundraising, lobbying, working for a family member, or proselytizing, and hours for which you have been paid or received a stipend. This is a critical component of many scholarships – please call me if you have questions.

Regents Scholar/SD Opportunity Curriculum – To be a Regents Scholar, students must take four years of English, four years of math (Algebra I and above), four years of science (including courses in biology, chemistry, or physics with labs), four years of English, three years of social studies, two years of the same modern/classical language or two years of CTE or a combination of both, one year of fine arts, and one-half year of computers. No final grade in any class may be below a C (2.0) and the student must have a 3.0 (B) grade average. Following the Regents Scholar Pathway and taking a foreign language is advised for college sports and for college entrance in other states (at least 2 years – examples University of MN, University of NE Lincoln, Montana State, University of Wyoming).

South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship – The South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship was established for Regents Scholar/SD Opportunity curriculum recipients with an ACT

score of 24 or greater. No final grade in any core class may be below a C (2.0) and the student must also have a 3.0 (B) cumulative grade average. Students who get a 28 and meet benchmark ACT scores (English 18, Math 22, Reading 22, Science 23) will also qualify without the required coursework. The scholarship provides \$6500 over four years to a qualifying student who attends an eligible post-secondary education institution in South Dakota. Students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average in college, complete a minimum of 15 credit hours per term (remedial and repeated courses do not count), and may be asked to take the college proficiency examination (given after completion of 48 credit hours). This scholarship is non-competitive; all students who meet the requirements and complete the application can receive the scholarship. Qualifying students who first attend an out-of-state school may return to SD and receive a partial scholarship. <http://sdos.sdbor.edu/>

Dakota Corps Scholarship – The Dakota Corps Scholarship provides full tuition and applicable fees for graduates with a minimum of a 2.8 GPA and an ACT of 27 or greater who would like to stay in South Dakota and work in a critical need area. Critical need areas are: teaching math, science, foreign language, high school or elementary special ed, CTE teacher, accountant, auditor, engineer, information technology, and registered nurse. Students must attend a participating SD school as an undergraduate and agree in writing to stay in SD and work in the critical need area for as many years as the scholarship was received plus one year. Recipients for this competitive scholarship are chosen based on grade point average, test scores, activities, honors, community service, and a written essay. More information at <https://www.sdbor.edu/dakotacorps/Pages/welcome.aspx>

Build Dakota Scholarship – The State of SD is offering a full tuition and fees scholarship for certain programs at the SD technical schools. Students must be interested in high tech and high need occupations and be willing to stay in SD to work for three years in the technical field following graduation. Students must apply early (only a limited number are accepted in each program), be accepted into eligible program, and fill out the scholarship application by the deadline. Make sure to fill out application thoroughly. CTE courses, job experience, NCRC scores, community service, Financial Aid, interest, aptitude, thoroughness in application determine eligibility. <http://www.builddakotascholarships.com/>

Financial Aid Information - Financial aid booklets, brochures, and books to check out are available in the counseling office. There are excellent on-line sources of financial aid information, too. **FAFSA** - The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (www.fafsa.gov/) will be available in October. Because this form is required to be eligible for federal loan programs, grants, and work-study, all students who are planning to attend a post-high school institution should complete the application. It is best to have your taxes for the previous year with you when you complete this form. We will have a Financial Aid Information Night on **October 20th at 6:30pm** to discuss details.

Grants – Grants are free money for college that are usually awarded based on financial need (determined by the FAFSA). One grant, the TEACH Grant, is for students who wish to teach in low-income districts in high need fields including bilingual education, foreign language, mathematics, reading specialist, special education, and music education. This grant can provide up to \$4000 per year but requires a 4-year commitment to teach in a low-income district or the grant becomes a loan. You may find information

at <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/types/grants-scholarships/teach>. Please talk to your college admissions and financial aid office about this grant as it requires a commitment to major in certain fields and has payback stipulations if the requirements for the grant are not completed.

CLEP testing – CLEP testing is an option for students who wish to try to test out of first level college coursework. SD state schools will accept CLEP test scores in place of certain courses such as college algebra or college composition. Testing is offered at all colleges for a fee (\$89 in 2020 plus administration fee of approx. \$20). If a student passes the CLEP test, he will earn college credit. However, the money is not refunded if the student scores below the minimum score and no credit is awarded. The tests are on-line and are timed. If a student is planning on a career in engineering, taking the college algebra CLEP test may not benefit the student, as the first math level required for engineering is calculus. Also, certain professional programs may not accept CLEP (some Physicians Assistant programs). Interested seniors can take the CLEP test please speak with Mrs. DeMent to search for testing centers. Please let me know if you have questions.

