



# North Dakota

The Midwestern Higher Education Compact brings together leaders from 12 Midwestern states to strengthen postsecondary education and promote regional economic vitality.



MHEC leverages the knowledge and expertise of postsecondary leaders to generate collaborative solutions to challenges in higher education.

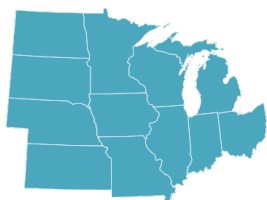


MHEC's contracts and programs save colleges, universities, and students in its member states valuable time and millions of dollars annually.



MHEC research and policy initiatives support workforce readiness and improve the quality, accessibility, and affordability of postsecondary education.

## About the Compact



MHEC was established in the early 1990s through the enactment of legislation recommended by the Midwestern Legislative Conference of The Council of State Governments. MHEC is funded by member state commitments, program income, and foundation grants. Member states are Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. North Dakota authorized legislation in 1999 to join MHEC.

## North Dakota Commissioners + Alternates



**Kyle Davison**  
North Dakota  
Legislative  
Assembly



**Tim Flakoll**  
Cass County



**Timothy Mihalick**  
State Board of  
Higher Education



**Brandy Pyle**  
North Dakota  
Legislative  
Assembly



**Brent Sanford**  
North Dakota  
University System

# How MHEC Benefits North Dakota

North Dakota received a 15-fold return on its MHEC membership commitment of \$115,000 in 2024-2025.

Midwestern-State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (M-SARA) for distance education savings	\$1,525,312
Technology savings	\$158,473
Capacity building support (state grants, convenings, scholarships and travel grants)	\$16,261
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,700,046</b>

## New Upcoming Savings & Financial Opportunities

- Each member state is eligible for a Strategic Impact and Innovation Grant of up to \$250,000 over two years from MHEC to advance innovative ideas and solutions in higher education. In December 2025, North Dakota, the first MHEC member state to have its application approved, was awarded \$250,000 to provide all 11 North Dakota University System institutions with access to a career readiness and workforce alignment platform. This initiative will enhance student success by offering personalized career guidance, connecting students with regional employers, and aligning academic pathways with workforce needs.
- MHEC will produce an estimated \$1.9 million in savings for the region in 2025-26 on student health insurance due to participation growth in a contract with UnitedHealthCare – StudentResources. The North Dakota University System participates in MHEC’s contract.

## Additional Savings for North Dakota Students & Families

The Midwest Student Exchange Program (MSEP) has helped students and families save millions of dollars by making it more affordable for non-resident students to attend out-of-state colleges and universities. This program is currently being reviewed in response to changes in tuition reciprocity practices across the region.



# North Dakota Engagement with MHEC Policy Initiatives & Capacity-Building Opportunities

<b>Open Educational Resources (OER)</b>	MHEC provided a \$10,000 grant to North Dakota University System to host a statewide OER conference. Five North Dakota leaders attended MHEC's OER summit in January.
<b>Dual Enrollment</b>	Six North Dakota higher education leaders participated in MHEC's July State Policy Workshop to advance dual enrollment efforts in the state.
<b>Access &amp; Affordability</b>	Leaders from numerous North Dakota state agencies, colleges and universities, the tribal college system, and philanthropic organizations attended MHEC's FAFSA Summit and other webinars to address issues and opportunities related to college access and affordability.
<b>Technologies Community</b>	Dirk Huggett from NDUS chairs the Technologies Executive Committee and Dr. Michelle Rakoczy from NDUS serves on the community's annual conference planning committee. Four other North Dakota tech leaders are active participants in the community.

## Research Requests

**MHEC's policy and research team provided detailed reports in response to requests from North Dakota legislators and higher ed leaders on the topics of:**

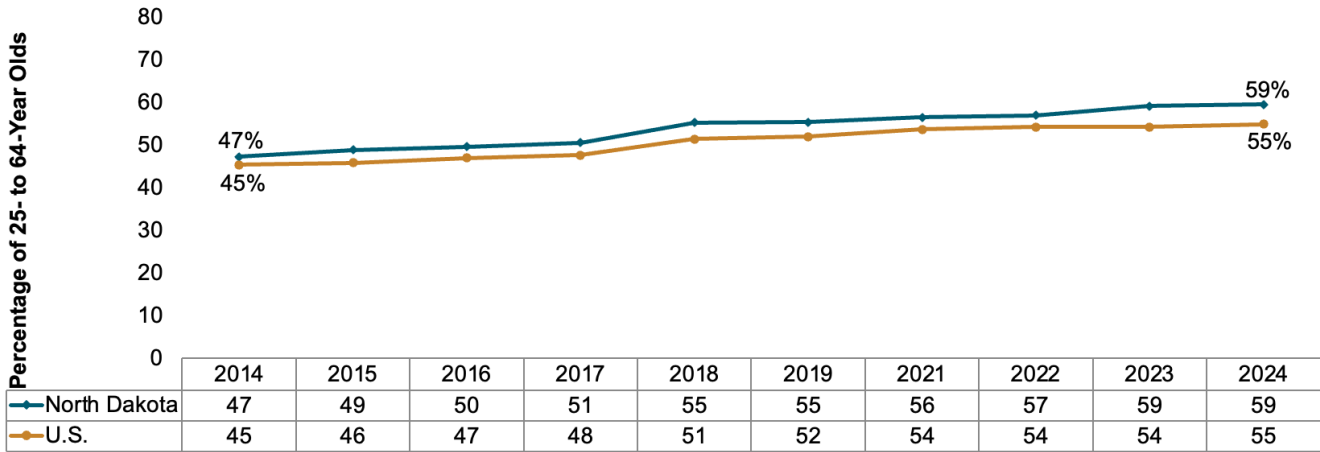
- Graduate degree attainment
- Full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollment, dual enrollment, and online enrollment
- Minnesota North Star Promise program
- Budgetary oversight
- Follow up to questions asked by the North Dakota Higher Education Institutions Committee



# Key Indicators for Higher Education in North Dakota

**ATTAINMENT:** North Dakota has remained consistently higher than the nation in attainment. About 59% of North Dakotans have a postsecondary certificate or higher, compared to 55% nationally.

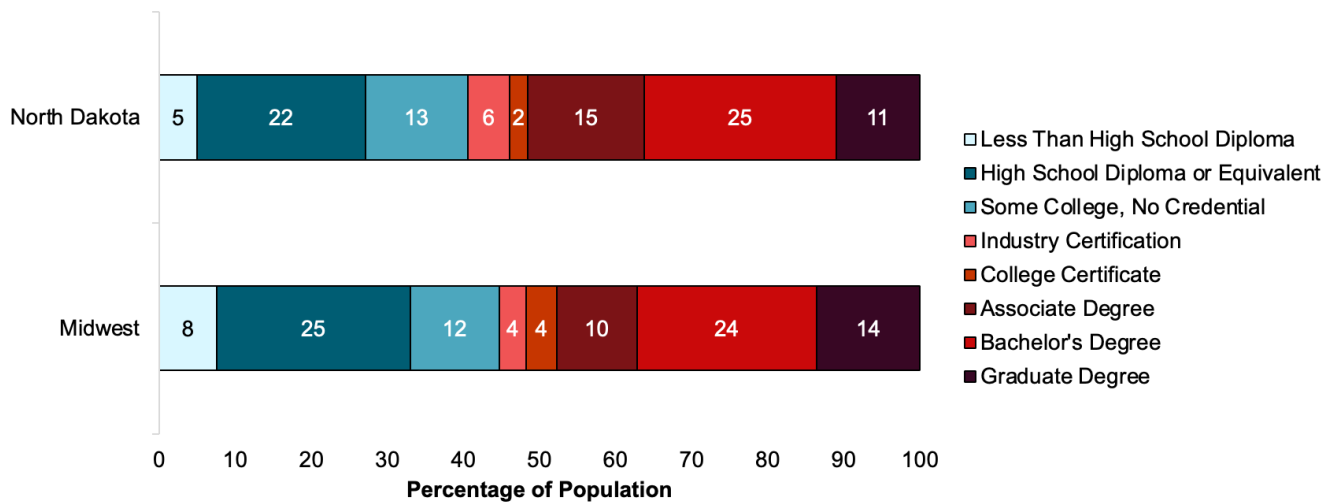
**Percentage of 25- to 64-Year-Olds in North Dakota Who Have Attained a Postsecondary Credential**



Source. Lumina Foundation. (2026). *A Stronger Nation*. Note. The attainment estimates include postsecondary certificates. Since 2018, the attainment estimate includes industry-recognized certifications. 2020 estimates are not available due to sampling problems that occurred during the 2020 administration of the American Community Survey. Lumina’s methodology for short-term non-degree credentials includes only certificates and certifications that meet its value threshold of earning at least 15% above the national median annual wages of a high school graduate. The reported share of adults whose highest credential is a certificate or certification may thus be underestimated. Registered apprenticeship completion certificates outside of a postsecondary institution are not captured in Lumina’s attainment measure. Explore more on the [MHEC Interactive Dashboard](#).

**ATTAINMENT:** North Dakota residents have attained various types of postsecondary credentials, ranging from industry certifications and college certificates to bachelor’s and graduate degrees; 41% of residents do not have a credential beyond high school.

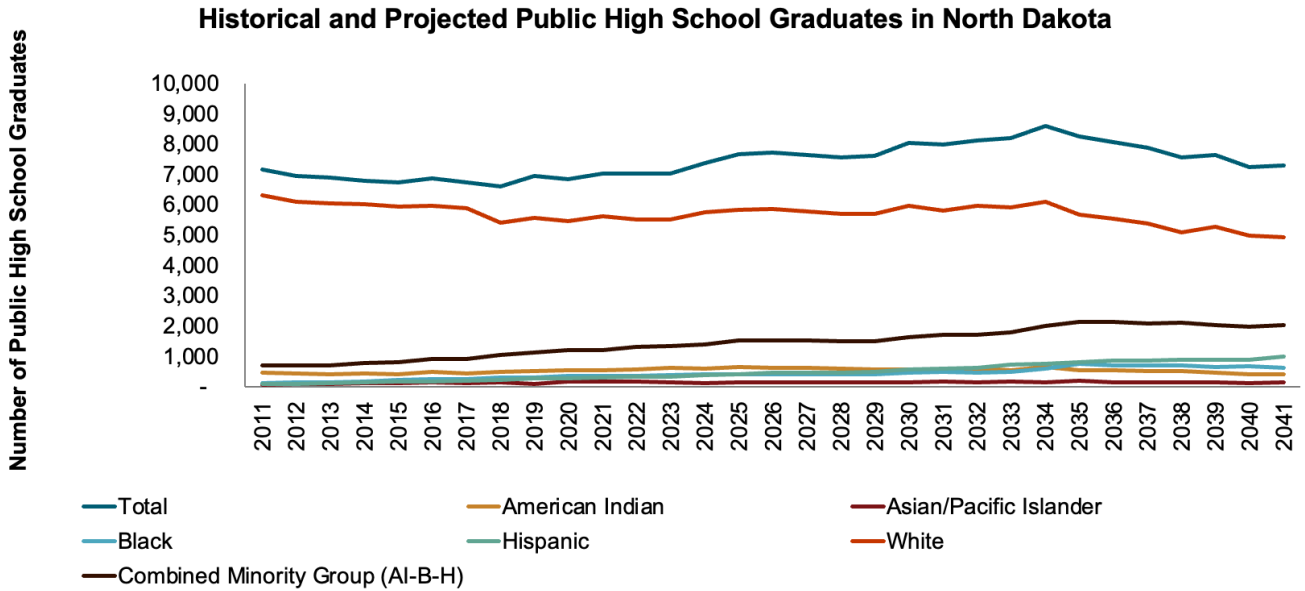
**Educational Attainment Distribution of North Dakota Residents Ages 25-64, 2024**



Source. Lumina Foundation. (2026). *A Stronger Nation*. Note. Lumina’s methodology for short-term non-degree credentials includes only certificates and certifications that meet its value threshold of earning at least 15% above the national median annual wages of a high school graduate. The reported share of adults whose highest credential is a certificate or certification may thus be underestimated. Registered apprenticeship completion certificates outside of a postsecondary institution are not captured in Lumina’s attainment measure. Explore more on the [MHEC Interactive Dashboard](#).



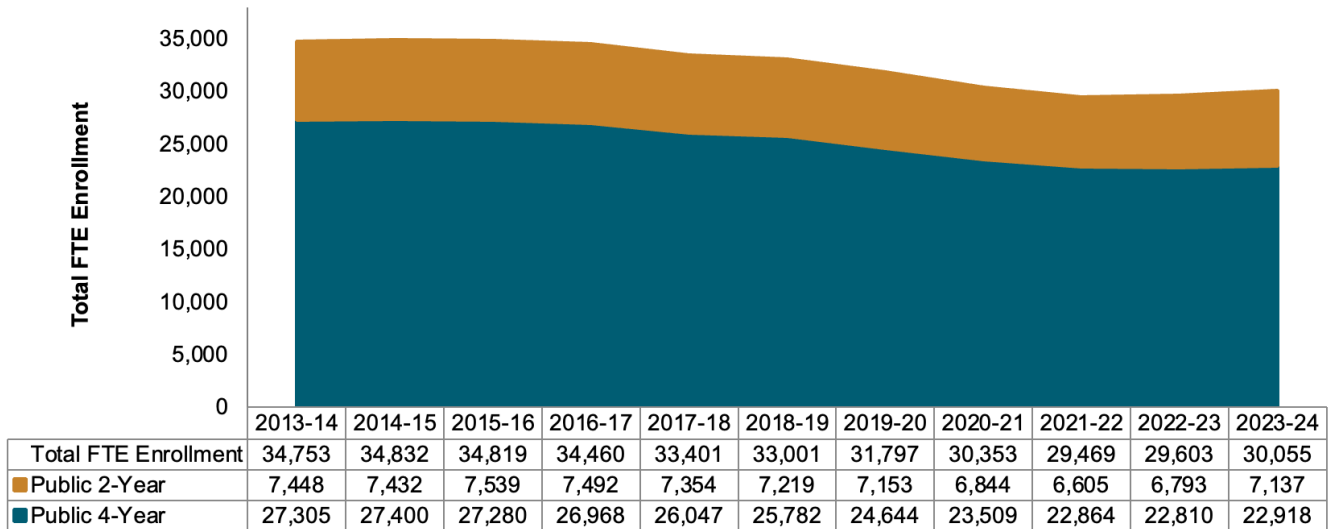
**ENROLLMENT POOL:** The number of high school graduates in North Dakota is projected to increase through 2034 before declining, though Black and Hispanic graduates will remain steady or increase.



Source: WICHE. (2024). *Knocking at the College Door*. The combined minority group (AI-B-H) comprises American Indians, Blacks, and Hispanics. The estimates exclude home-schooled students. Explore more on the [MHEC Interactive Dashboard](#).

**ENROLLMENT:** Undergraduate enrollment has declined at public two- and four-year institutions over much of the past decade but recently started to increase.

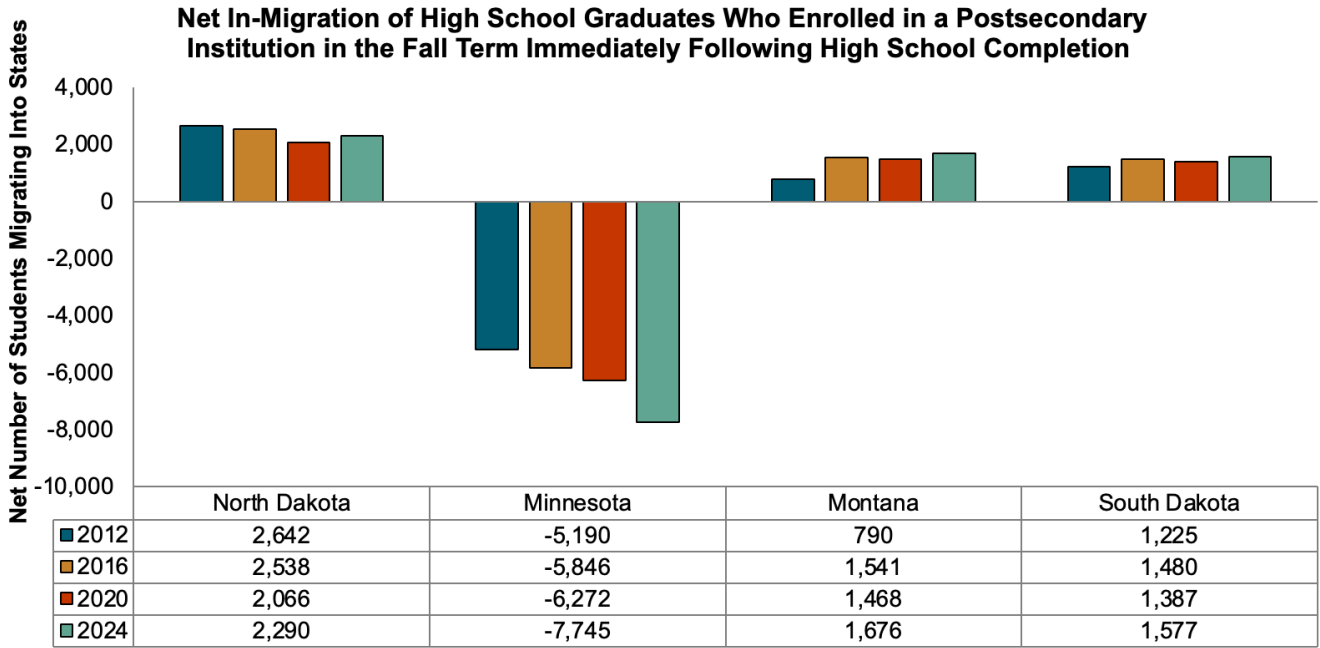
### Full-Time Equivalent Undergraduate Enrollment at North Dakota Public Institutions



Source: NCES IPEDS. (2024). *Reported 12-month enrollment*. FTE enrollment is a calculated measure of the equivalent number of full-time students represented by an institution's instructional activity over a 12-month period. It is derived from the reported credit or clock hours attempted and the institution's academic calendar system. Enrollment estimates include on- and off-campus students, dual enrollment students, and students taking distance or online courses for credit. Carnegie Classification was used to classify institutions. Institutions with mixed categories were classified according to their distribution of associate and bachelor's degrees awarded. Tribal colleges and universities are excluded. Categorizations may change over time. Explore more on the [MHEC Interactive Dashboard](#).

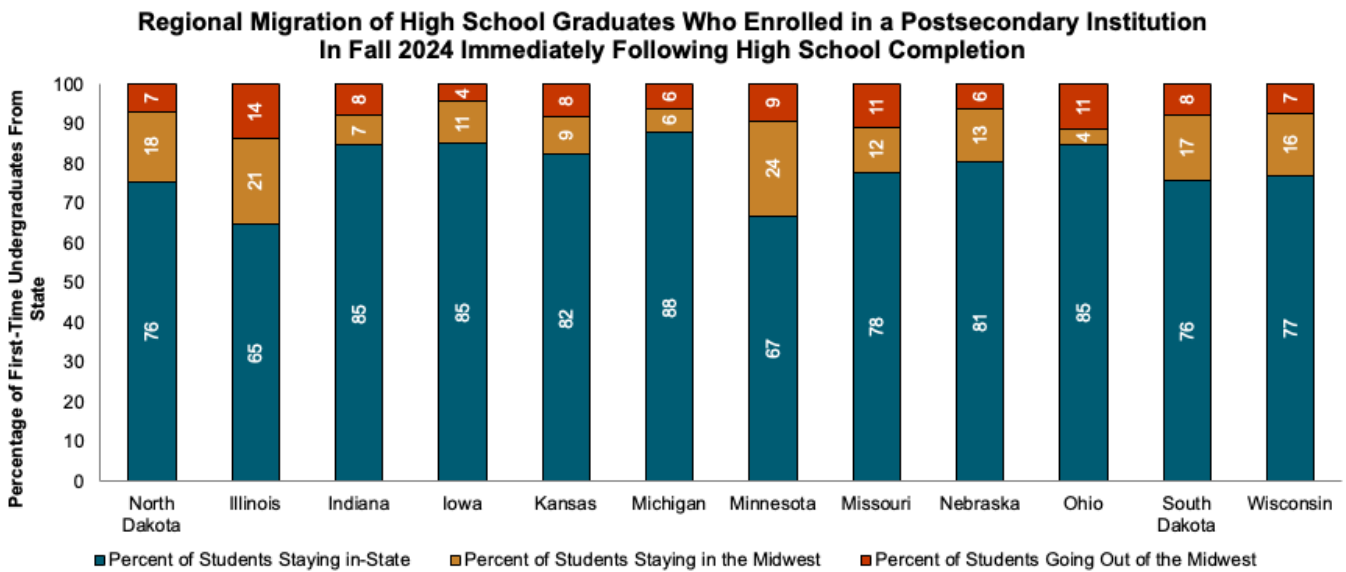


**MIGRATION:** More students migrate into North Dakota than migrate out, and net in-migration was higher in North Dakota than neighboring states in 2024.



Source. NCES IPEDS. (2024). *Fall enrollment*. Estimates include enrollment at any Title IV-participating postsecondary institution. Students with unknown residence and those entering from outlying territories and foreign countries are excluded. Explore more on the [MHEC Interactive Dashboard](#).

**ENROLLMENT LOCATION:** Of first-time college students from North Dakota, 76 percent enrolled in state, 18 percent enrolled elsewhere in the Midwest, and 7 percent enrolled outside the Midwest.

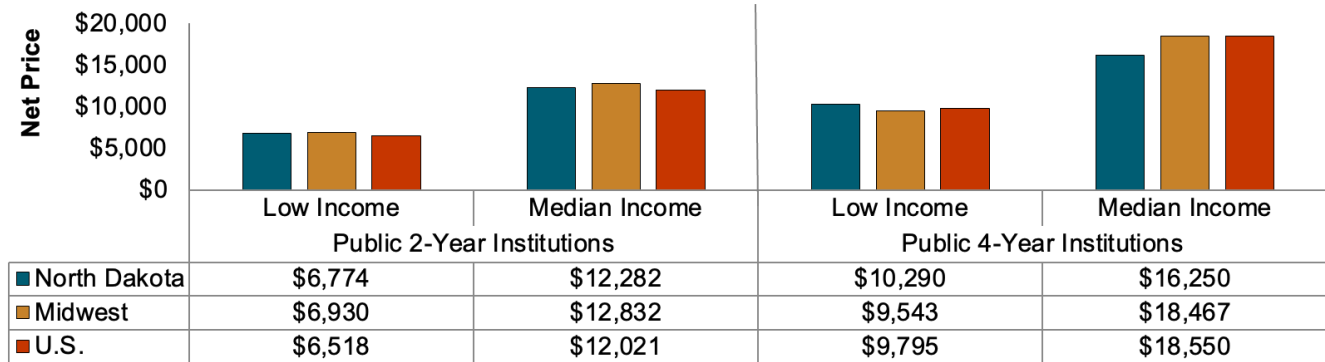


Source. NCES IPEDS. (2024). *Fall enrollment*. Estimates include enrollment at any Title IV-participating postsecondary institution. Students with unknown residence and those entering from outlying territories and foreign countries are excluded. Explore more on the [MHEC Interactive Dashboard](#).



**COLLEGE PRICE:** Average net prices at public two-year colleges in North Dakota for low- and median-income students are lower than the Midwest averages. At public four-year institutions, average net price is higher than the Midwest average for low-income students but lower than both the Midwest and national averages for median-income students.

**Average Net Price of One Year of Enrollment for First-Time, Full-Time, Degree/Certificate-Seeking Students by Family Income and Sector**



Source. NCES IPEDS. (2024). *Net price*. U.S. Census Bureau. (2024). *American Community Survey one-year estimates, Table B19125: Median family income in the past 12 months by presence of own children under 18 years*. Note. Net price is standardized to first-time, full-time, degree/certificate-seeking students for comparative analysis and should not be interpreted as the typical price paid by all students, particularly in the two-year sector, where part-time students constitute a large share of enrollment. Total cost of attendance includes in-state or in-district published tuition and required fees, books, supplies, food, on-/off-campus housing, and other expenses. The net price of attendance for a median-income family represents the amount a family with an income of \$106,471 must pay for college. The net price of attendance for a low-income family represents the amount a family with an income of \$30,000 or less must pay for college. Estimates are weighted by income group of first-time/full-time students. Carnegie Classification was used to classify institutions. Institutions with mixed categories were classified according to their distribution of associate and bachelor's degrees awarded. Tribal colleges and universities are excluded. Explore more on the [MHEC Interactive Dashboard](#).

# North Dakota Technology Contract Usage



**Total savings for institutions in North Dakota = \$158,473**

## Higher Education

Bismarck State College  
 Dickinson State University  
 Lake Region State College  
 Mayville State University  
 Minot State University  
 NDSU Bookstore  
 North Dakota State University  
 North Dakota University System  
 North Dakota University System - Core Technology Services  
 UND Aerospace Foundation  
 University of North Dakota  
 Valley City State University  
 Williston State College

## K-12

Nedrose School District 4  
 Roosevelt Public Schools  
 Saint John's Academy  
 Trinity Christian School

## Government/Other

Billings County - Auditor  
 City of Drayton  
 City of Kenmare  
 City of Minot  
 McHenry County - Auditor  
 North Dakota Association of Counties  
 North Dakota Association of Counties - NRG Technology Services  
 North Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs  
 North Dakota Public Service Commission  
 North Dakota State Seed Department  
 North Dakota Veterans Home



# North Dakota Program Participation as of 12/10/25

When members identify the need for solutions to challenges in postsecondary education, MHEC explores whether a long-term, regional approach is beneficial. Programs born from this process offer enrolling institutions opportunities to save money, improve efficiency, and better serve their stakeholders.

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## Midwestern-State Authorization Reciprocity Agreement (M-SARA) for distance education

Bismarck State College  
Dakota College at Bottineau  
Dickinson State University  
Lake Region State College  
Mayville State University  
Minot State University  
North Dakota State College of Science  
North Dakota State University - Main Campus  
Trinity Bible College and Graduate School  
Turtle Mountain Community College  
University of Jamestown  
University of Mary  
University of North Dakota  
Valley City State University  
Williston State College

\*Approved SARA Institutions in North Dakota per <https://www.nc-sara.org/directory>

## Midwest Student Exchange Program (MSEP)

Dakota College at Bottineau  
Dickinson State University  
Lake Region State College  
Mayville State University  
Minot State University

North Dakota State University  
University of North Dakota  
Valley City State University

\*Access the most up-to-date list of participants at <https://msep.mhec.org>

## Stone Arch Sponsored Cell Captive Insurance Program

Contact Breanne Hegg to learn about participating in this program, which allows higher education institutions and systems to manage risk by using cells in MHEC's wholly owned captive insurance company: [breanneh@mhec.org](mailto:breanneh@mhec.org).

## Student Health Programs – UnitedHealthCare StudentResources

North Dakota Colleges and Universities  
North Dakota State University  
University of North Dakota

Contact Breanne Hegg, vice president of programs, contracts, and communications, for updates: [breanneh@mhec.org](mailto:breanneh@mhec.org).

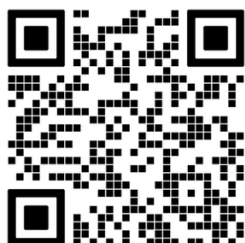


## MHEC Resources

**North Dakota member state page** (with multiple downloadable documents)

<https://mhec.org/states/north-dakota/>

or scan the QR code below



**MHEC website**

<https://mhec.org/>

**Interactive dashboard** (offering key data to boost educational attainment)

<https://mhec.org/mhec-interactive-dashboard/>

**MHEC contracts**

<https://mhec.org/what-we-do/contracts/>

**MHEC news**

<https://mhec.org/news/>

**MHEC strategic plan**

<https://mhec.org/about/strategic-plan/>

**MHEC committees**

<https://mhec.org/about/committees/>

**MHEC commissioners**

<https://mhec.org/about/commissioners/>

**Post-Secondary Employment Outcomes**

<https://tinyurl.com/55nekm5j>

## Contact

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(612) 677-2777

