



South 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.

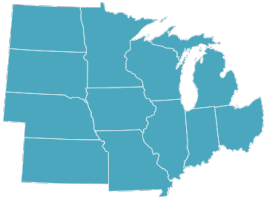


MHEC's contracts and programs save colleges, universities, and students in its member states valuable time and millions of dollars annually.



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. South Dakota authorized legislation in 2008 to join MHEC.

South Dakota Commissioners + Alternates



Nathan Lukkes
South Dakota
Board of Regents



Larry J. Tidemann
Governor's
Designee



Michael Cartney
Lakes Area
Technical College
alternate

Vacancies: 3 Commissioners, 2 Commissioner alternates

How MHEC Benefits South Dakota

South Dakota received a five-fold return on its MHEC membership commitment of \$115,000 in 2024-2025, as well as received a \$250,000 Strategic Impact and Innovation Grant from MHEC.

Technology savings	\$334,406
Strategic Impact and Innovation Grant	\$250,000
Capacity building support (state grants, convenings, scholarships and travel grants)	\$12,563
TOTAL	\$596,969

New 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 March 2026, an application from South Dakota State University and Black Hills State University was awarded the full amount to advance success for students pursuing careers in high-demand health professions.

Additional Savings for South 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.



South Dakota Engagement with MHEC Policy Initiatives & Capacity-Building Opportunities

Open Educational Resources (OER)

MHEC provided a \$10,000 grant to support faculty OER grants in South Dakota institutions and several OER leaders from University of South Dakota and Augustana University attended MHEC's OER summit in January.

Technologies Community

David Hansen from the South Dakota State Board of Regents System Office served on the Technologies Community Executive Committee. Eric Mosterd from the University of South Dakota and Erik VanLaecken from Southeast Technical College have been active participants in the community.

Research Requests

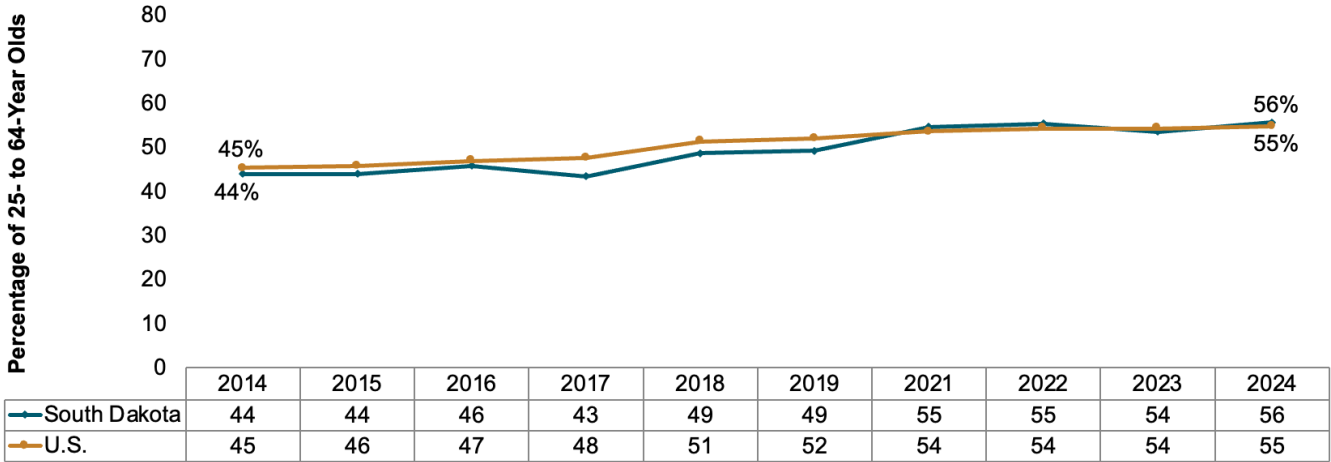
MHEC's policy and research team provided a State Performance Update and interactive dashboards that included numerous indicators for higher education in South Dakota. Explore analytics at <https://mhec.org/what-we-do/policy-research/mhec-interactive-dashboard>.



Key Indicators for Higher Education in South Dakota

ATTAINMENT: South Dakota’s postsecondary attainment rate has increased over the past decade. About 56% of South Dakotans have a postsecondary certificate or higher, compared to 55% nationally.

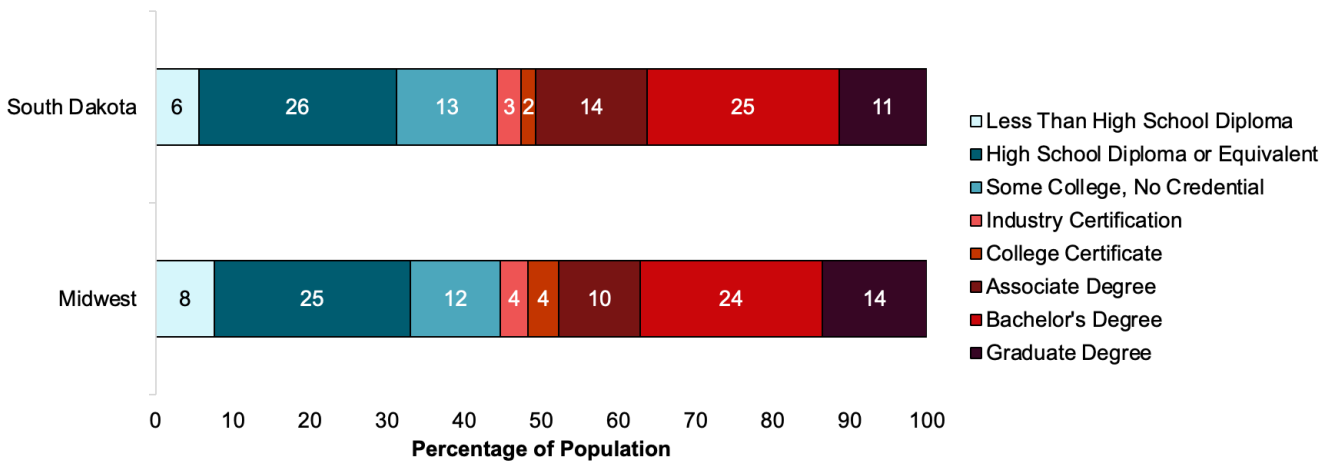
Percentage of 25- to 64-Year-Olds in South Dakota Who Have Attained a Postsecondary Credential



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: South Dakota residents have attained various types of postsecondary credentials, ranging from industry certifications and college certificates to bachelor’s and graduate degrees; 44% of residents do not have a credential beyond high school.

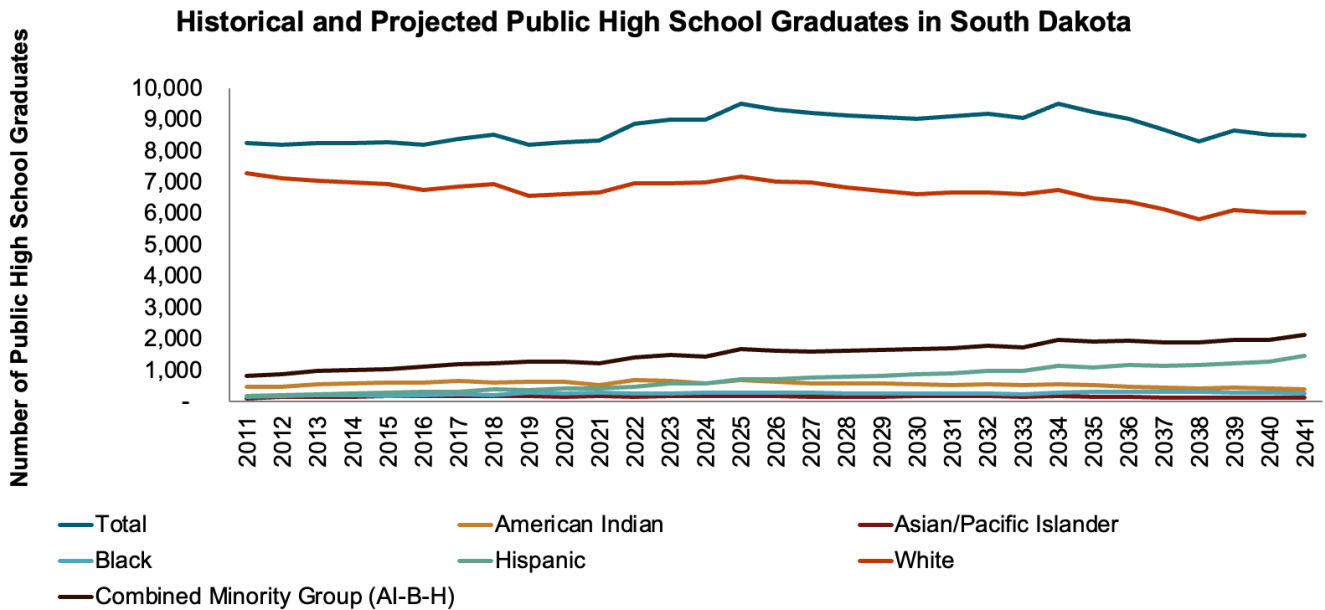
Educational Attainment Distribution of South Dakota Residents Ages 25-64, 2024



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](#).

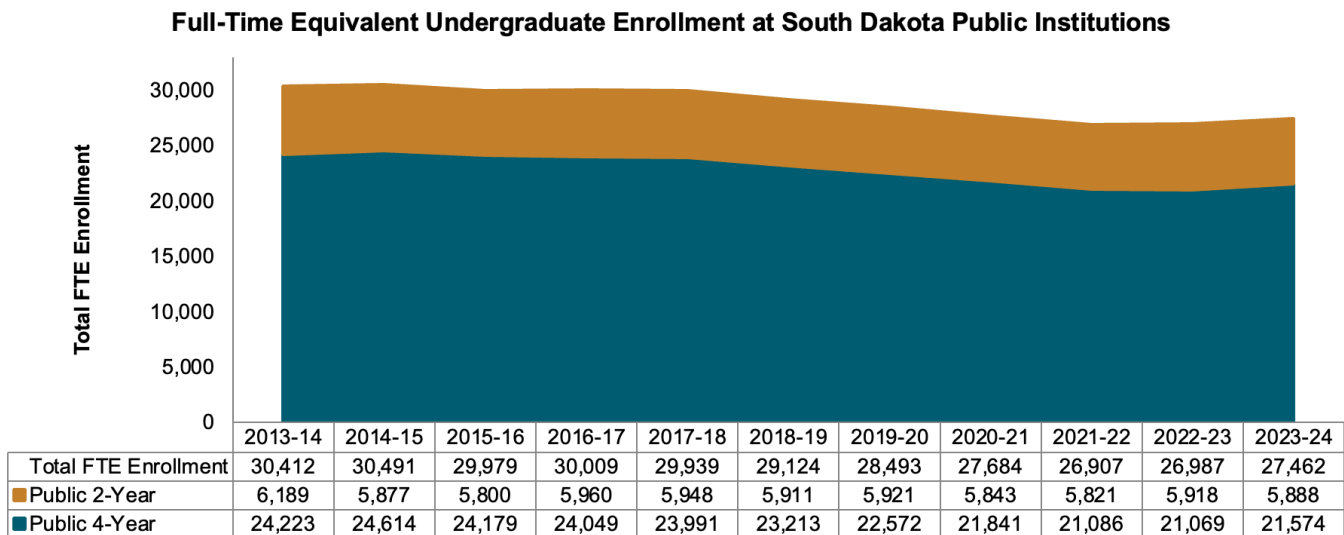


ENROLLMENT POOL: The number of high school graduates in South Dakota is projected to decline modestly through 2033, with a rebound anticipated in 2034. The number of White graduates is expected to decrease, while the number of graduates in the combined minority group is expected to increase.



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](#).

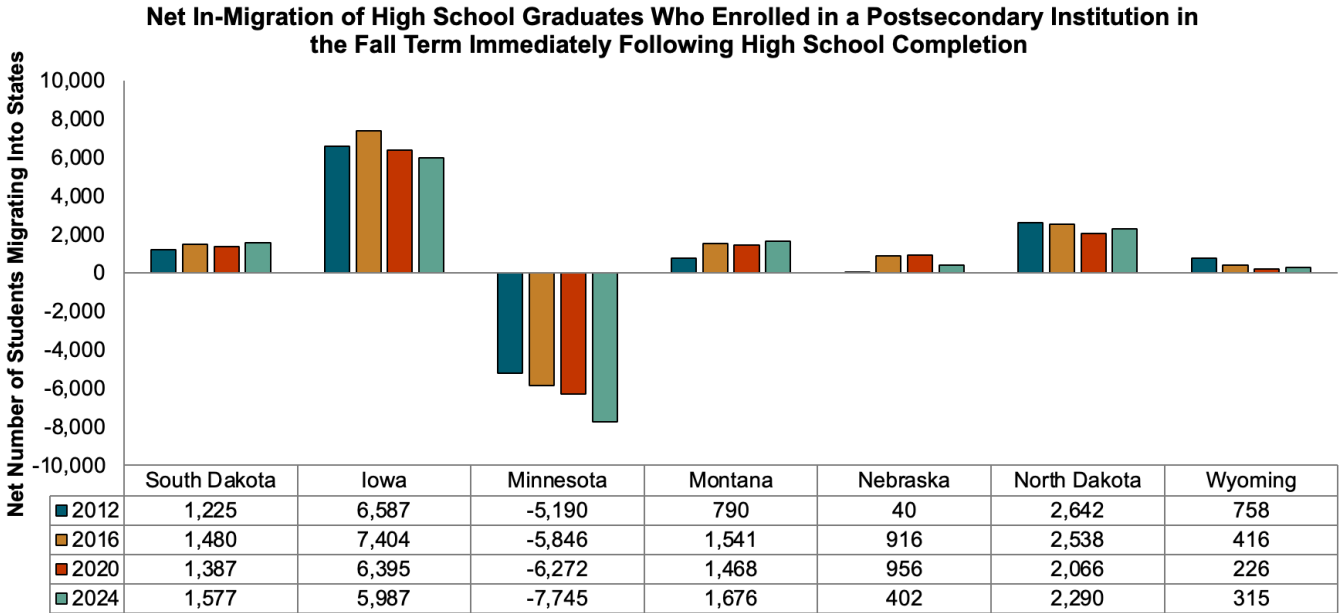
ENROLLMENT: Undergraduate enrollment has declined at public two- and four-year institutions over much of the past decade but recently started to increase.



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](#).

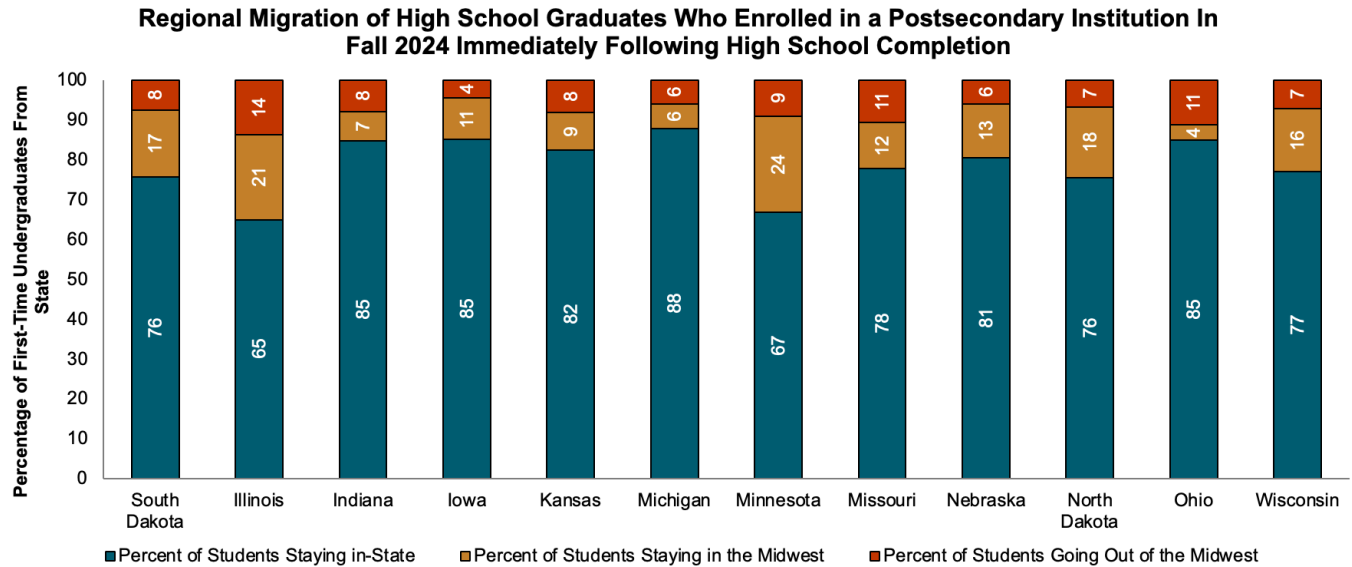


MIGRATION: More students migrate into South Dakota than migrate out.



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 South Dakota, 76 percent enrolled in state, 17 percent enrolled elsewhere in the Midwest, and 8 percent enrolled outside the Midwest.

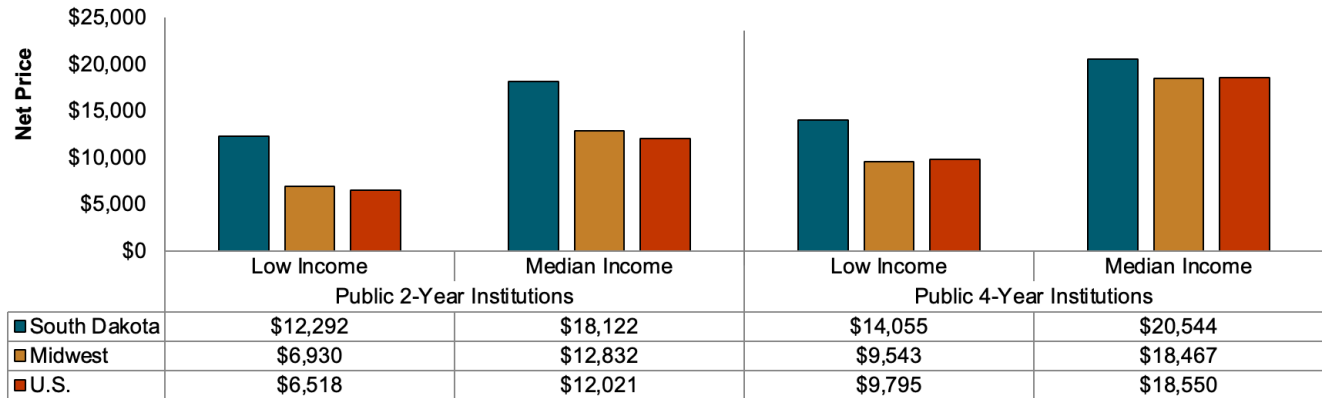


Source. NCES IPEDS. (2024). *Fall enrollment*. Estimates include enrollment at any Title IV-participating postsecondary institution. Students with unknown residence and those entering from outlying territories and foreign countries are excluded. Explore more on the [MHEC Interactive Dashboard](#).



COLLEGE PRICE: Average net prices for both low-income and median-income students at South Dakota public two- and four-year institutions are higher than the Midwest and national averages.

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 \$101,422 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](#).

South Dakota Technology Contract Usage



Total savings for institutions in South Dakota = \$334,406

Higher Education

Black Hills State University
 Mitchell Technical College
 Mount Marty University
 Northern State University
 Sinte Gleska University
 South Dakota Board of Regents
 South Dakota State University
 Southeast Technical College
 University of Sioux Falls
 University of South Dakota-Sioux Falls

K-12

Bison School District 52-1
 Crazy Horse School

Government/Other

City of Madison
 City of Vermillion
 Legislative Research Council
 South Dakota Bureau of Information and Telecommunications
 South Dakota Department of Education
 South Dakota Department of Health
 South Dakota Department of Human Services
 South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation
 South Dakota Records Management



South 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.

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

South Dakota participates through W-SARA.

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

Midwest Student Exchange Program (MSEP)

Contact Carrie Wandler to learn more about participating: 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.

Student Health Programs – UnitedHealthCare StudentResources

Contact Breanne Hegg for updates: breanneh@mhec.org.



MHEC Resources

South Dakota member state page (with multiple downloadable documents)

<https://mhec.org//states/south-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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