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### **JAG-SD students to “Continue the Conversation” in Pierre**

PIERRE, S.D. — Student leaders from Andes Central High School, Bennett County High School, Lyman High School, Todd County High School, Wagner High School, and all four public Sioux Falls high schools (Jefferson, Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Washington) will gather in Pierre on Feb. 14 to meet with legislators and other government officials as part of a larger statewide project called, “Capitol Conversations.” The students are part of the Jobs for America’s Graduates-South Dakota (JAG-SD) program, which is a leadership development and career exploration program for middle and high school students.

During this event, students will attend committee meetings, visit the House and Senate floors, learn about the judicial branch, gain an understanding of lobbying, and tour the Capitol.

“Educational research supports the idea that students better remember information learned through hands-on activities,” said JAG-SD State Director Beth Schneider. “Our efforts should also focus on helping students understand their roles as informed citizens, as well as the responsibilities of leadership. That’s why JAG-SD developed ‘Capitol Conversations.’”

As part of “Capitol Conversations,” JAG-SD students first met during the October 2022 Leadership Development Conference, where they learned about leadership and what it means to represent their peers.

Throughout the fall, the “Capitol Conversations” project brought local JAG-SD Career Associations together with a variety of government leaders from their communities. The Career Association is the extracurricular component of JAG.

The culminating piece of “Capitol Conversations” involves students reconnecting with government leaders from their communities after the legislative session to understand the impact of bills that were brought forward and laws that were passed.

Exploring the idea of representative leadership is even more significant this year, as the national JAG Career Association elected its first group of national student officers in May 2022, and JAG-SD is preparing to install its first JAG-SD Career Association State Officers in March.

“A delegation of South Dakota students was on hand to witness the historic event at nationals in May, which inspired our students to advocate for having their own state officers in South Dakota,” said Schneider. “This demonstrates the power of developing young leaders.”

JAG has more than 300 student members in South Dakota and 68,000 members nationally. To learn more about starting a JAG program, please contact JAG-SD State Director [Beth Schneider](#).