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BOTE hears graduate outcomes report and approves new technical institute programs

RAPID CITY, S.D. – At its meeting earlier today, the state Board of Technical Education heard a report on job placement of technical institute graduates.

Technical institute graduates continue to enjoy strong job placement. Each technical institute surveys graduates six months after graduation. Of fall 2016, spring and summer 2017 graduates, over 90 percent responded, with almost 98 percent of respondents reporting they are employed, in the military or continuing their education. Just over 82 percent of respondents are employed in their field, in South Dakota.

“There is high demand for a skilled workforce in South Dakota,” said Nick Wendell, executive director of the South Dakota Board of Technical Education. “With placement numbers like these, we see that South Dakota technical institutes are well positioned to meet the need. Once students walk across that stage and toss those mortarboards, there are many great, well-paying opportunities awaiting them.”

The board also approved two new programs at Western Dakota Technical Institute: Construction Technology and Farm and Ranch Management. According to WDT’s program proposal, the Construction Technology program would combine classroom, lab and internship learning opportunities in a wide variety of construction-related skills. State and national employment of construction laborers is projected to grow through 2024. The Farm and Ranch Management program proposal explains that the program is intended to prepare students for new challenges and opportunities, including the evolving use of computer software programs and drone technology.

Additionally, technical certificates were approved in the Information Technology program at Southeast Technical Institute: Computer Technology, Java Programming, Network Administration and Web Programming. Technical certificates are short-term career pathway programs that result in the award of a formal certificate. Students seeking a technical certificate might be recent high school graduates wanting to enter the workforce; working individuals looking to add value to their company and advance in their career; or non-traditional students who do not yet have postsecondary credentials.