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Public invited to comment on proposed changes to state graduation requirements

PIERRE, S.D. – The public is encouraged to engage in the statewide conversation about proposed revisions to South Dakota’s high school graduation requirements. The official public comment period on the related administrative rule changes is now open.

Members of the public can view the proposed rule changes and make public comment by visiting rules.sd.gov and following the “Department of Education” link.*

Written comments must be submitted by July 12. The state Board of Education Standards will hold a public hearing on the proposed rule changes at its July 16 meeting in Pierre. Individuals may also provide comment at this meeting.

Proposed changes to the graduation requirements aim to combine opportunities for rigor, student engagement and flexibility. The proposal was developed to provide students with multiple opportunities to meet their postsecondary and career goals within a framework of general high school graduation requirements.

“One major change in these proposed requirements is the concept of endorsements,” said Secretary of Education Don Kirkegaard. “The proposed requirements would allow all students to graduate with the same high school diploma, but additionally, students could earn advanced endorsements, which signify students have taken coursework with a specific focus.”

Students could earn more than one advanced endorsement, since they share some of the same course requirements. Students would not be required to earn endorsements.

The proposed endorsements are as follows:

- **Advanced:** indicates a student has pursued the coursework consistent with entrance requirements for postsecondary education at a university
- **Advanced Career:** indicates a student has career experience in a concentrated area, based on academic and/or workplace experience and a related credential
- **Advanced Honors:** indicates a student has pursued advanced rigorous, academic coursework consistent with the South Dakota Opportunity Scholarship course requirements

*As rules are presented in a package, look for the rules package with a public hearing date of 7/16/18. The proposed changes to graduation requirements are located on pages 49-71 of that document.