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Retention rate strong at state technical institutes; Governor named Friend of Technical Education

PIERRE, S.D. – The retention rate at South Dakota’s four technical institute’s is 78 percent, which matches last year’s rate. The state Board of Technical Education heard a report on the retention rates at its meeting earlier today. The retention rate measures all students who enroll one fall and return to the institution the following fall, in this case, fall 2017 to fall 2018.

“Our institutions have continued to emphasize the importance of student success, and it’s continuing to yield positive results,” said Nick Wendell, executive director of the South Dakota Board of Technical Education. “If we can help students find their fit academically and socially, the likelihood that they will be retained, persist to graduation and ultimately get placed in a meaningful career, increases. A retention rate in the high seventies is good for our students, our system and our state.”

Also at today’s meeting, the board presented Gov. Dennis Daugaard with the first Friend of Technical Education Award for promoting the value of technical education and serving as a champion for the state’s technical institute system. Board members said the Governor and his team were instrumental in the establishment of the Board of Technical Education and the Build Dakota Scholarship program.

They also commended Daugaard for supporting investments at each of the institutions, including renovations, construction of new facilities and the purchase of new equipment. Additionally, during his time as leader of the Western Governors’ Association, Daugaard placed the focus of his term on workforce development and the role of technical education in preparing the workers of tomorrow.