

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING OF SOUTH DAKOTA FREEDOM SCHOLARSHIP BOARD

First PREMIER Bank Board Room, 500 S Minnesota Avenue, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Dana J. Dykhouse at 11:00 a.m. CDT, Monday, July 21, 2025, at the First PREMIER Bank Board Room in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. Members present were Dana Dykhouse, Miles Beacom, Chris Houwman, Jennifer Grennan and Phyllis Heineman. Others present were Elli Haerter, Brandy Drew, Stephanie Judson and Siri Buller. Brett Koenecke joined online via TEAMS.

Agenda

Beacom moved and Heineman seconded to approve the amended agenda, which added student gratitude as the first item under #5 Program Discussion and moved Executive Session for consulting with legal counsel about contractual matters, SDCL 1-25-2(3), to the first item after approval of minutes. Motion carried with a voice vote.

Minutes

Grennan moved and Houwman seconded to approve the minutes from April 21, 2025. Motion carried with a voice vote.

Executive Session SDCL 1-25-2(3)

Grennan moved and Beacom seconded to enter executive session for consulting with legal counsel about contractual matters, SDCL 1-25-2(3) at 11:03 am. Chairman Dykhouse declared executive session over at 11:29 am. No votes were taken while in executive session.

Program discussion

Haerter began by sharing two stories published by Northern State University about Freedom Scholarship recipients. The board enjoys hearing about the Freedom Scholarship's impact on recipients. Judson shared information about the quarterly earnings of the Freedom and PREMIER funds. Haerter then shared an update on the 2025 budget expenditures to date and noted that expenses are on target for the year. The board reviewed the historical allocations and briefly discussed the 2026-2027 allocation, which they will make in October. They would like to increase the scholarship dollars available.

During the operations update, Haerter shared that an estimated 1,401 scholarships were awarded 2024-2025. Reconciliation of the 2024-2025 year data will take place in September and October in time for the legislative report that is due November 1. Since the Akoya database was not functioning for the past 30 days and recently repaired, she is behind on 25-26 year awards. Brandy Drew reported on graduates so far and the success of the new mail and email campaign to reach graduates. Haerter also shared that a letter to tribal colleges requesting a response if interested in the SD Freedom Scholarship program was sent. A response needs to be received by August 14, 2025 for the 2026-2027 year. Elli closed the operations update by sharing the agenda for the university partners meeting to be held on July 22 in Sioux Falls.

Chairman Dykhouse departed the meeting at 12:15. Vice Chairman Beacom called for a brief break for lunch.

Annual review of open meeting laws

Per state statute, the Freedom Board reviewed the booklet: Conducting the Public's Business in Public (Revised in 2023) as published by the SD NewsMedia Association and posted on the SD Attorney General's website the week prior to the meeting.

Approval of additional disbursement to NSU and combined disbursement to MMU, DWU

Beacom moved and Grennan seconded to approve the additional disbursement to Northern State University for the former Presentation College students for the 2025-26 year and authorize SDCF to make one combined disbursement to MMU and DWU for the 25-26 year in August (instead of two). Motion carried with a voice vote.

Executive Session for student matters (SDCL 1-25-2(2))

Houwman moved and Heineman seconded to enter into executive session at 12:44 pm for student matters. Motion carried with a voice vote. Vice Chairman Beacom declared executive session over at 1:01 pm. No votes were taken during the executive session.

Student Exceptions

Grennan motioned and Houwman seconded to grant the 6 students (cases: 072501, 072502, 072503, 072504, 072505, 072506) exceptions to the Freedom Scholarship requirements. Motion passed with a voice vote.

2025 Meetings Ahead

Q4: Monday, October 27, 11 am to 1 pm, First PREMIER Bank, Sioux Falls, SD

Public Comment

There was no public comment received at the meeting.

Adjournment

Heineman moved and Houwman seconded to adjourn the meeting at 1:05 pm. Motion carried with a voice vote.


Phyllis M Heineman (Nov 4, 2025 20:52:24 CST)

Phyllis Heineman, Secretary/Treasurer

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Final Audit Report

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