

2026 ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT

South Dakota Technical College System
Government Operations and Audit Committee
Tuesday, October 13, 2026

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



The South Dakota technical college system is comprised of four institutions, including:

- Lake Area Technical College, Watertown | President Tiffany Sanderson
- Mitchell Technical College, Mitchell | President Theresa Kriese
- Southeast Technical College, Sioux Falls | President Cory Clasemann
- Western Dakota Technical College, Rapid City | President Kendra Ericson

Each college offers a variety of high-quality credentials, including; associate of applied science degrees, diplomas, and long and short-term certificates. Central to the mission of the institutions, and the system, is a commitment to prepare graduates to enter the state's workforce as skilled professionals.



The South Dakota Board of Technical Education, established in 2017, provides system-level support and oversight. The Board includes representation from a variety of industries and regions. Current board members include:

- Dana Dykhouse (Chair), First PREMIER Bank, Sioux Falls
- Brian Sandvig (Vice Chair), Valley Queen Cheese, Milbank
- Terry Sabers (Secretary), Mitchell
- James Dover, Avera Health, Sioux Falls
- Brad Greenway, Greenway Pork, Mitchell
- Denny Law, Golden West Communications, Wall
- Joy Nelson, Haugan Nelson Realty/Joy Ranch, Watertown
- Dr. Kay Schallenkamp, retired university president, Spearfish
- Jamie Stucky, Sanford Health, Lennox

The attached report includes data related to **graduate outcomes**, **enrollment**, and **retention**.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

In 2023, the Board of Technical Education and the system's four colleges adopted three system-level strategic priorities.

Those priorities include:

1. **Attainment** Increasing the number of South Dakotans who attain high-quality post secondary credentials.
2. **Affordability** Ensuring that technical education is affordable and offers a positive return on investment.
3. **Alignment** Preparing learners and graduates for meaningful employment and continued education opportunities.

The goals related to the priorities include growing the number of credential completers produced by the system, ensuring credentials are affordable and provide a return on investment, and supporting academic programs that are aligned with industry needs.

(Executive Summary continued on page two)

GRADUATE OUTCOMES

In academic year 2025-26, the system produced **2,794** unique graduates. Graduate outcomes data based on the 2025-26 cohort is being collected and will be available in the coming months.

This report highlights the 2024-25 graduate outcomes report, which includes **2,664** unique graduates.

According to the 2024-25 graduate outcomes report, which had an 92.7% response rate, the system's placement rate was **98.8%** (2,447). The placement rate includes those who are employed, continuing their education, or joining the military. Among those graduates who responded (2,472), **90.3%** (2,234) remained in South Dakota after graduation.

ENROLLMENT

According to the system's fall 2026 enrollment report, unduplicated enrollment (full-time, part-time and dual-credit) increased by **53** students (up to **7,827** students from 7,774) when compared to fall 2025. The number of students participating in the dual-credit program decreased by **54** (down to **1,420** students from 1,474).

RETENTION

The system's retention rate, which measures the number of students who enroll in the institution one fall and return (or complete) the following fall, was at **80%** in the fall of 2025. Lake Area Technical College had a retention rate of 84%, Mitchell Technical College had a rate of 84%, Southeast Technical College had a retention rate of 80%, and Western Dakota Technical College had a rate of 67%.

The updated retention rate will be available in the fall 2026 retention report, released in December.

KEY APPROPRIATIONS

In recent years, the State of South Dakota has supported appropriations to the technical college system through Equipment funding (primarily using one-time dollars) and the implementation of a multi-year Maintenance and Repair funding plan. This report includes details regarding the impact of this funding and the method of distribution across the system.

Equipment Funding

The system received **\$4,317,384** in one-time funding in FY27 to support priority equipment purchases. The dollars were distributed using the existing funding formula and paired with private/local support (\$2,126,472) to invest \$6,443,856 in equipment.

Maintenance and Repair Funding

The overall replacement value of facilities in the technical college system is **\$385,549,494**. The system partnered with the Office of Governor and Bureau of Finance and Management to develop a multi-year plan to grow the total of annual Maintenance and Repair (M&R) investments to equal two percent of the overall replacement value.

In FY27, the system received an M&R appropriation of **\$2,788,837**.

SUPPORTING REPORTS

More in depth reports in each area can be found at the links below.

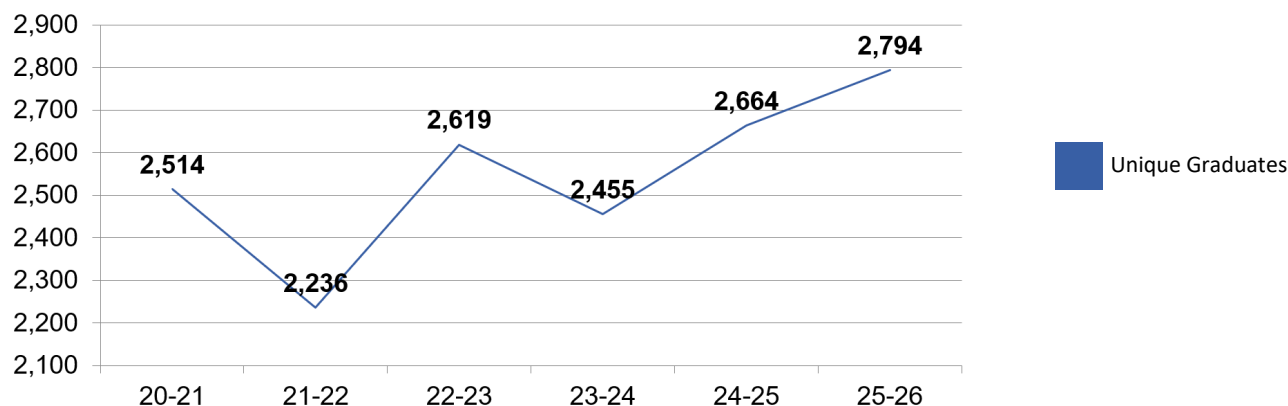
- 2024-25 [Graduate Outcomes Report](#)
- Fall 2025 [Retention Report](#)

The Fall 2026 Enrollment Report will be shared at the October 22, 2026 meeting of the Board of Technical Education.

GRADUATE OUTCOMES

The system produced **2,794** graduates in academic year 2025-26. As part of the attainment goal adopted in 2023, the system intends to produce 3,001 graduates per year by 2031. The graduate placement data provided at the bottom of page three is based on academic year 2024-25 graduates and the graduate outcomes report from that cohort. The graduate outcomes report based on the 2025-26 cohort is in development.

Graph 1 System Unique Graduates History (2020—2026)



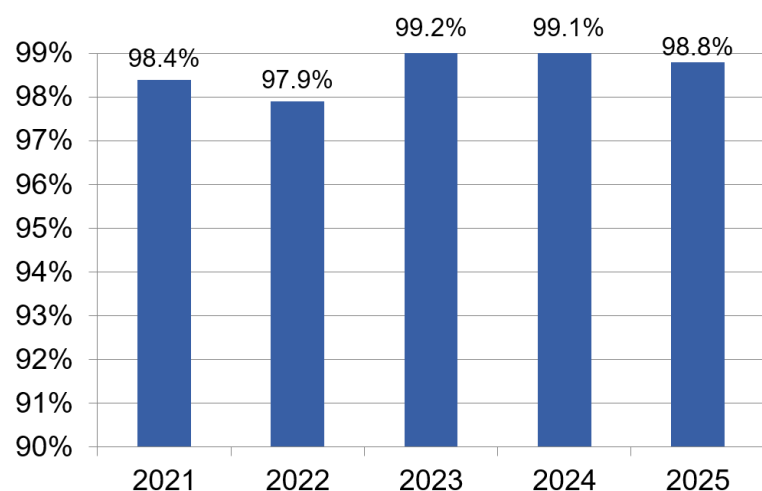
Source Graduate Outcomes Report (2025), Projections from the Technical Colleges (2026)

Graduate Placement

The graduate outcomes report measures the outcomes of graduates six months after graduation. The 2025 graduate outcomes report includes data on graduates from the fall of 2024, spring of 2025, and summer of 2025. The 2024-25 graduate survey had a **92.7%** (2,472 respondents) response rate. The 2025 data reported below is based on those graduates who responded, not all graduates.

According to the 2025 graduate outcomes report, the system's **placement rate** was **98.8%** (2,447), which includes those respondents who are employed, continuing their education, or in the military. The graph below outlines the system's placement rate history since 2020. Data for the 2026 graduate outcomes report is being collected.

Graph 2 System Graduate Placement Rates (2021—2025)



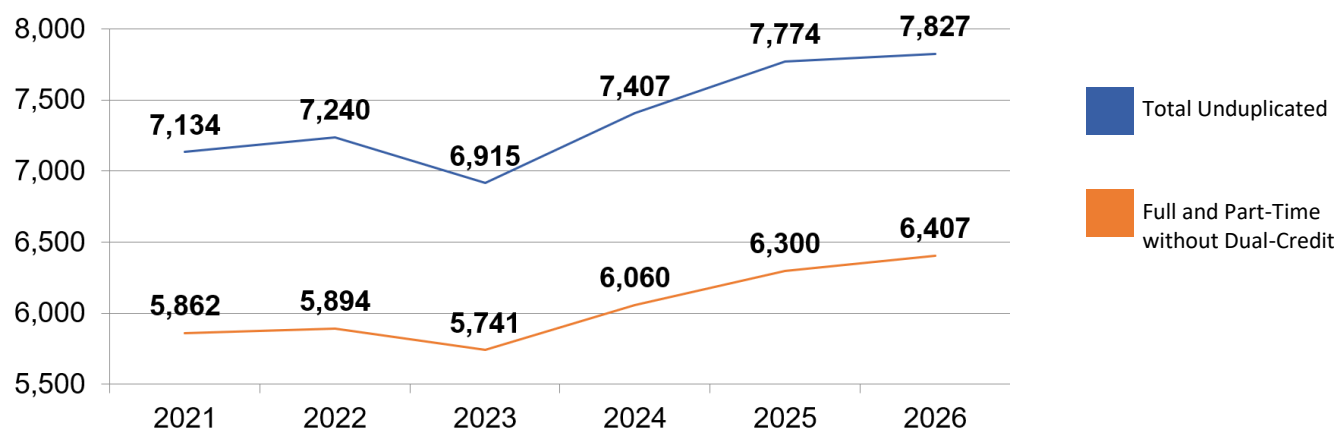
Source 2025 Graduate Outcomes Report

ENROLLMENT

According to fall 2026 enrollment data, **unduplicated enrollment** (full-time, part-time, dual-credit) in the technical college system has increased by **53** students (7,827 students from 7,774) compared to fall 2025.

The graph below outlines the system's total unduplicated enrollment history since 2020 and full-time and part-time enrollment without dual-credit students.

Graph 3 Unduplicated Fall Enrollment History (2021—2026)



Source Enrollment Report (Fall 2026)

The table below outlines the system's unduplicated fall enrollment history since 2021. Fall 2026 data indicates an increase in enrollment among full-time and part-time students.

Table 1 Unduplicated Fall Enrollment (Full-time, Part-time, Dual-Credit) History (2021—2026)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
Full-time/Part-time	5,862	5,894	5,741	6,060	6,300	6,407
Dual-Credit	1,272	1,346	1,174	1,347	1,474	1,420
Total	7,134	7,240	6,915	7,407	7,774	7,827

Source Enrollment Report (Fall 2026)

Program Growth

In recent years, the system has targeted a number of high-demand programs for enrollment growth. Since the fall of 2022, enrollment in **Health Sciences** programs have grown by **686** students, enrollment in **Architecture and Construction** programs have grown by **116** students, and enrollment in **Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security** programs have grown by **55** students.

National Trends

According to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), enrollment in public, two-year institutions remained relatively flat between fall 2023 and fall 2024. Enrollment in this sector has declined by **17%** since fall 2019 and **30%** since fall 2014.

The fall 2025 national data will be available in December.

Enrollment by Institution

The table below breaks down the enrollment history of each institution since 2021.

Table 2 Unduplicated Enrollment (Full-time, Part-time, Dual-Credit) History by Institution

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
LATC						
Full-time/Part-time	1,809	1,816	1,720	1,817	1,783	1,786
Dual-Credit	381	422	459	495	538	595
Total	2,190	2,238	2,179	2,312	2,321	2,381
MTC						
Full-time/Part-time	1,067	1,065	1,015	1,064	1,153	1,212
Dual-Credit	166	169	161	173	189	194
Total	1,233	1,234	1,176	1,237	1,342	1,406
STC						
Full-time/Part-time	2,122	2,202	2,234	2,375	2,479	2,445
Dual-Credit	259	251	244	284	336	353
Total	2,381	2,453	2,478	2,659	2,815	2,798
WDTC						
Full-time/Part-time	864	811	772	804	885	964
Dual-Credit	466	504	310	395	411	278
Total	1,330	1,315	1,082	1,199	1,296	1,242
System						
Full-time/Part-time	5,862	5,894	5,741	6,060	6,300	6,407
Dual-Credit	1,272	1,346	1,174	1,347	1,474	1,420
Total	7,134	7,240	6,915	7,407	7,774	7,827

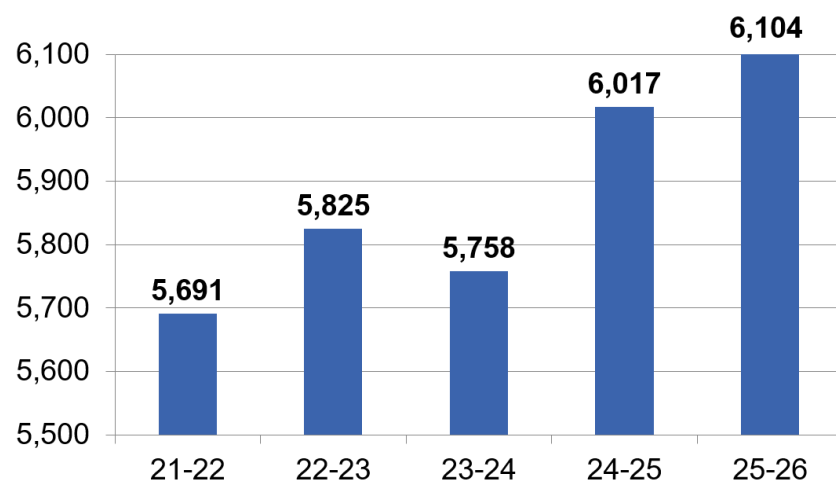
Source Enrollment Report (Fall 2026)

Full-Time Equivalent (FTE)

Based on recently finalized academic year 2025-26 (FY27) enrollment data, the full-time equivalent (FTE) count in the technical college system was **6,104**, an increase of **87** FTE over 2024-25 (FY26). The previous academic year's FTE is used to apply the Per Student Allocation each fiscal year. The FTE is determined by dividing the tuition collected by the product of the state tuition rate and 30 (30 credits per year equals a full-time student).

The graph below outlines the FTE history of the system dating back to academic year 2021-22 (FY23).

Graph 4 System Full-time Equivalent History (FY23—FY27)



Source Appendix A (2025), Board of Technical Education Projections (2026)

The table below outlines FTE numbers at each institution since academic year 2021-22.

Table 3 Full-time Equivalent Breakdown by Institution (FY23—FY27)

	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
LATC	2,006	2,047	1,952	2,057	1,995
MTC	1,120	1,135	1,098	1,116	1,215
STC	1,768	1,939	1,964	2,064	2,097
WDTC	797	704	744	780	797
Total	5,691	5,825	5,758	6,017	6,104

Source Appendix A (2025), Board of Technical Education Projections (2026)

Predicting FTE Performance

As student behaviors evolve, predicting the system's FTE number based on enrollment is becoming increasingly difficult. The system continues to provide more opportunities for part-time students, which makes projecting the total number of credits generated each semester a challenge.

RETENTION

The official retention rate measures students who enroll in an institution one fall and return to the institution (or complete prior to) the following fall. High school students are not included in retention statistics. The South Dakota technical college system's retention rate in fall 2025 was **80%**. The system's fall 2026 retention report will be shared at the board's December meeting.

The table below outlines the system's retention rate history since 2021.

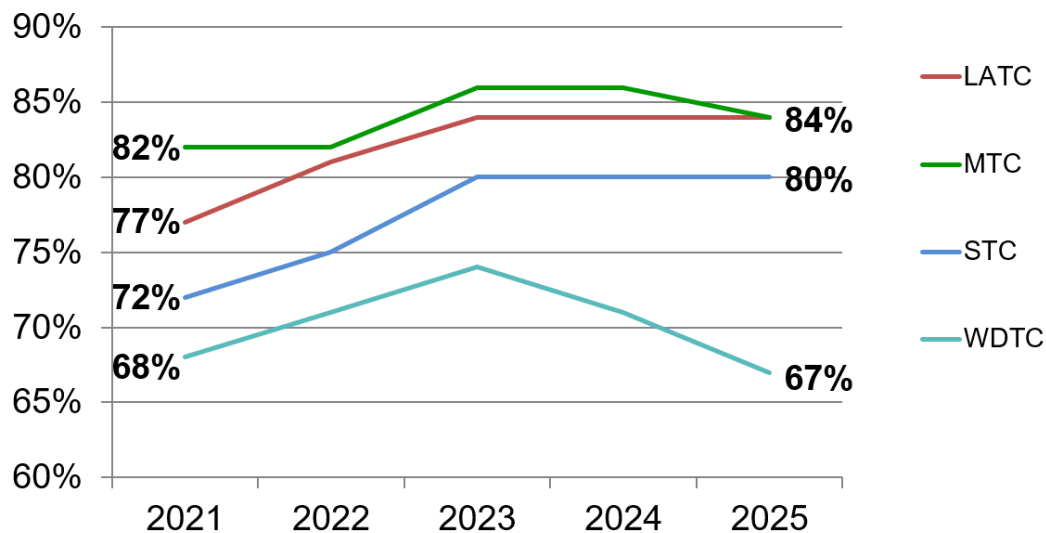
Table 4 System Retention Rate History (2021—2025)

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
System	74%	78%	81%	81%	80%

Source Retention Report (Fall 2025)

The graph below provides a history of retention rates by institution since fall 2021.

Graph 5 Retention Rate History by Institution (2021—2025)



Source Retention Report (Fall 2025)

National Notes

According to the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), the retention rate among public, two-year institutions between the fall of 2023 and the fall of 2024 was **54%**.

Among full-time students the national retention rate was **62%**, while the retention rate among part-time students was **43%**. Institutions with a larger percentage of part-time and non-traditional students tend to have lower retention rates. In South Dakota, the student populations at Southeast Technical College and Western Dakota Technical College have a higher percentage of part-time students than the populations of Lake Area Technical College and Mitchell Technical College.

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Table 5 Equipment Funding Distribution by Institution (FY27)

	State (67%)	System (33%)	Total
LATC	\$1,359,317	\$669,514	\$2,028,831
MTC	\$918,438	\$452,365	\$1,370,803
STC	\$1,316,828	\$648,587	\$1,965,415
WDTC	\$722,801	\$356,006	\$1,078,807
Total	\$4,317,384	\$2,126,472	\$6,443,856

Maintenance & Repair (M&R) Funding

The overall replacement value of facilities in the technical college system is \$385,549,494. The system partnered with the Office of the Governor and the Bureau of Finance and Management to develop a multi-year plan to grow annual Maintenance and Repair (M&R) investments to between 1.75% and 2% of the overall replacement value.

In FY27 the system received a state appropriation of **\$2,788,837**. The institutions agreed that the funding would only be applied to state-owned facilities and the distribution formula would not include childcare or cold storage facilities. The FY27 breakdown is outlined in the table below.

Table 6 Maintenance & Repair Funding Distribution by Institution (FY27)

	FY27	Square Feet
LATC	\$705,617	368,805 ft ²
MTC	\$593,091	317,261 ft ²
STC	\$916,658	479,110 ft ²
WDTC	\$573,472	299,737 ft ²
Total	\$2,788,837	1,464,913 ft²

The colleges match the state's M&R contribution using a combination of local fees and revenue generated through a \$6/credit hour M&R fee assessed to students.