

## ABSTRACT

Dakota State University (DSU), located in Madison South Dakota was founded in 1881. Founded as a Normal School and transformed in 1984 into a “high tech” university, this small rural university provides the only open enrollment avenue for a “high tech” higher education to a growing number of under-prepared, first generation, low income and at-risk residents. Dakota State University enrolled 2,295 students in the 2003 fall semester.

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The majority (84.5%) of **Dakota State University students** are still recruited from the seven adjacent counties around Madison. These students are usually the first generation of their family to attend college. In addition, 90% of the service area school districts have student populations of fewer than 1,000 pupils and many have fewer than 500; consequently, **85% of our students come from high schools with graduating classes of less than 50**. They are used to a high amount of personal attention and intervention, but they often lack the academic preparation necessary to be successful in college.



**Activity: Strengthening student success and retention through improved information access and services.** Request over 5 years = \$1,805,953

Components: (1) Develop an information-based student support system that includes early alert, registration, and student tracking (2) Redesign developmental education courses and tutoring to support student success and (3) Increase accuracy, accessibility and efficiency of timely institutional data.

**Evaluation** is a cornerstone of our project design. An External Evaluator will oversee the definition of specific evaluation strategies and implementation of the annual evaluation plan.