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April 21, 2017

Meghan Fay Zahniser
Executive Director, AASHE
2401 Walnut Street, Suite 102
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Ms. Zahniser:

I affirm the accuracy of Black Hills State University's Sustainability Tracking and Rating System submission. Our campus leads the region in sustainability efforts and maintains top academic programs in business, exercise science, natural sciences, social sciences, the arts, mass communication, health sciences, sustainability, and education. Black Hills State University is the cultural and intellectual center for the Black Hills. The word "authenticity" is one of our four CORE values as an institution. To us it means *Leading with integrity and sustainable best practices; honoring our heritage, celebrating our diversity, serving our community, and thriving in the Spirit of the Black Hills.*"

As you can see from our submission, the Black Hills State University experience goes beyond the classroom. We take pride in the importance of protecting our environment and we encourage our students to engage in global issues, using their intellectual capital to solve problems here and around the world. In 2007, Black Hills State University became the first South Dakota institution honored as a charter signatory of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment, pledging carbon neutrality by 2050. Ten years later, we are holding to that commitment and so much more. The effort and collaboration of many produced recent successes in our sustainable growth including graduating our first class of Masters of Science in Sustainability students, achieving Tree Campus USA designation, and creation of the Black Hills Food Hub. We also acknowledge the progress still needed to achieve true economic, social, and environmental sustainability.

Allow me to thank AASHE for developing and sharing this tool. We are excited to continue our partnerships with you and our fellow member institutions.

Sincerely,

Tom Jackson, Jr., Ed.D.
President, Black Hills State University