CRTF Recommendation Discussion

The following recommendations come from task force meetings, subcommittee meetings, public comment, and general knowledge of members related to current programming and programming when the new prison opens in 2030.

Some CSG and committee recommendations are a target to reach in the coming years by adding some staffing and programs each year to prepare for the opening of the new prison while improving the current options.

The following is intended to be an outline once the main points are accepted. Then DOC, CSG, Governors team, and sub committees will work to input supporting data for final report adoption at a later meeting. Some of the topics require no motion needed and others have a potential motion.

The intent would be to use the motions and this outline format to adopt topics and then put in language giving more background on the task force's intent to each section before a final zoom meeting. This outline with the motions adopted will form the basis of a final report.

This is designed to go with the CSG final report by linking it to their recommendations and attaching their recommendations to our CRTF report.

This document was put together by the state with recommendations to be implemented that fit the scope of the task force. Members will be able to make motions from the floor to add or edit sections.

Cross-Cutting Recommendations

1. **Security Program posts**- Dedicated security program posts will improve delivery of existing DOC programs, volunteer programs.
    a. This will ensure the smooth deliver of evening volunteer hours, weekend volunteers, religious and cultural programs, and inmate transport to programming, educational classes, and potentially evening education classes.
    b. Provide opportunities to have security program staff to supervise and expand peer-to-peer opportunities.
    c. Ensure physical activity programming, recreation, showers, and other services that contribute to positive mental health.
    d. CSG Recommendation 2.1. May not happen all in one year but add some now and continue to build up over time.

Potential Motion: I move that DOC should add program security posts each year during the budget process to improve current programming and train staff for when the new prison opens.

2. Reentry

a. Reentry packets and resources
    i. The education subcommittee held a reentry demonstration activity that highlighted the challenges for inmates leaving prison. Vital documents, drivers license, housing, transportation, cell phone access, and other factors can lead to recidivism.
    ii. Every inmate should leave with vital documents, benefits enrollment, and a transportation plan (CSG 1.4)
    iii. Establish a Programs Board inside the prison.
b. Life skills-
    i. DOC, CSG, and public comment all focused on the need to teach inmates life skills on finances, job interview skills, interpersonal skills, parenting skills.
    ii. Showcase inmate accomplishments through resumes, certificates, and other documentation to show employers.
c. Family Reunification
    i. DOC should continue to offer and expand family reunification events and activities to reduce recidivism.

d. Reentry Council
    i. Assist DOC with coordinating reentry supports across the agencies and partners responsible for housing education, employment, behavioral health, and parole supervision. Including partners not represented on the CRTF.
    ii. Assist DOC with statewide reentry goals.
    iii. Program measures to track included in CSG Recommendation 1.5
    iv. Facilitate data sharing across agencies
    v. Include tribal partners in designing services

Potential Motion: The CRTF endorses the CSG recommendation of establishing a reentry council.

e. RNR

i. Create a Rehabilitation and Reentry division reporting to the same director. This was recommended by CSG and completed by DOC after the last meeting. (No motion needed)
ii. Centralized waitlist. (CSG 1.2 (1)).
iii. Streamline catalog (CSG 1.2(2)).
iv. Facility Audits (CSG 1.2(4)).

f. Improve readiness to return to community
    i. Integrate reentry planning into intake assessments.
    ii. Begin Medicaid enrollment and substance use treatment referrals, including medication-assisted treatment before release (CSG 1.4)
g. Fund and expand peer support and transitional services using state, federal, or private funds. (CSG 2.2)
    i. These peer supports can function inside the walls and upon release
    ii. Incorporate justice impacted individuals who have "made it"
    iii. Certified peer support and be done with funding or with volunteers.
h. The Legislature should evaluate CRTF requests again following the budget projections during session if additional funding becomes available.

Potential Motion: DOC should continue and expand the SaferSD Reentry program. DOC should continue to work to fill gaps identified by DOC and CSG with other state agencies, nonprofits, and contractors.

3. Housing

a. Existing with Teen Challenge and St. Francis
b. St. Francis House has applied to DSS to be considered a treatment provider)

Potential Motion- The state should work to facilitate beds to Teen Challenge and similar facilities that are also faith based as an alternative to prison.

Potential Motion- The CRTF endorses the St. Francis House for reentry and designation as a treatment facility with DSS. (St. Francis House has applied to be drug treatment center)

c. Reentry Housing such as F5 and Community Work Centers
    i. This is a critical need but a solid plan will be needed including location, ongoing funding, and local community buy in to get

legislative support. This could also include a location closer to some tribal communities that are willing to partner.

d. Reentry to community based services
    i. A "warm handoff" to community providers through reentry or parole. (CSG 1.4)
    ii. Flexible transportation options (CSG 2.3)
    iii. Incentives for landlords to rent to people returning from prison. (CSG 2.3)
    iv. Use release and service data to target investment where services are thinnest.

Potential Motion- DOC should work to identify a plan for adding community reentry centers/work release centers. This could also go to unserved areas of the state over time and in consultation with local communities. This could involve a private partner, small and efficient state run facilities, or a combination.

Potential Motion- DOC and the state should use release and service data to target investment where services are thinnest including incentives, working with community treatment providers, and landlords. (CSG 1.4)

4. Work Release, Community Service, and Institutional Jobs

a. DOC's and CRTF's vision is that every inmate will have a job or program. Ranging from institutional work, to a college degree, community services, and work release. Every inmate should have a way of serving, learning, or doing. 100% success will be difficult to achieve as inmates can't be forced to work but maximizing this opportunities is an adopted goal of the CRTF.

Potential Motion- The CRTF endorses the vision that every inmate will have a job, program, or purpose while they are in prison.

5. Parole

a. Enhanced Compliance Unit
    i. DOC created an enhanced compliance unit to focus on high risk parolees and do checks on nights and weekends

Potential Motion- The CRTF believes that holding parolees accountable is key to their community rehabilitation. The CRTF endorses backfilling the DOC budget during the 2027 session to ensure the permanent continuation of the Enhance Compliance Unit.

b. Enhance parolee services through state and federal dollars to cover employment, housing, behavioral health, parole supervision, and other cross-cutting areas. (CSG 4.1 and 4.2).

Potential Motion- The CRTF endorses parole reforms that may lead to more time in prison in the scenario where that individual needs and can get treatment. If they can't get treatment, then community treatment should be established prior to parole

c. Absconder Apprehension Unit
    i. The Absconder Apprehension Unit has successfully reduced the number of absconders. This unit should continue to work with local law enforcement agencies and crime task forces to bring apprehend absconders before new crimes are committed. (No motion needed)

6. Earned Discharge Credits

a. The CRTF believes the DOC could consider modifications to the current system but it should not be replaced with a good-time system where EDC's are automatically earned.
b. Changing the distribution to make sure they can be earned an entire calendar year or removed as a disciplinary tool were both discussed.

Potential Motion- The CRTF supports identifying modifications to the current EDC system but not replacing it with a good-time system.

Potential Motion (more specific version)- The CRTF supports modifications of the EDC system to allow DOC to be flexible and modify the EDC's in administrative rule. (CSG 3.1)

7. Recidivism data and evaluation of program success

a. While inmates take many different programs the DOC should continue to track and report data on existing programs so they can be evaluated for funding, expansion, or replacement.
b. Establish a Programs Committee within the prison (DOC doing in October).
c. CSG 1.5 and 2.2

Potential Motion: The CRTF endorses continued tracking of program success for evidence based and established trauma-informed models of care. This will provide accountability tor taxpayer funds to provide reports to the legislature and support funding for staffing and associated programs.

Religious Recommendations

A correctional environment can maintain safety, accountability, and appropriate security while recognizing the inherent dignity of every human person. Every person retains inherent worth, even while being held accountable for harmful actions. A rehabilitative prison culture should be built around five principles that reflect this:

1.) Human dignity: Every person deserves respect, humane treatment, and the opportunity to develop.

2.) Moral development: Rehabilitation can involve developing conscience, empathy, self-control, sound judgment, and concern for others.

3.) Purposeful work: Individuals should have opportunities to contribute, develop skills, and experience the value of productive labor.

4.) Education and personal growth: Literacy, academic learning, vocational training, and life skills should be accessible to all. When possible, individuals should be encouraged to develop their God given talents especially as they can contribute to the community as a whole.

5.) Community: Incarcerated individuals are encouraged to build healthy relationships, mentor peers appropriately, participate in constructive group activities, and support others in pursuing positive goals. This should also extend to participation and continuity of family contact.

In light of these principles, the Faith Based Subcommittee of the Corrections and Rehabilitation Task Force recommends the following:

Previously Adopted

8. **Prison Seminary Program-**
    a. DOC, Northwestern, and Prison Seminary Foundation are encouraged to start classes as soon as possible even while accreditation is pending. They intend to start in January of 2027.
    b. We believe the culture in the prison system is shifting. Within six months of the Prison Seminary Program being fully implemented, we anticipate a noticeable continued shift in the culture as inmates, staff, and volunteers experience the fruits of moral rehabilitation brought about by the program.

New Recommendations

9. Weekend and evening volunteer hours

a. Utilize program security posts to enhance consistency and availability of weekend and evening hours for religious programming. (Covered by Motion One).

10. Increase the number of volunteers allowed to participate in a program from the current 10.

a. Currently the standard volunteer group size is limited for safety, security, and drug interdiction. With new body scanners, dogs, and other improvements the number of volunteers allowed at a time can now be increased safely. Allowing more volunteers will allow the reach to more inmates.

Potential Motion: The CRTF endorses DOC raising the number of volunteers in a group setting to a higher level that is safe for a specific program and space.

11. Access to prison for religious programming.

a. DOC should use security program posts to designate times to safely minister to inmates in the tiers, restrictive housing, and improve access to inmates.
b. DOC is updating their process for chaplains to safely have access to inmates in the facility with an alarm, picture ID, other safety features and adequate staffing.
c. Staffing and Culture- utilize security program posts to ensure continuity of religious services.
    i. Religious programming is important for the staff as well. It will enhance the culture, job satisfaction, and retention of staff. Improved staff retention which leads to positive trust with inmates, improved relationships, and better programming long-term.
    ii. DOC should work with BHRA on reviewing exit interviews. Ensure key interviews are reviewed with executive leadership to continue to make improvements for staff.
    iii. Ensure adequate administrative staffing to carry out CSG and CRTF recommendations.
d. Provide adequate space for chaplains and staff for offices, classrooms, and other space needed to carry out their work.
e. Funding- The state should add security program staff and funding for DOC to continue improved access to prison this year and continue to expand in preparation for opening the new prison. CRTF recommendations should be evaluated again during session after budget projections are set to determine additional opportunities.

12. Prison Fellowship Ministries

a. The new women's prison will receive programming from Prison Fellowship ministries. They will offer a 6 month and 12 month program because female inmates often serve less than a year making a seminary program less feasible.

Potential Motion: The CRTF supports the establishment of Prison Fellowship Ministries at the women's prison and expansion to other facilities with appropriate length programming for the sentence length.

13. Other programs- Malachi Dads, volunteer appreciation, and other concepts

a. DOC is now establishing Malachi Dads as a prison ministry program in Sioux Falls. Sec. Lamb will provide additional information but there are other programs for other facilities.
b. There are multiple other ministry programs like Brothers in Blue, St. Dysmas, and others that are key partners to recognize.
c. We encourage the intentional implementation of volunteer appreciation efforts (i.e. annual award ceremony) and the recruitment of community members to lead the effort for the community to show appreciation for DOC staff. Rehabilitation requires both staff and volunteers energetically engaged.
d. We recommend regular meetings with the Secretary, executive leadership, staff, and volunteers to maintain engagement, identify issues, and provide for resolution of any conflicts within the system (currently monthly).

Potential Motion: The CRTF supports the continuation, expansion, and growth of religious programming for inmates at all DOC facilities and recognition of those volunteers helping minister to offenders.

Education Recommendations

14. GED Educational Track

a. Priority population: Those who have not earned a high school credential. This is self-reported and validated via record checks. Those entering the GED educational program are TABE tested.
b. Add a teacher for prison GED coursework.
c. Build/support teacher development on literacy teaching strategies to include the science of reading.
d. Work to expand use of Reach Literacy or similar volunteer programs for individuals with low reading levels.
e. Increase peer mentor/tutoring opportunities.

f. Support security staff for educational transfers and volunteer programming. (no motion needed, covered under motion one).

Potential Motion: The CRTF endorses DOC adding multiple teaching positions with one GED teacher being added immediately.

15. Literacy Track

Increased emphasis on literacy through teachers, volunteer programs, and special education.

a. Priority population: Interested individuals with low literacy skills. Offer and encourage 20 minute assessment.
    i. Focus on completing within three months for inmates serving at least one year.
    ii. Create an intervention plan for those reading below the 6th grade level.
    iii. Potentially completed by trained peers.
b. Reach Literacy did not recommend dyslexia screening for all, but DOC should work to identify inmates with special education needs for interventions and special assistance.
c. Establish a literacy specialists position that could be DOC or contract.

16. Work with tribal programs inside and outside the prison. Literacy is a major factor of incarceration and a large portion of prison inmates are tribal.

a. Build Peer Tutors to function as tutors, advocates, and supporters of literacy efforts.
b. Reach has an inexpensive program for training tutors. Some cost for materials. Utilize Reach program.
c. Warm handoff at time of release to adult education program. This process is being developed with DLR.
d. Additional information from Reach literacy to be incorporated.
e. Support security staff for educational transfers and volunteer programming. (no motion needed, covered under motion one).

Potential Motion: The CRTF supports adding additional resources to literacy education through additional staff such as hiring a specialized teacher, volunteers, or contractors. This should include an emphasis on identifying special educational needs.

Potential Motion: The CRTF endorses working with Reach Literacy and similar providers to continue to assess current offerings, materials, creating individual plans, and create a culture of literacy in the prison environment. (Reach Literacy Recommendation).

17. Southeast Tech Satellite Campus

a. Southeast Technical College is pursing a designation for the new men's prison as an approved satellite campus for programming in the prison.
b. The Governor provided $1.5 million in future funds that is being used to establish a diesel mechanics program.
c. STC, Department of Labor, and DOC can continue to identify high needs area.

Potential Motion: The CRTF endorses the establishment of a satellite campus for technical education at the new men's prison and technical classes offered by multiple colleges.

18. Western Dakota Tech

a. WDTC is offering a plumbing program at the men's prison in Rapid City and a Hospitality Certificate at the women's prison. Continued expansion is being explored

Potential Motion: The CRTF endorses the continue expansion of technical programs West River at the new women's prison and Rapid City minimum center.

19. Business Partnership Training Opportunities

a. Sanford Health is partnering at the new women's prison to offer a health care training track. Partnering with private companies for training, apprenticeships, and work release will give inmates skills.
b. The Governor's House Program at Springfield is a highly successful program that should continue.

20. College and University Education Opportunities

a. Second Chance Pell grants have opened up new federal funding sources for these programs. As of July 1, 2023, the ban on incarcerated individuals getting federal pell education grants was completely lifted. It had been banned in 1994 until a DOJ pilot program was started in 2016 and the success led to the full reinstatement in 2023.
b. Tablets can be used, remote learning, and in person instruction to offer select four-year degree opportunities.

Potential Motion: The CRTF endorses the partnership and establishment of educational programs that are second chance pell grant eligible.

21. **Pheasantland Industries**

a. Pheasantland Industries serves as a job and educational training. These opportunities will be expanded in the new prison and there are several examples of successful prison industries from other states.

Potential Motion: The CRTF endorses the expansion of pheasantland industries to identify new areas that teach skills and provide work for inmates. Industries that could benefit the taxpayers should also be considered.

Tribal Recommendations

The Tribal subcommittee focused on the three P's of Prevention, Present, and Post for handling tribal offenders and programming.

22. Expand tribal parole cooperation and formal partnership agreements

a. Sisseton currently receives approximately $250,000 a year to hire parole staff that are employed by the tribe to supervise DOC parolees under an MOU. (Present)
b. This could be expanded to other tribes using one-time money for a pilot program and then ongoing funds. (Post)
c. Create a rapid MOU template for tribal supervision (adopted in December)
d. Designate the Sisseton/Wahpeton Oyate parole program as a flagship model was approved in December, 2025 but a more specific section can be added as this will be built over time.

Potential Motion: The CRTF endorses expanding and funding tribal parole partnerships with willing tribes. (motion requested because specific to potential funding asks).

23. Tribal liaison to work with parolees in the community

a. A contractor to go onto reservations and work with parolees on reentry. Continue to assist with employment, housing, and community support assistance. (Prevention)
b. Can work to hold ceremonies in the prison with tribes invited. (Present)
c. Pilot a Tribal Cultural Liaison role approved in December group of motions but a more specific motion would be helpful for a funding request. (Prevention)
d. One-time money could establish a pilot program and then ongoing money added in future years.
e. Ensure adequate resources for cultural programming from multiple sources. (Present)

Potential Motion: The CRTF endorses DOC seeking state, federal, or private funding to establish and then expand a tribal liaison reentry program to help Native American inmates with reentry.

24. Tribal specific programming in prisons

a. Moving Forward in a Sacred Way- DOC has now signed a contract with them (no specific motion needed) (Present)
b. I.Am.Legacy- Presented in Rapid City. Their programming is currently in the Pennington County Jail and could contract with DOC. I.Am.Legacy has been invited to start programming the new women's prison and are completing entry paperwork. (Present). Additional I.Am.Legacy ideas:
    i. Certify lifer and long-term inmates as credible messengers and violence interrupters. (Prevention
    ii. Trained in deescalation techniques
    iii. Peer mentors working with other prison programs.
c. Lakota Language Program in Sioux Falls (Present)
d. NACT (Native American Cultural Teaching) (Present)
e. Other programming Author of My Life (AOML), Claim Your Power (trauma- and ACEs-informed), Unified Program Leadership Council (UPLC): inmate-led, multi-program governance structure with DOC staff and volunteer participation, peer mentors for crisis support (Present)

Potential Motion: DOC should continue to offer, expand, and fund tribal specific programs such as those listed above.

25. Education outreach

a. Education, literacy, and dyslexia are incarceration factors and dyslexia may not qualify as a special education indicator in an IEP. (Prevention)
b. Other learning disabilities and special education are also critical to identify.
c. The DOC team should be invited by the interim state/tribal relations committee at least annually with the Department of Education, Department of Labor, Department of tribal relations, and tribal partners to discuss educational outcomes and best practices. (Post)

Potential Motion: The CRTF supports education and literacy training with Native American inmates and encourages the Department of Education to work with tribal partners on literacy.

26. Items adopted in December not specified above or completed to include in the final report. These items were adopted in December and have been moving forward at different rates but a new motion is not needed. (Post)

a. Compile outcomes and create a replication framework for other tribes.

b. Restore evening volunteer hours
c. Adopt a standardized DOC reentry checklist
d. Approve pending AVP workshops
e. Formally recognize the Unified Program Leadership Council (UPLC)
f. Reduce the 5-year volunteer contact ban
g. Establish quarterly volunteer roundtables
h. Prioritize M-2 program revitalization
i. Ensure ID issuance before release
j. Quick template for tribal supervision

Behavioral Health Recommendations

27. Leaders of Tomorrow or similar programs

a. Tamien Dysart and Leaders of Tomorrow has been very successful in the prison and Sioux Falls community.
b. Staff training is also key to the prison environment, turnover, and culture.

Potential Motion: The CRTF supports ongoing funding for Leaders of Tomorrow or similar programs to be funded by the legislature without the need for additional FTE.

28. Adequate Staffing for mental health and chemical dependency counselors

a. The new prison substantially expands and dedicates specific space for drug treatment, behavioral health, and supporting inmates
b. This space will only benefit if the FTE needs are fully funded by the legislature in 2030.
c. Any addition now to ramp up to 2030 would also be beneficial and they could assist at the halfway houses or with parole.

Potential Motion: The CRTF supports the full funding and FTE needs to appropriately staff the new men's prison. New positions should be added as soon as possible to work with parolees or halfway houses to ramp up to 2030.

29. Therapeutic Communities

a. The new women's prison has 96 drug treatment beds that all live in a therapeutic community.
b. There were two presentations to the task force on the success rate of these and the amount of programming that all 96 women will get living together in two 48 bed units and completing drug treatment, course work, peer-to-peer mentoring and other treatment as a way of life.
c. The new men's prison housing units are 66 beds per pod.

Potential Motion: The CRTF supports the use of therapeutic communities and multiple housing pods in the new men's prison should be operated as therapeutic communities.

30. Physical and Activity

a. The Task force heard a presentation on how physical fitness, recreation, and activity can help improve mental health and rehabilitation. Working out improves mental discipline and is an outlet for inmates.
b. Program Security Posts under motion one can also ensure adequate regular recreation time and different time options. The National standard is at least three times per week but it can be every day.

Potential Motion: The CRTF supports physical activity and recreation as a way to improve offender mental health. DOC can use peer-to-peer, volunteers, or contract with life coaches to help inmates establish personal wellness goals.

31. Animal Therapy

a. The dog program was presented at a CRTF meeting. The Sioux Falls Humane society is adjacent to the new prison.
b. The additional land could also be used for some horse (equine therapy). Some states train and sell wild horses or donkeys.
c. Taking care of animals also teaches educational and life skills.

Potential Motion: The CRTF supports incorporating animal therapy, care, and training in existing and new facilities.

32. Gardening and cultivating

a. Many states run greenhouse that give inmates jobs and grow fresh healthy food. It also teaches responsibility.
b. DOC has added a greenhouse to the plan for the new women's prison in the last few months.
c. Opportunity for plant education through volunteer groups.

Potential Motion: The CRTF supports the investment and partnerships to establish greenhouse type programs at all prisons as space allows.

33. Enhance out of prison treatment options

a. Outpatient treatment services are a critical need for inmates. There are many facilities in the state doing excellent work for outpatient treatment, inpatient treatment, other nonprofits, and drug courts under UJS.
b. Additional services are needed but a full analysis was beyond the scope of the committee.

Potential Motion: The CRTF supports the use of out-of-prison treatment options that reduce recidivism.

34. Improve prevention and intervention with juveniles

a. Juvenile treatment to intervene prior to entering the prison system.
b. Juvenile programs were beyond the specific scope of the committee but should at least be recognized.
c. DSS currently funds several juvenile treatment programs in cooperation with DOC.
d. Last year, $2.0 million for non-profit operated alternative educational center for juveniles was funded in Brown County.

Potential Motion: The CRTF supports continue investment, improvement, and analysis of ways to improve juvenile justice in the state.