

SDDOC  
SOUTH DAKOTA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

# SDDOC & Southeast Technical College

Prison Education Programs

October 29, 2025



# Existing Welding Program Collaboration

- A collaboration between Southeast Technical College (STC), Department of Corrections (DOC), & Department of Labor (DLR)
- Minimum custody, gate pass eligible offenders from Sioux Falls are selected based on predetermined criteria and a thorough screening process
- Semester-long **welding certificate program** including Math, Student Success, and employment training and assistance (DLR)
- Cohorts ranging between 10 to 20 students from DOC each semester.
- Students earn a **welding certificate** from STC and have the opportunity to earn their **American Welding Society (AWS)** industry certification.



# DOC Welding Certificate Cohort



- A group of **11 offenders** from the Sioux Falls Minimum Center started their first day of **college classes** at **Southeast Technical College** on August 25th.
- They will be attending **math** and **welding courses** to become **certified welders** and will be set to graduate on December 12th.



# DOC Welding Certificate Cohort

- 73 students have graduated with a certificate since beginning of the program, fall 2022.
- Program has an 86% completion rate.
- 75% first try pass rate on the AWS certification.
- Currently in our 7th cohort



Student numbers, completion, and AWS certification statistics provided by STC.

# DOC Welding Certificate Cohort

- Initial employment of graduates is 86%.
  - 98% of those were placed in field.
- At the one-year mark, 84% of graduates remained employed.
  - 65% of graduates are still working in field.
- 90% of 2024's graduates are still employed (stats as of May 2025).



# Progress & Future Opportunities

- In July, the Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) awarded STC \$1.5 million Future Funds grant funding to establish a Diesel Heavy Equipment diploma program within SDDOC
- This will offer an opportunity to offenders who are not eligible to attend programming on STC's campus, and **increase** the overall number of offenders leaving SDDOC with **college credentials**
- Additional programs will be considered for the recently approved Sioux Falls facility





Thank you!