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Margaret C. Carpenter  
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ADMINISTRATOR'S MEMO TO COUNTIES

MEMO # 11-01

**DATE:** March 24, 2011

**TO:** County Departments of Human/Social Services Directors  
Wisconsin Circuit/Juvenile Court Judges  
Wisconsin Sheriffs

**FROM:** Margaret C. Carpenter, Administrator 

**SUBJECT:** Consolidation of Juvenile Correctional Institutions; New Juvenile Commitments

Over the last several years, the populations at the Department of Corrections' juvenile institutions have been falling while the deficit in the Division of Juvenile Corrections budget has been climbing. Currently, we are at 30% capacity for our male juveniles and 20% capacity at our female institution.

To address these issues, the Department announced a plan to save tens of millions of dollars annually in state juvenile institution operating costs and permanently eliminate a \$21.6 million budget deficit in the Division of Juvenile Corrections (DJC) within ten years. The DOC plan addresses both issues by closing two of the state's three secure juvenile institutions and consolidating operations at Lincoln Hills School (LHS) in Lincoln County.

After intense study and debate, including a vote last year by a state juvenile corrections task force to close Ethan Allen School, the DOC has recommended to Governor Walker that the consolidation moves forward. The Governor supports it and has included it in his proposed 2011-13 Budget. The consolidation eliminates the need for a huge rise in the daily rates charged to counties for juvenile correctional placements, and it gives DJC the opportunity to provide consistent, high-quality services to delinquent youth.

The consolidation plan calls for the July 1st closure of Southern Oaks Girls School (SOGS) in Racine County and Ethan Allen School (EAS) in Waukesha County and the transfer of all youth to the grounds of LHS in Irma, Wisconsin. The 800-acre site at LHS will house all state male juvenile offenders and include a "bifurcated" or separate facility for female juveniles newly named Copper Lake School (CLS).

During the coming months, staff, programs and youth will be gradually transferred from EAS to LHS. It is anticipated that transfer of girls to CLS will occur towards the end of the

consolidation process. Adequate time is needed to construct an internal fence, separating the male and female facilities. Prior to any youth being transferred, the youth's family and the committing county will be notified by letter and phone.

Between now and July 1, the Department will gradually shift its reception function for boys to LHS. The purpose of moving reception to LHS prior to the closure of EAS is to assure that youth begin their treatment and educational programs in the institution where they will complete them. We believe youth are best served by continuity of programming at one institution. This will minimize the number of interruptions in youths' progress. However, we know that counties have to prepare in advance for operational and staffing changes related to the consolidation of juvenile correctional services. Given these circumstances, the Department is establishing the following policies:

- **Beginning April 20, 2011, the EAS Assessment and Evaluation unit will be closed to new commitments for correctional placement and the Short-Term Reentry Program.** We hope that providing a four-week notice of this change will provide adequate time for counties to prepare for its impact. For a limited time, certain youth will still be received at Ethan Allen, as described below.
- Courts may continue to commit male youth to reception at EAS through **May 20, 2011**, with the understanding that such youth will be transferred immediately to LHS for assessment and evaluation. **As a courtesy to counties during this one-month period, DJC will provide transportation of youth between EAS and LHS.**
- **All new commitments of male youth after May 20, 2011, must be designated for reception at LHS.** Counties will resume their responsibility for transporting youth to LHS. This advance notice should help counties plan for any additional resources needed to transport youth greater distances.
- Courts may continue to make direct commitments of youth to reception at EAS for participation in the Corrective Sanctions Program until **May 20, 2011**. Youth will be retained at EAS for assessment, then transferred to community supervision under Corrective Sanctions within 21 days of admission.
- Until further notice, EAS will continue to accept youth on existing corrections orders for admissions related to violations of community supervision rules:
  - Short-term sanctions up to 21 days,
  - Type 2 RCC sanctions up to 10 days,
  - Revocation of aftercare supervision, and
  - Permanent return of Corrective Sanctions (Type 2) youth.
- Until the institution operations are transferred to CLS, Southern Oaks will continue to accept girls on:
  - New commitment orders,
  - Short-term sanctions up to 21 days,

Type 2 RCC sanctions up to 10 days,  
Revocation of aftercare supervision, and  
Permanent return of Corrective Sanctions (Type 2) youth

- We anticipate that CLS will begin serving girls around **June 20, 2011**. A notice will be sent to counties and parents approximately two weeks before CLS officially opens.
- No new referrals for SPRITE are currently being accepted.

We appreciate your cooperation and assistance with the above policies.

cc: Gary Hamblin, Secretary, DOC  
Chuck Cole, Deputy Secretary, DOC  
Dennis Schuh, Executive Assistant, DOC  
Silvia Jackson, Assistant Administrator, DOC/DJC  
Fredie-Ellen Bove, Administrator, DCF/DSP  
Diane Bloecker, Director, Child Welfare Licensing Section DCF/DSP  
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DHS/DCF Area Administrators  
DHS/DCF Human Service Area Coordinators  
DOC/DJC Management staff  
County Youth Aids contacts  
Court-attached juvenile court intake offices  
Type 2 residential care centers