



Wisconsin Department of Corrections

Governor Tony Evers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 5, 2024

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Latest report highlights progress at LHS, CLS

DOC continues to work on revising administrative code

MADISON, Wis. – The 19th report from the federal court-appointed monitor for Lincoln Hills School/Copper Lake School (LHS/CLS) was filed today, noting continued improvements at the juvenile facility.

The Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) is now in substantial compliance with 43 (or 86%) of the 50 provisions identified in the consent decree, seven more than the previous reporting period.

The consent decree stems from a 2017 lawsuit over conditions at the facility under the previous administration. Under Gov. Tony Evers, the DOC has been in either partial or substantial compliance with all provisions of the consent decree.

“The department is grateful to the monitoring team for their recognition of the important work going on at Lincoln Hills and Copper Lake schools and for their assistance as we continue to make improvements,” DOC Deputy Secretary Jared Hoy said. “DOC is especially proud of our employees there who have been energized by the progress. That enthusiasm and passion is positively impacting our care of the youth there.”

In the latest report, the department gained substantial compliance in provisions relating to administrative confinement, staffing and morale.

The court-appointed monitor visited LHS/CLS in March and conducted 52 interviews with staff and youth.

“Staff morale was exceptionally good overall at the time of the site visit,” the monitor wrote. “Staff were extremely friendly from the moment you walked through the front door. The new staff who were on-the-job training expressed their excitement to begin their positions, stated the training was good, and genuinely were happy with their decision to join the team. Staff also said to the Monitoring team that they felt safe at the facility and loved their jobs.”



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The monitor noted that overall interactions between leadership, staff and youth were positive and the general atmosphere during the visit was calm.

A major improvement noted in the report was the Division of Juvenile Corrections full implementation of The Mandt System.

The Mandt System uses trauma-informed positive behavior support to help build relationships and create a safe environment for all. The program replaced an older system known as Principles of Subject Control, which is commonly used in correctional settings but isn't as well suited to the therapeutic work of juvenile corrections.

As of January, The Mandt System is the sole model for the prevention and de-escalation of negative behaviors in juvenile corrections. Academy recruits are trained in this method and juvenile corrections staff receive quarterly refreshers.

A couple measures of the system's success:

- In a two-year comparison of 2022 and 2023 there has been a 44% decrease in the use of mechanical restraints, a 32% decrease in use of force incidents, and a 50% decrease in AC placements. There has also been a reduction in workplace injuries.
- DOC has seen a dramatic improvement in the percentage of staff members who reported fearing for their safety. In 2019, that statistic reached an all-time high of 80% of LHS staff. In October 2023 after Mandt implementation that number fell to just 16%.

DOC is also continuing to work on updating state administrative code related to juvenile corrections to reflect current best practices and the latest research on child development.

Changes to chapter DOC 376 of the state's administrative code, which governs security in Type 1 juvenile correctional facilities, have been referred to the Senate Committee on Judiciary and Public Safety and Assembly Committee on Corrections.

A listing of all monitor reports can be found [here](#) on the department's website.