



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Governor Tony Evers / Secretary Kevin A. Carr

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Monitor Report Identifies Continued Progress at Lincoln Hills/Copper Lake

Madison – The latest report from the court-appointed monitor for Lincoln Hills School/Copper Lake School (LHS/CLS) filed today noted continued progress at the facilities. The Wisconsin Department of Corrections is now in substantial compliance with 32 provisions identified in the consent decree, which stems from a 2017 lawsuit over conditions at the facility under the previous administration.

“Leadership, staff, and youth overall at LHS/CLS continue to have positive interactions with each other and the environment in general was very calm throughout LHS/CLS,” the monitor wrote in the report. ... “The overall operations of LHS/CLS continue to be moving in a positive direction and the [DOC] continue to make progress in areas of the provisions of this agreement.”

This is the 17th report filed by the court-appointed monitor, and under Gov. Tony Evers’ administration the DOC has been in either partial or substantial compliance with all 50 provisions of the consent decree. Since the last report in March, the department gained substantial compliance in conditions of room confinement by making them cleaner and safer.

“The Division of Juvenile Corrections staff continues to make significant improvements at LHS/CLS, a trend that has continued under the Evers administration,” said DOC Secretary Kevin Carr. “We are proud of the strides that have been made, but we recognize the work is not finished and will continue to give considerable attention to ways we can improve and better serve the youth in our care.”

Other improvements noted in the report include:

- Upgraded game room, lighting and exhaust fans in all living units.
- Added new options in canteen/food service in response to youth feedback.
- Updated water fountains throughout the school and administrative areas.
- Decrease in staffing vacancies.

Since the last report, the DOC has hired a special education teacher, two new psychological associates and 28 youth counselors. The department also filled all social worker vacancies.

“Staffing shortages increase the burden on those who work to maintain a safe and healthy environment for youth and staff,” the monitor wrote. Since March, the DOC held a dozen different job fairs and walk-in interviews to recruit new staff. “[DOC] are working diligently to try to attract and retain staff for these critical

roles and have truly created significant incentives for new and existing employees in order to help with attracting new talent and retaining current staff.”

The monitor noted that after reviewing videos of use-of-force incidents, the utilization of Mandt techniques by staff are showing to be more effective in de-escalation and lowering the risk of injury to staff and youth when compared to Principles of Subject Control techniques. The monitor encouraged the DOC to proceed with full implementation of Mandt. The monitor also noted that there should be a continued focus on moving away from administrative confinement.

A listing of all monitor reports can be found on the [DOC website](#).