



**JOE PARISI**  
DANE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

## **Dane County** **Department of Human Services**

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Director – Shawn Tessmann  
1202 Northport Drive, Madison WI 53704

**DATE:** September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019

**TO:** Members of the Dane County Board Personnel and Finance Committee

**FROM:** Shawn Tessmann, Director, Dane County Department of Human Services

**RE:** Update on DCDHS Equity and Sustainability Efforts

Thank you for the opportunity to provide an update on what the Dane County Department of Human Services (DCDHS) has achieved in the areas of Equity, Inclusion, and Sustainability in 2019.

In 2019, DCDHS has been collecting data in several areas for reflection and action towards increased Equity and Inclusion in 2020.

We are tracking:

1. How often youth of color are being offered informal/deferred prosecution agreements (DPA) whenever appropriate.
2. If DCDHS is decreasing the disproportionality of children of color being placed in out-of-home care.
3. If DCDHS is achieving its goal of increasing diversity of staff within the department, and,
4. If DCDHS is reducing the number of youth of color who are referred to court on school offenses.

The data reflecting these focus areas will be available in 2020.

In 2019, DCDHS also hired an additional LTE and student support to meet needs identified by Dane County's immigration community, sought out and secured a state grant to help fund college credit opportunities for DCDHS staff of color without post-secondary education (in partnership with Centro Hispano), and expanded the successful Community Restorative Court initiative.

In 2020, DCDHS will broaden the scope of its Equity and Inclusion plan moving forward. In past years, the plan has largely referenced programs and processes in our Children, Youth, and Families (CYF) division. This has been appropriate given the scope of CYF, but we know that we can do more in all areas of our department.

The elements of the DCDHS Equity and Inclusion plan will also be promoted in the department's new five year strategic plan to ensure the two documents complement and inform each other, rather than exist separately from one another.

Finally, the DCDHS' sustainability efforts took significant steps forward in 2019 with the completion of a solar array expansion on the roof of the Dane County Job Center at 1819 Aberg Ave. The 498 panel solar system will end up saving Dane County \$18,000 a year on utility costs and generate around 25% of the Job Center's annual electricity.

The Job Center's solar panels will generate 205,000 kW hours per year, contributing to Dane County's goal of reaching 100 percent renewable energy use, and represents about 30% of Dane County government's current 600 kW generation total.

The switch to solar at the Job Center will also prevent an incredible 150,000 pounds of coal from being burned each year.

An upcoming re-cubing project in 2020, also at the Dane County Job Center, will enable us to maximize space at that facility. The efficiencies found in maximizing our current space helps eliminate the need for alternate space, and the increased utility use and costs that can come with it.

I welcome any comments or questions about our efforts. Thank you for the question.