



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES
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Sept. 11, 2024

TO: Green Hill School Staff & Residents

FROM: Felice Upton *Felice Upton*
JR Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: Building Capacity to Address Safety

I want to share a special update about the ongoing efforts by the Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) to address the growing safety issues and severe overcrowding at Green Hill School (GHS) caused by the increasing numbers of people entering our Juvenile Rehabilitation (JR) population.

The most urgent task for us is to find new space and add capacity. DCYF has been visiting multiple sites that could serve as a new secure facility where we could safely offer the treatment, services, and educational opportunities we know residents and families are eager to engage in.

Because we want to keep you updated with new information as we have it, I wanted to share that DCYF has identified an option for a new DCYF-operated residential facility at Stafford Creek Corrections Center (F South) in Aberdeen. DCYF has heard from employees, residents, families and collaborators about the importance of education and programming, visitation, and safety. This facility could provide much-needed new capacity in a setting that supports all these criteria. DCYF is discussing this option with many of the organizations and legislators who are interested in this issue, and we will seek clarity from the courts to confirm DCYF has authority to operate this facility.

I want to emphasize that we are very early in the process of exploring this option. There is no immediate impact and no pending plans to transfer any young people. Should we move forward with this option, the soonest a new DCYF facility at Stafford Creek could open is January 2025. I want to assure you that there will be frequent communication as this proceeds and there will be ample notification prior to any moves being planned.

DCYF plans to continue to tour and consider other facilities across the state. We understand the importance of education, programming, visitation, and safety to all of you. Our goal is to alleviate the dangerous overcrowding at GHS and provide a safer environment for rehabilitation and growth.

Your patience and understanding during this process are greatly appreciated. We remain committed to the well-being of our residents and the vital work of our employees.