

# Effective Leadership To Change System Culture

Judge Frank Cuthbertson  
Pierce County Superior Court  
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## Challenges and Successes

- Pierce County's population is 750,000.
- African American youth comprise 11% of the 12-17 population, yet comprise 35% of the detention population.
- The Average Daily Census in detention has been reduced from 150 in 2001 to 50 in 2009.
- Since MfC was initiated in 2007 the number of African American youth held in detention has been reduced by over 200 per year or 26%.

## Changes In System Culture

1. Data Driven Decision Making, Disaggregating Data by Ethnicity and Evaluating Court Policies Through a DMC Lens.
2. Making DMC Reduction a Community Priority.
3. Longer Judicial Rotations with a Focus on Improved Training.
4. Accepting Alternatives To Detention.
5. Incorporating Cultural Competence in Evidence Based Programs and Staff Training.

## Data Driven Decisions

1. Overhauling Juvenile Court Detention Risk Assessment Instrument.
2. Expanding Data Collection Through Burns Data Set Including Arrest Data.
3. Incorporating Education Data including Suspensions and Expulsions.
4. Drilling Down To Reduce DMC (Probation Violations, Overrides and Assault 4°).

## Promoting DMC Reduction To Key Constituencies

1. Law Enforcement Agencies and Prosecuting Attorneys.
2. Mental Health, Social Services and Education Professionals.
3. Child Advocacy and Youth Serving Agencies.
4. Grassroots Minority Community Activists.
5. Public Officials and Legislators.

## Cultural Shift for Judicial Officers

1. Longer Rotations.
2. Training As a Prerequisite to Juvenile Court Rotations.
3. Viewing Policy Decisions Through a DMC Lens.
4. Committing to Key Policy Changes.
  - A. Ending Double Bunking;
  - B. Shutting Down Detention Beds

## Committing Resources To Detention Alternatives

1. Youth Assessment and Resource Center (YARC).
2. Evening Reporting Center.
3. Community Based Mentoring.
4. Improving Cultural Competence of Evidence Based Programs.
5. Community Detention (CDET) Monitors.

## The Road Forward

- The juvenile court system is currently focused on sustaining the core competencies of detention and probation, particularly given the current fiscal crisis.
- The challenge for Pierce County is changing the culture of the court from being focused primarily on internal sustainability to being part of a dynamic juvenile justice system that includes low-income minority communities as key partners in reducing DMC.