

October 29, 2021

DCS Board Response to the Revised Organizational Healing Report

The Board of Directors would like to thank everyone who participated in the listening session with Innivee Strategies, Inc. The perspectives and feedback from members of the community, clients, staff, and the Board was valuable and helped provide clarity and a compass we at DCS can follow. We look at this as an opportunity to help improve our agency into something we all be even more proud of.

Innivee Strategies decided that its initial report back in July was inadvertently framed as a "fact-finding" project, which diminished the focus that Innivee Strategies wanted to achieve. Their new report focuses on re-assessing their session findings and being more concise about their recommendations on the next steps. The Board has not edited or filtered the Innivee Strategies report in any way.

We want to take the time to share our response to the report. We will focus on each theme raised in the report, update our progress, and outline our next steps.

Accountability:

The Board is united in our commitment to address the challenges listed in the report with measurable results. All of the board committees are staffed and actively working.

Progress:

- The Board has increased representation and added five new board members.

Next Steps:

- We will continue to recruit and engage the community to fill the remaining seats to meet the maximum quota of twelve board members.

Communication, Language Justice, and Accessibility:

The Board has increased our contact with the DCS staff and has already engaged several stakeholder groups.



**ADVOCATE
EDUCATE
SERVE**

VP 619/550.3436 HQ
VP 760/208.2971 NCO
V 619/398.2441 HQ
DEAFCOMMUNITYSERVICES.ORG

HEADQUARTERS
1545 HOTEL CIRCLE SOUTH
SUITE 300
SAN DIEGO, CA 92108

NORTH COUNTY OFFICE
410 SOUTH MELROSE DRIVE
SUITE 216
VISTA, CA 92083

Progress:

- The Board has engaged with the stakeholders and staff and remains in communication.
- Board meetings are always public and working on improving consistent availability of live stream/videos of the monthly meetings.
- Our announcements in addition to including ASL also include LSM videos. Several vital documents have also been released in Spanish.

Next Steps:

- Establish a consistent schedule of status updates for the community, stakeholders, and staff.
- Maintain our communication with the stakeholders and the staff and keep on improving our transparency.
- Work on identifying the language demographic of the geographical areas that DCS serves and work to fill these gaps.

Racial Equity/Inclusion:

DCS is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive agency.

Progress:

- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI) guiding statement has been created for DCS and approved.

Next Steps:

- Work on establishing the objectives, strategies and identifying the results/outcomes.
 - Form a strategic plan from the perspectives listed in the report and provide deliverables measured in increments of one year to three years.
- Engage an external equity auditor.
- Pursue training for the Board in the areas (but not limited to) of Anti-bias, Power, Privilege, Oppression framework, and Cultural Appropriation.



**ADVOCATE
EDUCATE
SERVE**

VP 619/550.3436 HQ
VP 760/208.2971 NCO
V 619/398.2441 HQ
DEAFCOMMUNITYSERVICES.ORG

HEADQUARTERS
1545 HOTEL CIRCLE SOUTH
SUITE 300
SAN DIEGO, CA 92108

NORTH COUNTY OFFICE
410 SOUTH MELROSE DRIVE
SUITE 216
VISTA, CA 92083

Leadership and Culture:

DCS is invested in building an organizational culture where all employees feel valued and ensure that BIPOC individuals are safe and comfortable sharing their perspectives.

Progress:

- We engaged BIPOC individuals throughout all board activities, stakeholder meetings, executive director search committee, and the Board.
- Started up discussions on the Staff Liaison role; role description currently in progress. Two employees will be selected and will report to the board Personnel Chair.
- We are working on recruiting community member representatives for the Deaf Services Advisory Council (DSAC).

Next Steps:

- Work towards establishing an agency-wide "Ways We Work Together" document that will define how we individually be in alignment with our guiding values.
- Pursue training for the Board in the areas (but not limited to) Conflict Resolution, Team Building, Accountability, Finance, Project Management, Nonprofit management, and Organizational Leadership.

Human Resources and Hiring:

The Board's role in hiring: keeping tabs on the community concerns regarding the department or position, reviewing and making suggestions on job descriptions and performance evaluation procedures, spreading the word about the open position(s), and supporting DCS policies and procedures. The board is not involved with hiring decisions for all positions other than the Executive Director position.

Agency-wide communication, coordination, and collaboration with the Human Resources department is critical to forming and creating an organizational culture of enduring value and change.



**ADVOCATE
EDUCATE
SERVE**

VP 619/550.3436 HQ
VP 760/208.2971 NCO
V 619/398.2441 HQ
DEAFCOMMUNITYSERVICES.ORG

HEADQUARTERS
1545 HOTEL CIRCLE SOUTH
SUITE 300
SAN DIEGO, CA 92108

NORTH COUNTY OFFICE
410 SOUTH MELROSE DRIVE
SUITE 216
VISTA, CA 92083

Progress:

- Reestablished the personnel committee, now active.

Next Steps:

- Utilize Human Resources as a strategic partner to assist the organization's leadership in establishing a new vision and direction for DCS.
- Engage the services of an equity auditor, review their recommendations, and determine the next steps.

This is the first response, and we will continue to keep you updated on our progress. We welcome your thoughts and feedback. Email dcsboardfeedback@dcsosd.org

We are here for you, the community. DCS has already accomplished so much, and we have a lot more to do. The sky is truly the limit, and we cannot do this without you.

Thank you,

The DCS Board of Directors
Matthew Ellis, Chair
Amrita Nat-Booter, Vice-Chair
Jesse Jones, Secretary
Josh Jensen, Treasurer
Doug Sampson, Past Chair
Tamana Gundara
Laura Preston
Tony Ronco
Ruth Rosas



**ADVOCATE
EDUCATE
SERVE**

VP 619/550.3436 HQ
VP 760/208.2971 NCO
V 619/398.2441 HQ
DEAFCOMMUNITYSERVICES.ORG

HEADQUARTERS
1545 HOTEL CIRCLE SOUTH
SUITE 300
SAN DIEGO, CA 92108

NORTH COUNTY OFFICE
410 SOUTH MELROSE DRIVE
SUITE 216
VISTA, CA 92083