



Media Release

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DYS Director Steele Leaving; DHS Deputy Director to Serve as Interim

The Arkansas Department of Human Services (DHS) director of the Division of Youth Services (DYS) announced that he plans to leave his position Oct. 31 to take advantage of a career opportunity that he will announce at a later date.

DYS Director Tracy Steele, a former State Legislator who chaired both the Senate and House committees that oversee DHS activities, was tapped for his current position in July 2013.

“Tracy arrived at DHS and very quickly identified a need for more prevention programs for at-risk youth in our state. Since then, he and his team have worked diligently to find solutions,” said DHS Director John Selig. “He’s also had a strong working relationship with community providers.”

Selig said Steele’s passion for helping youth has been evident during his tenure, and that he appreciates Steele’s willingness to stay on to oversee the upcoming Arkansas Juvenile Justice conference and to ensure a smooth transition for a new director.

“We’ve tackled some tough issues and the juvenile justice system in Arkansas is going to continue to need support going forward,” Steele said. “I’m proud of all that we’ve accomplished together at DHS in the past year. I will always have an abiding love for these kids — our kids — who need so much help.”

DYS oversees a system of programs, both community and facility-based, designed to address the needs of youth who come into contact with the juvenile justice system. It is responsible for eight facilities and contracts with a number of community programs across the state.

DHS Deputy Director Keesa Smith will serve as interim director during a search for Steele's replacement.