

Homelessness in Dane County Schools

Presented by:

Kristin Aasen-Gowan (Cambridge Schools)

Catherine Reiersen (Sun Prairie Schools)

Keli Melcher (Stoughton Schools)

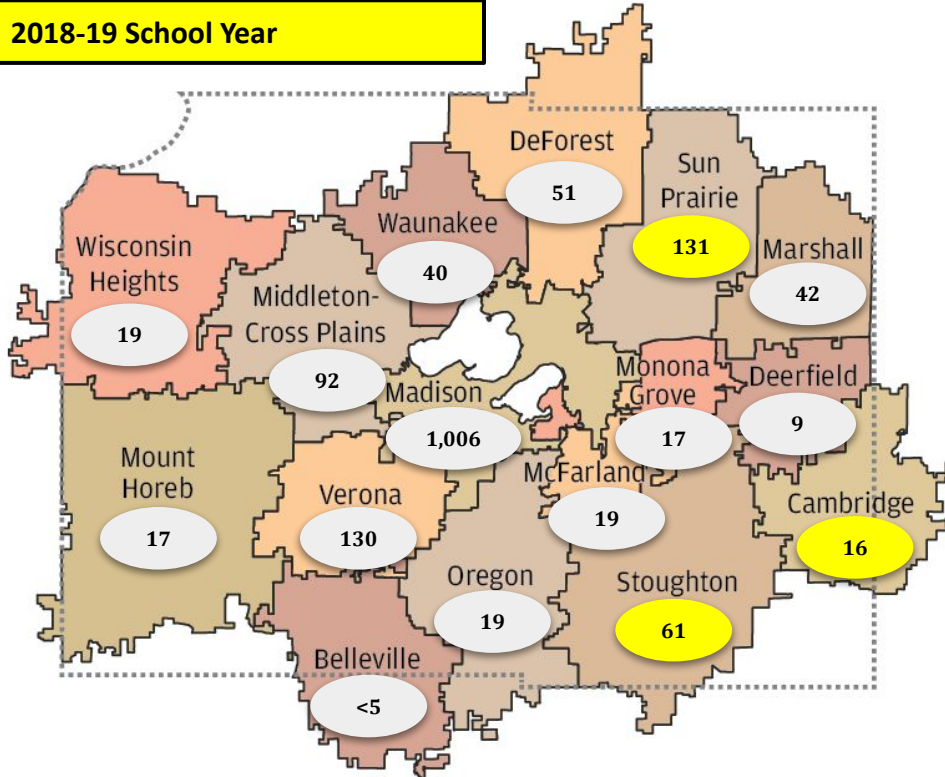
June 7, 2021

Overview

- Homelessness by the numbers
- Subgroups
- Unique barriers
- Service gaps
- Strengths
- Opportunities

Homeless students by school district in Dane County

2018-19 School Year

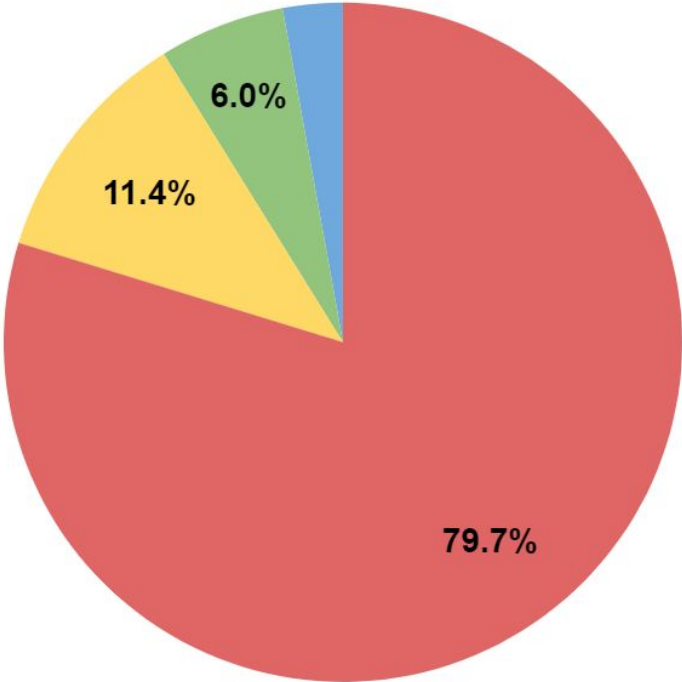


Total (non- Madison):
666

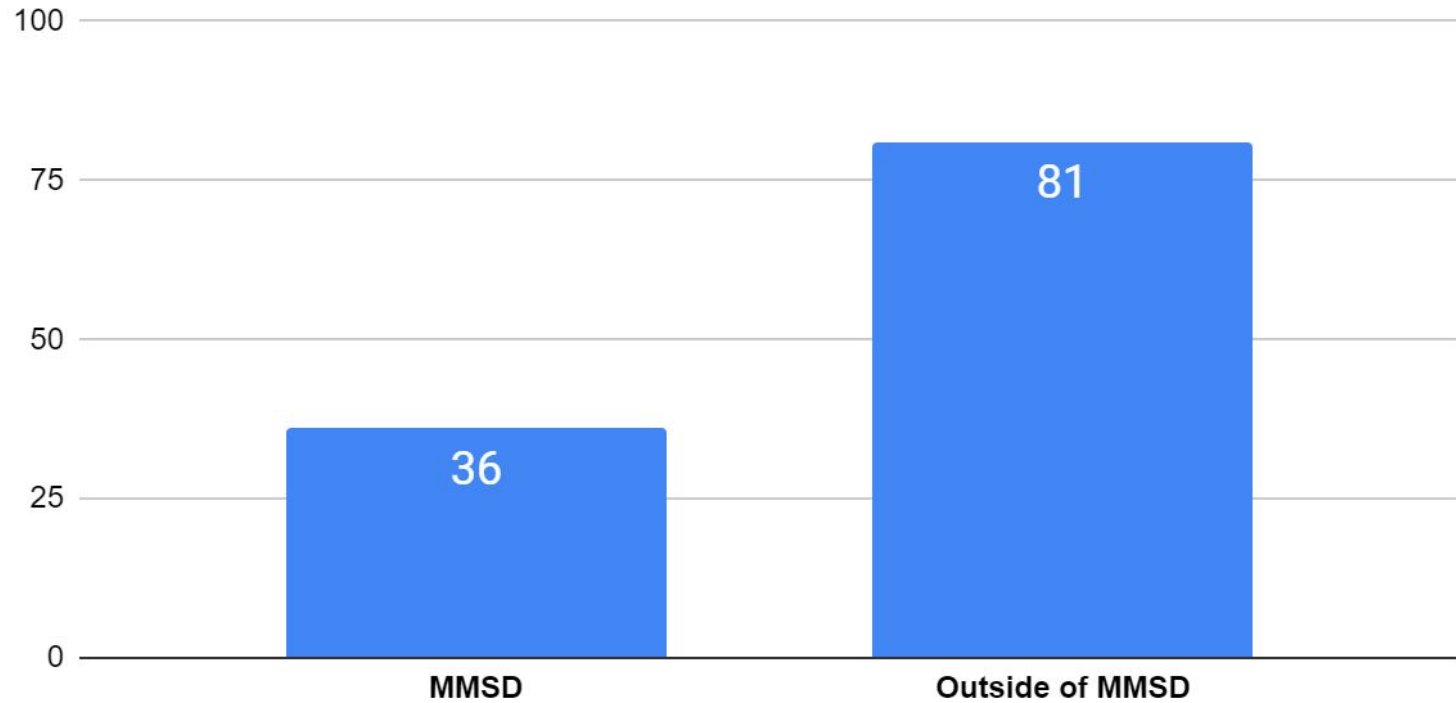
Students by Nighttime Residence (Excluding MMSD Data)

2018-19 School Year

- Doubled Up
- Hotels/motels
- Shelter/Transitional Housing
- Unsheltered



Unaccompanied Homeless Students



2018-19 School Year

Stoughton Homeless Numbers

2019-20

Total: 41

Doubled Up: 27

Hotel: 11

Shelter: 2

On the Street: 1

Unaccompanied Youth: 1

2020-21

Total: 40

Doubled Up: 26

Hotel: 12

Shelter: 2

Unaccompanied Youth: 2

Unique Barriers to Stoughton Families Experiencing Homelessness

- Lack of affordable housing in Stoughton causing many of our families experiencing homelessness to relocate to Madison or other areas
- No affordable public transportation (bus) to get to and from Madison which makes accessing social services difficult and puts a family in crisis in a very difficult situation
 - Would love to see a bus to and from Madison even a couple days per week
 - Stops at: Beacon, Job Center, Community Action Coalition, and Access Community Health would be helpful for families to access services
- We have some great local resources (START & JFF) however, we do not have a lot of support services that specialize in housing located right in Stoughton

Sun Prairie Homeless Numbers

2019-20

Total: 150

Doubled Up: 106

Hotel: 16

Shelter: 21

On the Street: 1

Unaccompanied Youth: 21

2020-21

Total: 191

Doubled Up: 127

Hotel: 28

Shelter: 30

On the Street: 1

Unaccompanied Youth: 24

66% of our students experiencing homelessness are Black or African American.

Unique Barriers to Sun Prairie Families Experiencing Homelessness

- Lack of affordable housing in Sun Prairie
 - Landlords can be picky, getting multiple candidates for one unit
- Little support for doubled-up families to access housing -- CAC position (Angie Alcorta) has not been filled
 - Cannot refer families directly to Rapid Rehousing or other housing services, they aren't placed on the Priority List because they're not "HUD homeless"
 - Our JFF worker, school social workers can help with applications but we don't have any funds to assist with security deposit, 1st month's rent, transportation support, etc.
- Lack of consistent transportation to sustain employment
 - Jobs that pay enough to sustain a Sun Prairie apartment (~\$1,500/month) are usually in Madison
 - Families will often request gas cards from the school or need car repairs
 - Route 23 runs at off-peak times, limited stops
 - Cab ride to Madison costs upwards of \$40

Cambridge Homeless Numbers

2019-20

Total: 13

Doubled Up: 12

Hotel: 0

Shelter: 0

On the Street: 1

Unaccompanied Youth: 2

2020-21

Total: 13

Doubled Up: 11

Hotel: 1

Shelter: 0

On the Street: 1

Unaccompanied Youth: 3

Unique Barriers to Cambridge Families Experiencing Homelessness

- Lack of affordable housing in Cambridge makes it difficult to find or stay housed when there is any interruption to income
- Lack of support from our community leaders to develop affordable housing
- No public transportation (bus, cab service) to get to and from Madison which makes accessing social services difficult
- Families are also uncomfortable driving in Madison (parking, one-way streets, volume and speed of traffic) where most shelter services are located
- Many homeless service coordinators focus on Madison and don't have as much knowledge of or relationships with landlords in rural areas
- CAC position for Cambridge remains unfilled
- Cambridge is in both Jefferson and Dane Counties. Services systems work differently.

Rural Community Strengths/Assets

Many rural communities have a few nonprofits or faith-based organizations that are essential to supporting families in these areas. However, they are often overwhelmed and underfunded as the only service provider.

JFF (County-wide) - Facilitate disbursement of federal rental assistance program funding and daneCORE applications

START (Stoughton Area Resource Center)

CART (Cambridge Area Resource Center) - Completely community funded, volunteer drivers, car repairs, gas cards, housing navigation, information, assistance and referrals

Sunshine Place (Sun Prairie) - Food pantry, clothing closet, utility assistance, mostly run by volunteers

Neighborhood Navigators & Community Schools (Sun Prairie) - city sponsored programs, community/school engagement through local events, food pantries, other support as needed

Sankofa ELU & Shelter from the Storm Ministries (Sun Prairie) - shelter and transitional housing, limited capacity and restricted by CE priority list

McFarland Senior Outreach Services & Colonial Club (Sun Prairie) - case management and support for seniors

Opportunities for Rural Areas

- Homeless Specialist Positions to work with doubled-up families, with a focus on rural areas
- Access to Rapid Rehousing, Supportive or Transitional housing programs for doubled up families (who don't meet HUD definition of homeless)
- Outreach sites for housing help or job center services
- Funding for initial rental costs (security deposit, 1st month rent)
- Community Housing Study and Outreach/Education
- Facilitator for housing work group
- Transportation help (expanding routes, gas reimbursement, car repair costs)
- Expansion of JFF or grassroots organizations to include more comprehensive housing services