

Continuum of Care and School District Partnerships

December 8, 2020

Webinar



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION
Carolyn Stanford Taylor, State Superintendent

Using Microsoft Teams

- We will mute everyone while we are presenting, please do not unmute yourself.
- If you have a camera on your computer please turn off the video by moving your mouse over the screen and clicking on the camera icon. It should show a line through the camera.
- To be able to use the chat function, click on the chat bubble on your screen to have the chat pop up on the right side of the screen.
- You can enter full screen by clicking on the three dots and choosing Enter Full Screen.
- We are recording the webinar.
- Feel free to enter questions into the chat at any time. We will answer at the end as time allows.



Learning Outcomes

- Understand the role of the Continuums of Care in Wisconsin
- Learn strategies to begin or enhance your partnership with your local CoC to better serve students experiencing homelessness
- Learn best practices from school districts across the state



Guest Presenters

- Torrie Kopp Mueller, Homeless Services Consortium, Dane County CoC
- Jani Koester, TEP Resource Teacher, Madison Metropolitan School District
- Dani Claesges, Homeless Coordinator, Eau Claire Area School District
- Carrie Poser, CoC Director, WI Balance of State CoC
- Kelly Christianson, Community Impact Director, United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley

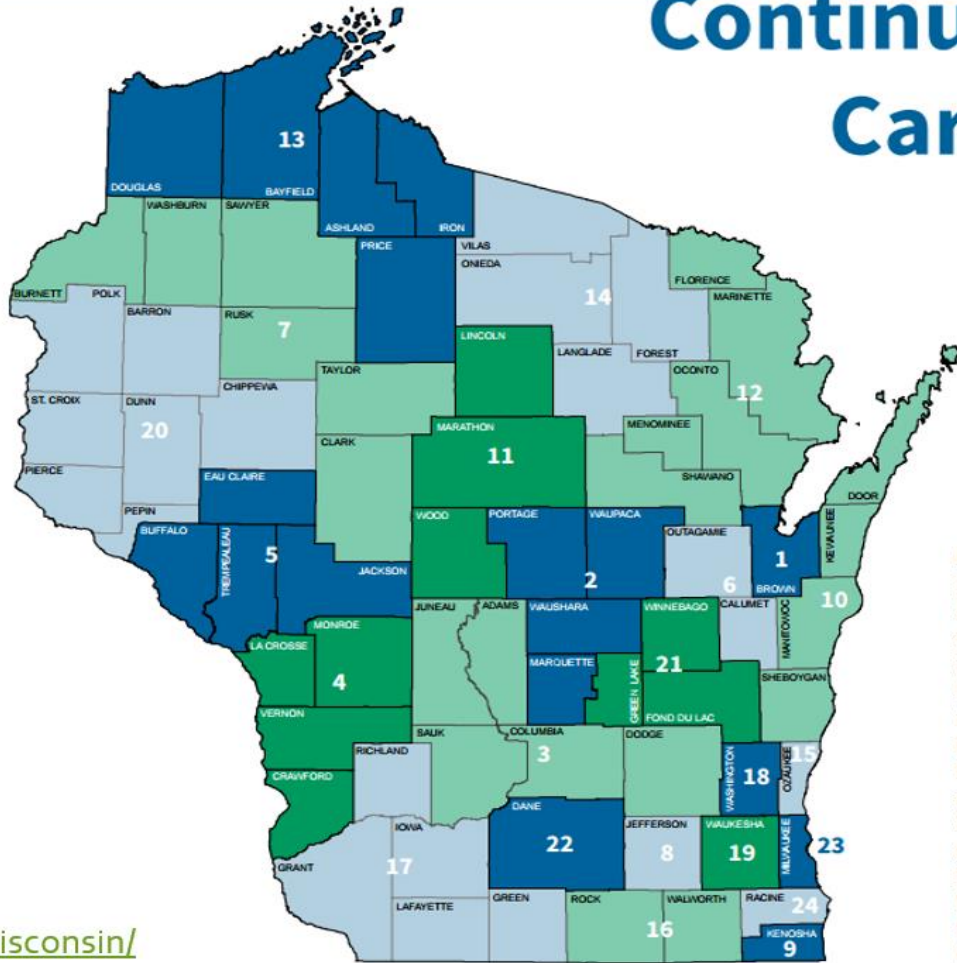


Continuum of Care (CoC) Program

- The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (HEARTH Act), enacted into law on May 20, 2009, consolidated three of the separate homeless assistance programs administered by HUD under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act into a single grant program.
- The HEARTH Act charges the Continuum of Care (CoC) with designing a local “system” to assist sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness and providing the services necessary to help them access housing and obtain long-term stability.
- In Wisconsin, there are four (4) CoCs.
 - [Madison/Dane CoC](#)
 - [Wisconsin Balance of State](#)
 - [Milwaukee](#)
 - [Racine](#)



Continuum of Care Map



A Continuum of Care (CoC) is a community planning body working to deliver services and housing to individuals experiencing homelessness. Many Wisconsin housing programs for homeless and formerly homeless persons are funded through HUD Continuum of Care Program grants. HUD collects and reports data on the Dane, Milwaukee, Racine, and Balance of State CoCs in Wisconsin.



Continuum of Care (CoC) Program

- The Continuum of Care (CoC) Program is designed:
 - to promote community-wide commitment to the goal of ending homelessness;
 - provide funding to quickly rehouse people while minimizing the trauma and dislocation caused by homelessness;
 - promote access to and effect utilization of mainstream programs; and
 - optimize self-sufficiency among individuals and families experiencing homelessness.
- A critical aspect of the amended Act is a focus on viewing the local homeless response as a coordinated system of homelessness assistance options **as opposed to** homeless assistance programs and funding sources that operate independently in a community.



Ending Homelessness

- “Ending Homelessness” means every community will have a systematic response in place that ensures homelessness is prevented whenever possible, or if it can’t be prevented, **it is a rare, brief, and non-recurring experience.**
 - **Quickly identify** and engage people at risk of and experiencing homelessness.
 - Intervene to **prevent** the loss of housing and divert people from entering the homelessness services system.
 - When homelessness does occur, provide **immediate access** to shelter and crisis services, without barriers to entry, while permanent stable housing and appropriate supports are being secured, and quickly connect people to housing assistance and services—**tailored** to their unique needs and strengths—to help them achieve and maintain stable housing.



Why does CoC/School partnership matter?

- The majority of HUD homeless service funds available to agencies require the use of different definitions of homelessness than the School District is able to use.
- Ending homelessness will require more than just HUD funds. Housing solutions for all people experiencing housing insecurity requires creativity, collaboration, and partnership that includes ideas, advocacy, funding, resources, and influence.
- School Districts provide an invaluable perspective and must be at the table to participate in planning, decisions about priorities and funding.



How do I connect with my CoC?

- Connect with your CoC Lead
 - Madison/Dane: [Torrie Kopp Mueller](#)
 - Wisconsin Balance of State: [Carrie Poser](#)
 - Milwaukee: [Rafael Acevedo](#)
 - Racine: [Teresa Reinders](#)
- Attend your CoC's Membership meetings
 - This includes local coalition meetings across the Balance of State CoC.
- Ask to be added to CoC Listserv
- Invite your CoC to appropriate school events or county wide school connections
 - Dane County HEN and Dane County SW meetings



What does a Coalition Meeting Look Like?

<https://www.wiboscoc.org/find-services.html>

- Monthly, bimonthly or quarterly meetings
- Currently meetings are virtual
- Roles within the coalition and CoC
- Understanding how the coalition & CoC works
- CoC requirements
- Subcommittees and shared responsibilities
- Unified representation within communities



Collaboration Best Practices

Get to know one another outside of the work. Go to coffee or lunch. Have conversations about life. Obviously, with COVID, these things all happen virtually.

Show-up when invited

- Share your sector's point of view
- Repeat your message
- Find common goals
- Respectfully challenge one another
- Find ways to help each other out



Concrete Ways to Collaborate

- Have someone on key committees
- Schools listed on release of information signed by family at assessment
- Shelter staff have residents sign ROI to start communication with schools
- School has a key contact for shelters
- Shelter has a key contact for the schools
- Schools attend Housing Placement Meetings
- Provide letters of support for grants
- Schools can provide documentation of homeless status
- Share data
- Find out what your CoC tells HUD they are doing to collaborate



How to Get through Conflict?

- Focus on shared goal: don't let conflict get in the way of housing families
- Listen to one another
- Engage in healthy dialogue about the conflict
- We all recognize the same situations as homeless, but we have a different focus (housing vs. education)
- Think about it as “a problem to solve instead of a roadblock”
- Trust that both sides want people securely and safely housed
- Be creative, think outside the box together (2 heads are better than 1)
- Celebrate shared successes



This is Happening!

- Connecting families to housing
- Connecting with families: schools have contact info!
- Continued conversation about community needs
- Shared language, esp. when talking with families about housing and resources
- Community outreach – sharing all our stories
- Collaborative conversations about emergent situations
- Including specific goals in our school district McKinney Vento Grant around attendance and parental involvement when families are in shelter and housing programs. Supporting change agent opportunities within our community
- Partner with CoC-agency to provide COVID funding to households identified by school district
- CoC developed a Doubled Up/Self Paying populations workgroup
- Housing 101 presentations to MMSD school SWers and supporting staff



Next Steps

- Find out who your local coalition leaders are
- Attend a local coalition and/or CoC meeting
- Invite local coalition leaders and/or CoC leads to school-related meetings
- Learn about coordinated entry
 - Referral source
 - Case conferencing
- Participate in the point-in-time process
- Build awareness collaboratively across the community (avoid silos)



Contact Information

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Please complete our [evaluation!](#)

