

# THE STATE OF THE SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM IN MILWAUKEE COUNTY, WISCONSIN



**A REPORT PREPARED FOR THE GREATER MILWAUKEE FOOD PROVIDERS COALITION  
IN COOPERATION WITH HUNGER TASK FORCE OF MILWAUKEE, INC.**

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**February 2003**

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## **I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) was created by Congress in 1968 to ensure that children in lower-income areas could continue to receive nutritious meals during school vacations, when they did not have access to school meals. The program allows for the provision of healthy meals and snacks to children and teenagers, 18 years and younger, at approved sites in low-income areas. The program also benefits low-income parents by easing their financial strain during the summer months, and school and non-profit food service workers who realize year-round employment. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service administers the SFSP as a non-profit, cost-justified program, providing reimbursement from the federal level to local sponsors to cover food and administration costs.

During the summer of 2002, the SFSP served 17% of eligible students in Milwaukee County and brought \$1.2 million in federal funding to the local economy (52% of the total for the state of Wisconsin) for food and administrative reimbursement. Milwaukee County utilized 10 SFSP Sponsors, including schools, day camps, and non-profit agencies supporting food at 142 host sites.

Major findings of this report include:

- The SFSP's underutilization by sponsors and food sites prevents thousands of eligible students from accessing nutritious meals during the summer when school is not in session
- If 100% of the eligible population of Milwaukee County students (over 97,000) had been served, \$23.2 million in federal funding would have flowed into Milwaukee County
- Of the students who actually participate in the SFSP, most do not have access to food sites in the two weeks following the end of spring classes, and in the four weeks leading up to classes in the fall
- Need for the SFSP in Milwaukee County is demonstrated by high rates of child poverty, record usage of food pantries, low food stamp utilization, and families with two working parents
- Due to the advantages of institutional capacity, schools are the ideal summer food providers
- 90% of school officials surveyed indicated that children who have access to nutritious meals throughout the year perform better in school
- 89% of school officials who participated in the SFSP during the summer of 2002 indicated that having the SFSP available was beneficial for their students
- Outreach and education is needed to attract new SFSP Sponsors and food sites

## II. INTRODUCTION

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) was created by an act of Congress in 1968 to ensure that children in lower-income areas could continue to receive nutritious meals during school vacations when they did not have access to school meals. The program allows for the provision of healthy meals and snacks to children and teenagers, 18 years and younger, at approved sites in low-income areas. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service administers the SFSP through state agencies as a not-for-profit, cost-justified program, providing reimbursement from the federal level to local sponsors to cover food and administration costs (Appendix 1 on page 17 provides reimbursement rates).

Schools, public agencies, and private nonprofit organizations may apply to sponsor the program. All sponsors receive training before starting the program to learn how to plan, operate, and monitor a successful food service program and follow the nutrition requirements mandated by the USDA. The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) serves as the state administrator for Milwaukee County and for the rest of the state. (Full details on sponsorship and hosting can be found at the DPI SFSP web site at [www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dfm/fns/sfsp.html](http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dfm/fns/sfsp.html).)

In Milwaukee County, over 76,000 students qualified to receive free and reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch Program in 2002. Students qualify for free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch based upon federal guidelines, a formula of family income and household size (see Appendix 4 on page 19 for eligibility details). The students can receive nutritious meals during the school year, but those programs end when school ends for the summer. The same students are eligible to receive free, nutritious meals during the summer through the SFSP. In addition, if 50% or more of a school's student population qualifies for free and reduced meals, all students in the community may receive meals through the SFSP, regardless of family income. In Milwaukee County, over 97,000 students were eligible to be served by the SFSP in 2002.

In addition to feeding children, the SFSP is important to Milwaukee County for the significant amount of funding it attracts from federal government. As Wisconsin ranks 43rd in the percent of federal tax dollars returned to the state (Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce, cited in Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 2002), SFSP expansion can bring additional federal funding to the local economy. During the summer of 2002, Milwaukee County SFSP Sponsors secured \$1.2 million in federal funding. If the program had been maximized, \$23.2 million in federal funding could have been secured (over 19 times more than the \$1.2 million secured).

The SFSP is good for the future of students in Milwaukee County. Year-round nutrition availability has been shown to enhance the capacity for students' academic performance. Previous research has established that recurrent or involuntary lack of food may result in malnutrition over time, and that even mild-to-moderate malnutrition can be a developmental risk factor for children. In particular, undernutrition can limit a child's ability to grasp basic skills and diminish overall learning potential (Brown, pp. 7-8). The SFSP assists schools in Milwaukee County that are making an effort to increase academic performance. Good nutrition is essential for effective learning every day, all year long. Just as learning does not end when school lets out, neither does the need for good nutrition.

With so many children lacking access to nutritional food during the summer, the Greater Milwaukee Food Providers Coalition wanted to find ways to increase participation in the SFSP. Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee, a member of the Coalition, applied for the services of a Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow to study the utilization of the SFSP in Milwaukee County. "The State of the Summer Food Service Program in Milwaukee County, Wisconsin" reports the findings of the study.

### **III. METHODOLOGY**

To gain a comprehensive perspective of the SFSP in Milwaukee County, three different arenas were researched: SFSP participation data; attitudes and perceptions of school officials eligible to administer the SFSP; and personal interviews with program administrators, sponsors, community leaders, and parents of students and students who participated in the SFSP in 2002. The research is outlined, as follows:

#### **A. Program Data Collection**

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) administers the sponsorship of the SFSP in Milwaukee County and the rest of the state. Program participation data was collected from DPI, including:

- Sponsor Data: Individual claim data – cost of meals payment, cost of administration payment, number of food distribution sites, average daily attendance, and the number of breakfasts, lunches, suppers, and snacks served (See Appendix 5 on page 20 for details)
- School Data: Percentage, by individual school, of students qualified for free and reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch Program (the benchmark used to determine student SFSP eligibility)
- SFSP Financial Data: Reimbursement rates for breakfasts, lunches, and snacks (See Appendix 1 on page 17 for reimbursement rates)
- SFSP Administration Data: Eligibility information for sponsorship, cost reporting mechanisms ([www.summerfood.usda.gov](http://www.summerfood.usda.gov))

To gain a complete overview of existing sponsors and food sites, addresses and program operation dates were collected from each individual sponsor. A cooperative effort with the Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee, Inc., yielded detailed maps that can be used as a tool to evaluate program accessibility, to determine geographic areas with met/unmet needs, and to assess target areas for future outreach and recruitment initiatives (refer to the Hunger Task Force web site for more detail: [www.hungertaskforce.org](http://www.hungertaskforce.org)).

#### **B. School and District Level Survey Research**

Qualification for free and reduced meals for the National School Lunch Program is utilized to determine low-income eligibility. Schools that serve 50% or more low-income students receive the highest rates for federal reimbursement. Schools contain the highest institutional capacity for conducting the SFSP due to experienced managers and workers, cooking/serving facilities, bulk storage capacity, proximity of food preparation to food consumption, and purchasing agreements. As such, schools represent the largest potential for SFSP growth. The attitudes and perceptions of local and district school officials were surveyed to better understand current SFSP procedures and policies.

Surveys were designed and distributed to participating and non-participating schools that qualified to participate in the SFSP – specifically, schools with 50% or more of their student population qualifying for free and reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch Program. Surveys were also designed and distributed to districts participating and districts not participating in the SFSP that contained SFSP-eligible schools. Maintaining anonymity was an important component of all of the surveys in an effort to help increase the validity of response (see Appendix 3 on page 18 for survey methodology).

### C. Field Research

To gain a personal view of SFSP participation, face-to-face interviews were conducted with sponsors, administrators, community leaders, students who participated in the 2002 SFSP, and parents whose children participated in the 2002 SFSP. Schools that conducted the SFSP in 2002 were selected at random to seek permission to interview students and parents.

### D. Additional Research Needed

To conduct a more comprehensive analysis of the SFSP in Milwaukee County, additional research is needed – research that extends beyond the time, monetary, and logistical constraints of the research conducted for this report. We believe that researchers, SFSP Sponsors and administrators, community leaders, and policy makers should be aware that the SFSP is difficult to analyze and evaluate. For example, the SFSP program structure is different from other food and nutrition assistance programs such as food stamps and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). As such, the SFSP cannot be measured and evaluated by the same methods. Enrollment is not required for participation at SFSP open meal sites, and the SFSP is a not-for-profit, cost-justified reimbursement program.

Additional research that is needed includes:

- Cost Per Meal Analysis: Due to the intent and design of the SFSP, data does not exist to compare the cost of providing food used for meals. Sponsors and host sites are not required to track expenses on a per-meal basis. Single-site sponsors might be able to create a solid estimate, but it would be extremely difficult for sponsors with more than two food sites to estimate a per-meal cost. Factors include economy of scale (bulk food purchase orders) and multiple geographic locations with various levels of food preparation/storage facilities. Nonetheless, a “Cost Per Meal Analysis” would be helpful in shaping sound policy recommendations and to comprehensively evaluate cost and quality of food provided, reimbursement rates, cost-reporting structure, and the capacity for program expansion.
- Cost of SFSP Administration Analysis: SFSP Sponsors, food site supervisors, and state administrators receive reimbursement for the management of the program based upon the numbers of meals served. Administration of the SFSP is often a fixed cost, though reimbursement is dependent upon number of meals served (meals served can vary depending upon the weather and other environmental factors – a situation that is compounded by sponsors managing multiple food sites). In addition to a “Cost Per Meal Analysis,” an analysis of the cost of administering the SFSP would be helpful in shaping sound policy recommendations and to comprehensively evaluate reimbursement rates, cost-reporting structure (for sponsors, food site supervisors, and state administrators), food site monitoring requirements, and the workload of day-to-day program management.
- Percentage of Eligible Children Served: The design and reporting requirements of the SFSP is unlike other federal food assistance programs in that participants do not enroll for service. Only the number of meals served provides a measure of participation. Therefore, with the SFSP, we were unable to use existing data to determine exact numbers of how many eligible students participated in 2002. Unless a different method is utilized to measure participation, exact numbers of students cannot be determined. The data collected by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction to determine reimbursement amounts can only provide an estimate of students served, based upon the number of meals served at a given time. This makes it difficult to set participation benchmarks, as is commonly done with programs like food stamps and WIC. For example, in 2000, in the

State of Wisconsin, 56% of eligible food stamp recipients participated in the SFSP (USDA, FNS, pp. 2). A method of measuring “Percentage of Eligible Children Served” would be helpful for sponsors, food site hosts, and other organizations in setting program goals and evaluating outcomes.

- **Appropriate Food Selection:** Further research is needed to determine the nutritional quality, appropriate quantity, and quality of food actually provided through the SFSP. Issues to be addressed include: food preferences for the ethnically diverse populations served, potential partnerships with local growers for fresh produce, and caloric intake for a range of age groups. Results from such research could be utilized for program evaluation purposes as well as to shape public policy.

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#### IV. SUMMER FOOD SERVICE PROGRAM OVERVIEW FOR SUMMER 2002

The Greater Milwaukee Food Providers Coalition sponsored the study of the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) because it wants to increase food availability for low-income students when school is out for the summer. As part of that interest, the Coalition sponsored this report, as well as the creation of a summer food marketing plan. The marketing plan may be found online at [www.hungertaskforce.org](http://www.hungertaskforce.org), or by contacting the Hunger Task Force of Milwaukee (HTFM).

***“That all people have the ability to obtain food efficiently, effectively, and sufficiently to meet their needs.”*** – Vision Statement of the Greater Milwaukee Food Providers Coalition, Building Community to End Hunger, A Blueprint for the Future of Food Security in Milwaukee, 2001

HTFM collected existing SFSP data, and found that there were at least 142,000 additional meals that could have been served to eligible students through the SFSP. Most students that did receive meals only received meals for a small portion of the summer, and the Milwaukee County economy therefore received a fraction of the available federal reimbursement dollars. It is not known exactly how many students participate in the SFSP, as open sites do not take attendance; SFSP Sponsors merely provide counts of meals served. Results of the data collection can be found in Section IV A of this report, beginning on page 7.

HTFM surveyed school officials from participating and non-participating schools and districts, and found that:

1. There is an overwhelming belief that children participating in SFSP have access to nutritious meals they might otherwise not receive
2. Great interest exists to learn more about the SFSP
3. Many schools recognize the need of their students and want to serve as SFSP food sites

The results of our survey research can be found in Section IV B of this report, beginning on page 8.

HTFM conducted field research, involving face-to-face interviews, telephone calls, and email exchange, and found strong commitment to the improvement, expansion, and the value of the SFSP. Results of the field research can be found in Section IV C of this report, beginning on page 12.

***“It gives you energy.”***  
– Student, 2002 Participant in Milwaukee County SFSP

## **A. Program Data Collection Results**

The SFSP utilizes National School Lunch Program free and reduced-price meal criteria to determine eligibility of schools and students. Students qualify for free and reduced-price breakfast and lunch based upon federal guidelines, a formula of family income and household size (see Appendix 4 on page 19 for eligibility details). The same students are eligible to receive free, nutritious meals during the summer through the SFSP. In addition, if 50% or more of a school's student population qualifies for free and reduced-price meals, all students in the community may receive meals through the SFSP, regardless of family income.

A total of 97,025 students in Milwaukee County were eligible to receive food during the summer of 2002 through the SFSP. Of this total, 76,658 students (or 79%) were qualified as recipients of free and reduced-price meals through the National School Lunch Program, and 20,367 students (or 21%) were eligible because they attended schools where 50% or more students qualify for free and reduced meals.

During the summer of 2002, the SFSP served 19,056 students, 17% of the 97,025 students eligible, at 142 food sites. However, 17% is only accurate for the middle of the summer, when almost all of the food sites were in operation. Analyzing the data at the beginning and the end of the summer reveals a much lower percentage served (see Appendix 6 on page 21 for details):

- During the week in which schools began summer vacation, only 1 food site was available, serving around 100 students.
- During the week after schools began summer vacation, only 2% of eligible students were served at 12 available food sites.
- During the third week before school resumed in the Fall, 3% of eligible students (around 2,900 students) were served at 28 available food sites.
- During the second week before school resumed in the Fall, 1% of eligible students (around 970 students) were served at 13 available food sites.
- During the week before school, 4 available food sites served approximately 250 students.

During the summer of 2002, Milwaukee County had 10 SFSP Sponsors operating 142 food sites. Exactly 53 sites were sponsored by public schools. Charter schools sponsored 2 sites, 3 sites were sponsored by private schools, and 84 sites were sponsored by private non-profit agencies. (Appendix 6 on page 21 lists sponsors with financial and service details; Appendix 7 on page 22 displays the number of weeks Milwaukee County SFSP food sites were in operation.)

Milwaukee County 2002 SFSP Sponsors brought \$1,162,675.69 in federal funding to the local economy (see Appendix 5 on page 20 for details). If all eligible students had been served breakfast and lunch for the 12 weeks of summer, Milwaukee County Sponsors could have brought in \$23,227,785.00 in available federal funding (see Appendix 2 on page 17 for details).

Just over 75% of the schools (156 of the 207 total eligible schools) and 89% of the students eligible to participate in the SFSP are members of the Milwaukee Public School District (MPS). This total includes public, choice, charter, partnership, and alternative schools.

There are two schools that are members of the South Milwaukee School District (one private, one public) totaling less than 1% of the total students eligible to participate in the SFSP, and one school in the West Allis School District (public), with less than 1% of the total students eligible to participate in the SFSP. The remaining 10% of students eligible to participate in the SFSP attend 48 charter, choice, and partnership schools located within the geographic boundaries of the MPS District but are not members of the MPS District.

Schools represent the largest potential for SFSP growth, due to schools' advantage of institutional capacity (experienced managers and workers, cooking/serving facilities, bulk storage capacity, proximity of food preparation to food consumption, and purchasing agreements) over other sponsors for conducting the program.

**Note:** 2003 SFSP Sponsor applications will be distributed from DPI in March. Applications will be due, if commodities are desired, in late April. If commodities are not desired, applications are due by June 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **B. School- and District-Level Survey Research Results**

The intent of the SFSP is for schools to be the primary candidates to sponsor and administer the SFSP. To assess the attitudes and perceptions of school officials, we surveyed the following:

- Principals at schools who participated in the SFSP in 2002
- Food Service Managers at schools who participated in the SFSP in 2002
- Principals at schools that qualified but did not participate in the SFSP in 2002
- Food Service Managers at schools that qualified for but did not participate in the SFSP in 2002
- District Food Service Managers with schools in their district that participated in the SFSP in 2002
- District Food Service Managers whose districts contained schools that qualified but did not participate in the SFSP in 2002

The survey was conducted from November 6, 2002 to January 3, 2003. The original deadline for survey returns was November 20, 2002. After November 20, 2002, each principal and district food service director who had not responded received at most two telephone calls (either messages/voice mails were left, or voice confirmation was established) and faxed information if requested. Survey responses are listed in *Table 1*.

<b>Table 1. 2002 Hunger Task Force SFSP Survey Response Rates</b>			
	N	n	Response Rate
Total Number of School Officials Surveyed	428	127	29.7%
<b>Schools Eligible and Participating in the SFSP</b>			
Principals	56	21	37.5%
Food Service Managers	56	15	26.8%
<b>Schools Eligible and Not Participating in the SFSP</b>			
Principals	156	49	31.4%
Food Service Managers	156	38	24.4%
<b>School Districts with Eligible Schools Participating in the SFSP</b>			
District Food Service Managers	1	1	100%
<b>School Districts with Eligible Schools Not Participating in the SFSP</b>			
District Food Service Managers	3*	3*	100%
<b>Geographic Representation</b>			
Zip Codes Represented in Sample	27	26	96%

\*After the survey research had been completed, we learned that only two school districts in Milwaukee County contained eligible schools not participating in the SFSP, and that residential care facilities were not eligible for the SFSP (2 schools in Milwaukee County, both of which did not respond to the survey). The data results do not reflect the change, as the difference of one returned survey would be minimal.



## Overall Results of Questions Asked in Every Survey

### 1. Importance of Year-Round Nutrition

We asked every school official the following question: “In general, do you think that children who have access to food year-round perform better in school?” Exactly 89.7% said “Yes,” 1.6% said “No,” and 8.7% of the respondents left the question unanswered.

### 2. Barriers Preventing Participation in the SFSP

We asked every school official the following question: “Are there barriers that (limit participation/prevent your school from participating) in the Summer Food Service Program?” Exactly 22.2% of the respondents reported barriers, 35.7% reported no barriers, and 42.1% left the question unanswered. Barriers reported are found in *Table 2*.

<b>Table 2. Barriers Reported that Limit Participation/Prevent School Participation in the SFSP (Schools “not-participating” and “not familiar with the SFSP” did not answer)</b>		
	n	Response Rate
Responders Reporting Barriers (% of total number of surveys returned)	28	22.2%
<b>Respondents were asked to select all that apply:</b>		
Reimbursement rate is too low	2	1.6%
Busing schedules/transportation issues	8	6.3%
Labor/Staff issues	10	7.9%
Parent opposition	1	.8%
Staff opposition	1	.8%
School Board opposition	0	0%
Facility availability/space limitations	5	3.9%
Students have no time	2	1.6%
Students’ food preferences	3	2.4%
Stigma associated with participation	4	3.1%
No perceived need for the program	9	7.1%

### 3. Interest Expressed in Receiving Study Results

We asked every school official the following question: “Would you be interested in receiving the results of our study?” Exactly 60.3% said “Yes,” 24.6% said “No,” and 15.1% of the respondents left the question unanswered. There was not a significant difference in the response between “participating” and “non-participating” schools and districts (“participating” schools and districts expressed being slightly more interested).

## Results from Schools and Districts “Participating” in the SFSP in 2002

### 1. Observed Benefits of the SFSP

We asked school officials who had participated in the SFSP in 2002 the following question: “Is having a Summer Food Service Program available for your students of any benefit to your students?” Exactly 89.2% of the respondents said “Yes,” 0% said “No,” and 10.8% left the question unanswered. Benefits observed are found in *Table 3*.

<b>Table 3. Observed benefits of the SFSP</b>		
	n	Response Rate
Responders reporting benefits (% of surveys returned)	33	89.2%
<b>Respondents were asked to select all that apply:</b>		
Children have nutritious meals they might otherwise not receive	33	89.2%
Improves educational or recreational programs	30	81.1%
Helps parents stretch food dollars	30	81.1%
Food service workers have summer employment	25	67.6%
Schools receive funds to provide meals during the summer	18	48.6%
Increases student socializing	22	59.5%
Improves learning readiness	30	81.1%
Improves behavior	20	54.1%
Other	2	5.4%

## 2. SFSP Meeting the Needs of Participating Students

We asked school officials who had participated in the SFSP in 2002 the following question: "Overall, do you think the Summer Food Service Program is meeting the needs of your students?" Exactly 83.8% of the respondents said "Yes," 8.1% said "No," and 8.1% left the question unanswered.

## 3. Feelings Regarding School District Participation

We asked school officials who had participated in the SFSP in 2002 the following question: "Overall, how would you rate your feelings about your school district's participation in the Summer Food Service Program?" Rated feelings are found in *Table 4*.

<b>Table 4. Rated Feelings About School District Participation in the SFSP</b>		
	n	Response Rate
Responders rating feelings about participation (% of surveys returned)	34	92.9%
<b>Respondents were asked to circle one:</b>		
1 (Not at all positive)	0	0%
2	0	0%
3	4	10.8%
4	13	35.1%
5 (Extremely positive)	17	49.5%

## Results from Schools and Districts "Not Participating" in the SFSP in 2002

### 1. How School Officials Not Participating in the SFSP View Hunger in Their Schools

We asked school officials who had not participated in the SFSP in 2002 the following question: "In your opinion, on any given day, what percentage of the student population within your school goes hungry due to lack of food at home?" School officials' responses are reported in *Table 5*.

<b>Table 5. School Officials' Opinions of Perceived Percentage of Students Who Go Hungry Due to a Lack of Food at Home</b>		
	n	Response Rate
Responders expressing their opinion (% of surveys returned)	82	91%
<b>Respondents were asked to check one:</b>		
Between 0% - 19%	36	43.9%
Between 20% - 39%	21	25.6%
Between 40% - 59%	19	23.2%
Between 60% - 79%	4	4.4%
Between 80% - 100%	2	2.4%

2. Would the SFSP Benefit Students?

We asked school officials who had not participated in the SFSP in 2002 the following question: "Would having meals and snacks available for students at your school during the summer be of any benefit to your students?" Of all respondents, 66% responded "Yes," 34% responded "No," and 0% left the question unanswered.

3. Familiarity with the SFSP

We asked school officials who had not participated in the SFSP in 2002 the following question: "How familiar are you with the SFSP?" Of all respondents, 10% responded "very familiar," 32% responded "somewhat familiar," 48% responded "not familiar," and 10% left the question unanswered.

Of the 48% respondents who selected, "not familiar," 69% said that having meals and snacks available at their schools during the summer would be a benefit to their students.

4. Interest in SFSP participation if cost was not an issue

We asked school officials who had not participated in the SFSP in 2002, but were familiar with the program, to respond to the following statement:

"Past research indicates that school officials consider cost a major factor in determining whether or not to participate in the Summer Food Service Program. If sufficient funding was available and cost was not an issue, would you want schools in your district to be able to participate in the Summer Food Service Program?"

85% responded, "Yes," and 15% responded, "No." We asked respondents who said "no" to offer insight into their response. Answers given included:

- "In a perfect world, all of our buildings would provide meal service during the summer, just as we do during the school year."
- "No summer school program offered."
- "The students only go to school 1/2 day."

### **C. Field Research Results**

Comments were collected from DPI Administrators, SFSP Sponsors, officials at SFSP-eligible participating and non-participating schools, and student participants. The following is a sample of some of the suggestions gathered over the course of this study:

***"I didn't go hungry during the day."***

– Student, 2002 Participant in Milwaukee County SFSP

#### **Commitment to the SFSP**

- "We'd really like to see the program grow." - *DPI Administrator*
- "We are committed to providing the greatest possible meals to the greatest number of children." - *2002 SFSP Sponsor*
- "It gives the children a chance to eat, whereas otherwise they would go without!" - *Official from a 2002 SFSP participating school*

#### **Milwaukee County SFSP Success Stories**

- "I didn't go hungry during the day." - *2002 SFSP Participant*
- "We have a healthier school population due to the breakfast and lunch program. Some of these children otherwise would go without!" - *Official at a 2002 SFSP participating school*
- "We got to know new neighbors in the Hmong community, and have encouraged collaboration, with this summer program." - *Official at a 2002 SFSP participating school*
- "Each child who received nutritious, well-planned and freshly prepared meals is a success story." - *2002 SFSP Sponsor*

***"There were many students in the program where the summer food service meal was their main meal for the day and that itself kept a lot of kids from being hungry on a daily basis."*** - Official at a 2002 SFSP-participating school

#### **Reported Barriers to SFSP Expansion**

- Food storage capacity inadequate at some food sites
- Staffing issues, including a perception that school food managers are not willing to work, and a perception that school food managers are unaware of summer work opportunities
- Current MPS practice is to offer summer meal service only to schools selected to offer summer school
- Economic feasibility of transporting food from a central location to multiple food sites
- "Families and staff are unaware of the program." - *Official from a 2002 SFSP participating school*

***"Summer feeding programs help keep kids off the streets. When they're off the streets, they're less likely to have a police record."***

– 2002 SFSP Sponsor in Milwaukee County

### How the Milwaukee County SFSP Could Be Improved

- “Please advertise! Students and families need to be flooded with information on opportunities to receive meals and other essential needs. If we are providing this service, in fairness, all families should be notified.” - *Official at a 2002 SFSP participating school*
- “If a sponsor does a cold bag lunch as the meal, the recipients tire of the lack of variety of food items very quickly. Different meal requirements might be an advantage to increase customer satisfaction.” – *Official from a 2002 SFSP non-participating school*
- “Students can be taught self-worth and receive instruction in etiquette and basic sanitation – skills that might not be taught at home.” - *2002 SFSP Sponsor*
- “MPS Schools could serve as vendors to local organizations’ summer programming. School vendor sites could be incorporated into MPS’s SFSP Sponsorship.” - *DPI Administrator*

### Potential Role of the Greater Milwaukee Food Providers Coalition

The Greater Milwaukee Food Providers Coalition, by virtue of the diverse nature of its membership, is in a unique position to address the issues of child hunger. (Appendix 8 on page 23 lists current members.) The Coalition could take action with the following activities:

- Increase SFSP awareness and education initiatives for eligible non-participating schools, organizations, students, parents, and community leaders, as outlined in the report, “Marketing the Summer Food Service Program in Milwaukee County.”
- Work with current SFSP Sponsors of open food sites to formulate goals and objectives regarding program participation for summer 2003. These goals and objectives should be submitted to the Coalition by April 2003 (when sponsor applications seeking the use of summer USDA commodities are due).
- Where applicable, recruit additional organizations that are capable of managing a food service program to serve as SFSP Sponsors
- Recruit additional organizations that conduct summer programming to serve as SFSP food site hosts.
- Sponsor additionally needed research as outlined in Section III, D, on pages 5-6.
- Develop partnerships with nonprofit and for-profit organizations, community leaders, and corporations to expand resources available to sponsors, food sites, and students. (For example, in the state of Virginia, partnership was developed between SFSP Sponsors and the Virginia Dairy Council Association. The Dairy Council donated milk coolers to SFSP food sites. Needed refrigeration for milk and meals was provided for the SFSP, and direct, constant advertising space was provided to market dairy products to the Council’s future customer base.)

### Current National SFSP Policy Considerations

- **Lugar Pilot** – named for Senator Richard Lugar from Indiana. Currently, administrators of the SFSP are required to track operational and administrative costs as separate expenses. This is different from the National School Lunch Program, and is a burden to SFSP providers. The Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2001 (Pub. L. 106-554), commonly referred to as the “Lugar Pilot,” authorizes SFSP pilot projects to increase participation in the SFSP by eliminating the need for separate reporting of administrative and operational costs. The Lugar Pilot was conducted in 2001 and 2002 in 14 states. The pilot program lessened the burden for existing sponsors, and helped in the recruitment of new sponsors. Participating states in the Lugar Pilots saw annual increases in both SFSP sponsorship and student participation.

The Lugar Pilot will be debated by Congress during the 2003 Child Nutrition Reauthorization process. DPI and advocacy groups are requesting that the Lugar Pilot be considered to become a permanent component of the SFSP for all states.

### D. Conclusions

#### **Outlook for SFSP in Milwaukee County**

- With over 76,000 students eligible and not receiving meals through the SFSP, there is great demand and great opportunity for program expansion.
- To maximize the number of students served, SFSP food sites should operate for every week of the summer.
- Schools represent the largest potential for SFSP growth, as schools contain the highest institutional capacity for conducting the SFSP due to experienced managers and workers, cooking/serving facilities, bulk storage capacity, proximity of food preparation to food consumption, and purchasing agreements.
- Schools with 50% or more students qualifying for free and reduced-price meals should operate their kitchens as vendors, supplying food for programs held on or near school grounds. For example, the Milwaukee Public School (MPS) District could provide food for all MPS Summer Recreation Sites and Community Learning Centers.
- Non-profit organizations play a crucial role in filling geographic service gaps in service of the SFSP so far unmet by schools. For example, organizations like the Social Development Commission and the Opportunities Industrialization Center of Greater Milwaukee could utilize the mobility and flexibility of their operations to fill geographic gaps.
- Increasing the number of SFSP food sites in Milwaukee County will enable more students to receive food during the summer – improving their nutritional intake and enhancing their capacity to learn, thereby increasing their chances for educational success.
- Serving more SFSP meals would mean more federal reimbursement dollars, and the economic impact cannot be ignored. If all eligible students were fed for the entire summer, over \$23.2 million would flow into Milwaukee County. Even if half of the eligible students were served, \$11.5 million would flow into Milwaukee County, in itself a 950% increase from the \$1.2 million received by Milwaukee County schools and agencies from the federal government during the summer of 2002.

### **Future Research Needed**

- New methods of measuring SFSP participation are needed to generate data that can be used to report numbers of eligible students served by the program. Proposed methods could include: 1. Survey sampling of students attending SFSP food sites; and 2. Student sign up sheets for the next day's meals.
- New methods of determining actual costs of providing meals through the SFSP are needed to generate data that can be used to analyze different components of the SFSP. Potential areas of study include reimbursement rates, quality of food provided, program expansion, and potential policy changes. Proposed methods of research tools could include: 1. New accounting mechanisms utilized to track cost of food purchased versus the number of meals served; and 2. Random sampling of food provided throughout the summer at food sites measured against a developed standard (e.g. age-appropriate serving size).

### **Advocacy Opportunities**

- Advocate for the Lugar Pilot to be made a permanent component of the SFSP nationwide during 2003 Child Nutrition Program Reauthorization.
- During 2003 Child Nutrition Program Reauthorization, advocate for SFSP open sites to be authorized to provide breakfast, lunch, and snacks on the same day.
- During 2003 Child Nutrition Program Reauthorization, advocate for SFSP open sites to be authorized to provide supper as a fourth daily meal in addition to breakfast, lunch, and snacks on the same day.

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## **V. RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE UTILIZATION**

To maximize the number of qualified students served through the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) in Milwaukee County, the following recommendations should be implemented:

1. The Milwaukee Public School District (MPS) should prepare and provide meals to all MPS Summer Recreation Sites, Community Learning Centers, and summer schools – with all sites operating as open sites, accessible to every student in the community, during the summer of 2003.
2. The Social Development Commission (SDC) and the Opportunities Industrial Center of Greater Milwaukee (OIC-GM) should prepare and provide meals to high-need geographic locations throughout Milwaukee County not serviced by MPS during the summer of 2003.
3. All Milwaukee County SFSP Sponsors should plan and prepare to operate all food sites for the entire summer (June – August) before June 2005.
4. The Greater Milwaukee Food Providers Coalition should implement the outreach strategies outlined in the report, "Marketing the Summer Food Service Program in Milwaukee County" for and during the summer of 2003.
5. The Greater Milwaukee Food Providers Coalition should recruit additional organizations to serve as SFSP Sponsors and/or food sites for the summer of 2003.

## VI. ENDNOTES (Harvard Referencing Style)

Brown, Dr. J. Larry, (2002) The Consequences of Hunger and Food Insecurity for Children, Evidence from Recent Scientific Studies. Massachusetts, The Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University.

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*Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce*, cited in Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, 2002. Retrieved: February 11, 2003, from <http://www.jsonline.com/news/Metro/oct02/85122.asp>

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*USDA National School Lunch Program Free and Reduced Meal Eligibility Guidelines*, 2001-2002. Retrieved: January 24, 2003, from <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Lunch/Governance/Notices/01-02iegs.htm>

*Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Community & School Nutrition Programs, Summer Food Service Program*, 2002. Retrieved: January 24, 2003, from <http://www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/dfm/fns/sfsp.html>

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## VII. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors of this report relied on numerous individuals and organizations throughout Milwaukee County and the State of Wisconsin for information, assistance, and review. Special thanks and mention are given to the following people and their organizations: Amy Kolano, David Dees, Rich Mortensen, Lonnie Hayne, and Barbara Ballweg, State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction; William Andrekopoulos, Dan Donder, and Mary Kelly, Milwaukee Public Schools; Jeanie Martin, CR-Social Development Commission; Georgia Cameron and Tomika Bonds, Opportunities Industrialization Center of Greater Milwaukee; Cheri Yarborough, Bob Waite, IMPACT Inc.; Dr. Michael Barndt, Ryan Ziegelbauer, and Peter Armstrong, Nonprofit Center of Milwaukee, Inc.; and Harold Madlom, Salvation Army.

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## VIII. APPENDICES

1. USDA 2002 SFSP Reimbursement Rates
2. Federal Dollars Available to Milwaukee County for the 2002 SFSP
3. 2002 Milwaukee County SFSP Survey Methodology
4. USDA Child Nutrition Programs: 2001-2002 Income Eligibility Guidelines
5. SFSP – 2002 Milwaukee County Sponsor Summary
6. SFSP Food Sites Operating in Milwaukee County, Wisconsin – June 10 to August 26, 2002
7. 2002 Milwaukee County SFSP – Number of Weeks Food Sites Were in Operation
8. Membership of the Greater Milwaukee Food Providers Coalition
9. Map – Milwaukee County SFSP Sites by Dates Opening
10. Map – Milwaukee County SFSP Sites by Dates Closing



## Appendix 1

## USDA 2002 SFSP Reimbursement Rates

Available at: [http://www.summerfood.usda.gov/Administration/reimbursement\\_rates.html](http://www.summerfood.usda.gov/Administration/reimbursement_rates.html)

## SFSP Payment Rates for All States (Except Alaska and Hawaii)

<b>Maximum Rate Per Meal</b> <b>(In Whole or Fractions of U.S. Dollars)</b> <b>Effective January 1, 2002-December 31, 2002</b>			
		Administrative Costs For Meals Served at	
Type of Meal Served	Operating Costs	Self-preparation or Rural Sites	Other Types of Sites
Breakfast	1.32	0.1300	0.1025
Lunch or Supper	2.30	0.2400	0.2000
Supplement	0.53	0.0650	0.0525

## Appendix 2

## Federal Dollars Available to Milwaukee County for the 2002 SFSP

Actual 2002 Federal Reimbursement to Milwaukee County SFSP Sponsors: \$1,257,664.84

Total Available 2002 Federal Reimbursement to Milwaukee County SFSP Sponsors if all 97,025 eligible students had been served breakfast and lunch for the 12 weeks of summer:	\$23,227,785.00
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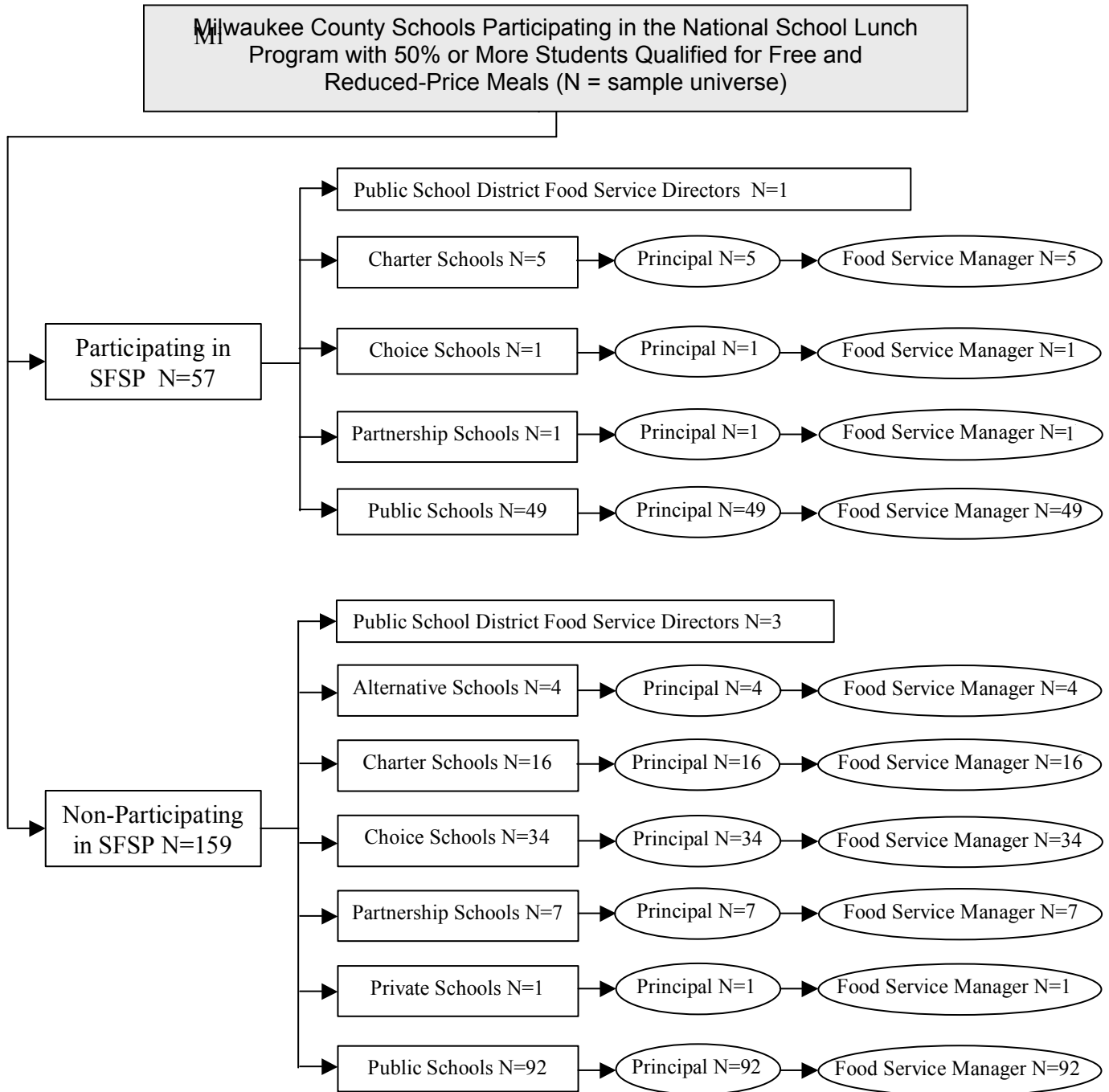
### Methodology:

Eligible students:	97,025
Breakfast food rate:	\$1.32
Breakfast admin rate:	\$0.13 (for schools)
Lunch food rate:	\$2.30
Lunch admin rate:	\$0.24 (for schools)
Summer vacation:	12 full weeks (June 5, 2002, to September 5, 2002)
Weekly meals:	5 days a week or 60 days during the summer (same number of days per week as National School Lunch Program)

Breakfast:	97,025 meals x \$1.32 + 97,025 meals x \$0.13 =	\$140,686.25 / day
Lunch:	97,025 meals x \$2.30 + 97,025 meals x \$0.24 =	\$246,443.50 / day
	Total:	\$387,129.75 / day

**\$387,129.75 per day x 60 days = \$23,227,785.00**

**Appendix 3**  
**2002 Milwaukee County Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)**  
**Survey Methodology**



**Appendix 4**  
**USDA Child Nutrition Programs: 2001-2002 Income Eligibility Guidelines**  
 Available at: [www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Lunch/Governance/Notices/01-02iegs.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Lunch/Governance/Notices/01-02iegs.htm)

Household size	Federal Poverty Guidelines			Reduced Price Meals - 185%			Free Meals - 130%		
	Annual	Month	Week	Annual	Month	Week	Annual	Month	Week
<b>48 CONTIGUOUS UNITED STATES, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, GUAM AND TERRITORIES</b>									
1.....	8,590	716	166	15,892	1,325	306	11,167	931	215
2.....	11,610	968	224	21,479	1,790	414	15,093	1,258	291
3.....	14,630	1,220	282	27,066	2,256	521	19,019	1,585	366
4.....	17,650	1,471	340	32,653	2,722	628	22,945	1,913	442
5.....	20,670	1,723	398	38,240	3,187	736	26,871	2,240	517
6.....	23,690	1,975	456	43,827	3,653	843	30,797	2,567	593
7.....	26,710	2,226	514	49,414	4,118	951	34,723	2,894	668
8.....	29,730	2,478	572	55,001	4,584	1,058	38,649	3,221	744
For each add'l family member add	+3,020	+252	+59	+5,587	+466	+108	+3,926	+328	+76
<b>ALASKA</b>									
1.....	10,730	895	207	19,851	1,655	382	13,949	1,163	269
2.....	14,510	1,210	280	26,844	2,237	517	18,863	1,572	363
3.....	18,290	1,525	352	33,837	2,820	651	23,777	1,982	458
4.....	22,070	1,840	425	40,830	3,403	786	28,591	2,391	552
5.....	25,850	2,155	498	47,823	3,986	920	33,605	2,801	647
6.....	29,630	2,470	570	54,816	4,568	1,055	38,519	3,210	741
7.....	33,410	2,785	643	61,809	5,151	1,189	43,433	3,620	836
8.....	37,190	3,100	716	68,802	5,734	1,324	48,347	4,029	930
For each add'l family member add	+3,780	+315	+73	+6,993	+583	+135	+4,514	+410	+95
<b>HAWAII</b>									
1.....	9,890	825	191	18,297	1,525	352	12,857	1,072	248
2.....	13,360	1,114	257	24,716	2,060	476	17,368	1,448	334
3.....	16,830	1,403	324	31,136	2,595	599	21,879	1,824	421
4.....	20,300	1,692	391	37,555	3,130	723	26,390	2,200	508
5.....	23,770	1,981	458	43,975	3,665	846	30,901	2,576	595
6.....	27,240	2,270	524	50,394	4,200	970	35,412	2,951	681
7.....	30,710	2,560	591	56,814	4,735	1,093	39,923	3,327	768
8.....	34,180	2,849	658	63,233	5,270	1,217	44,434	3,703	855
For each add'l family member add	+3,470	+290	+57	+6,420	+535	+124	+4,511	+376	+87

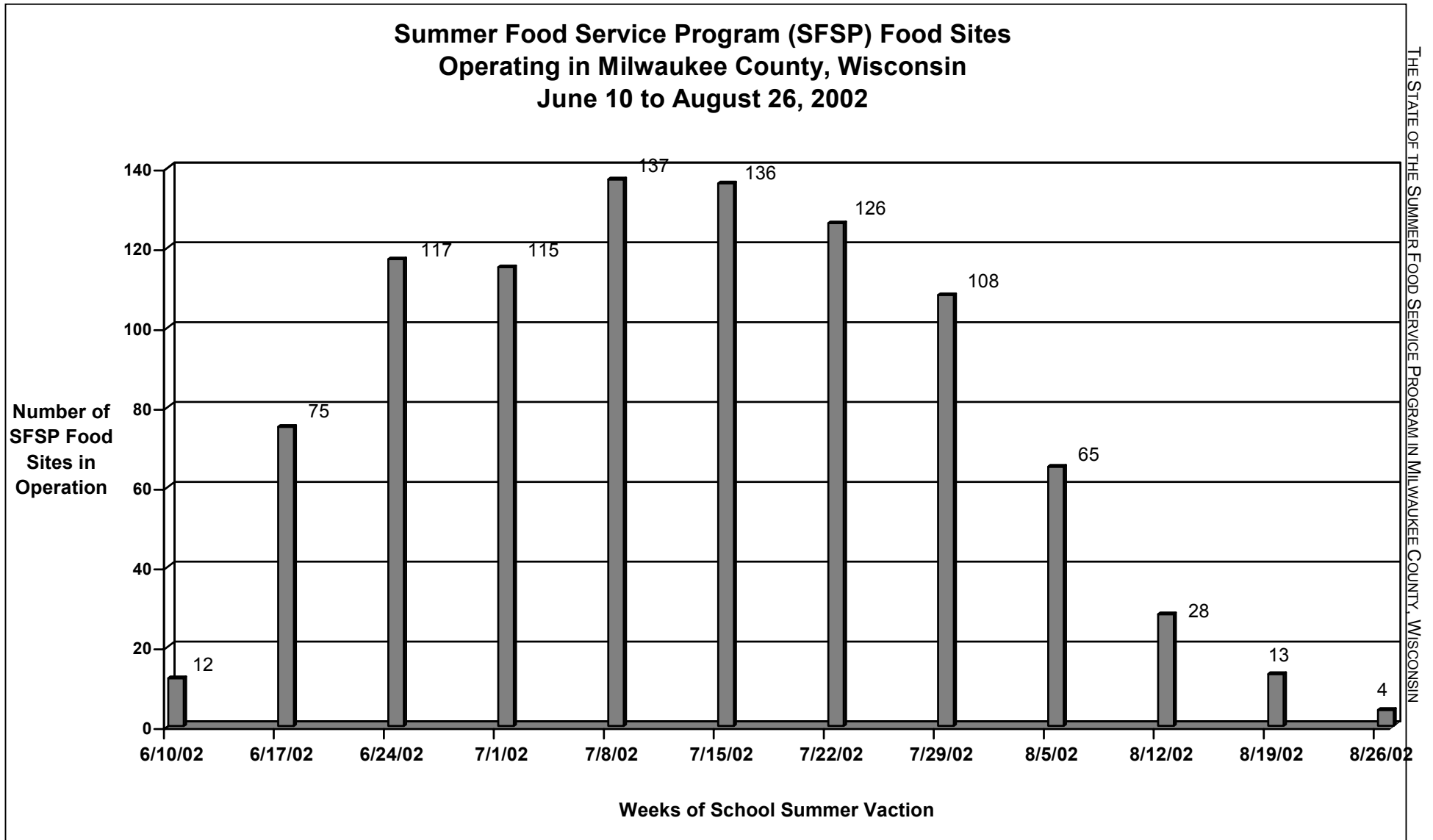
## Appendix 5

### SFSP – 2002 Milwaukee County Sponsor Summary

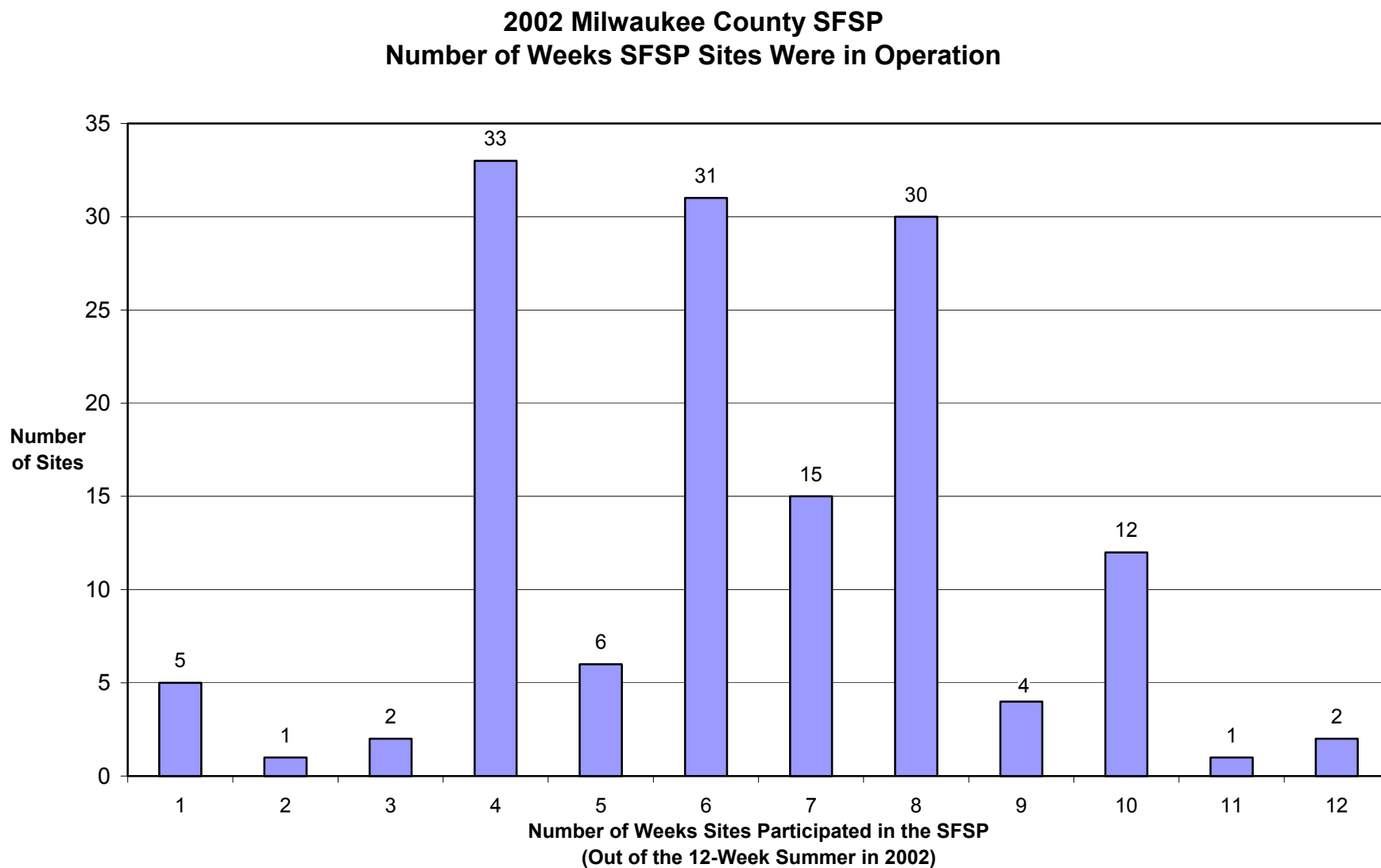
SFSP Sponsor	Actual Meal Payment	Actual Administration Payment	Max # Sites Operated in 2002	Min Average Daily Attendance	Max Average Daily Attendance	Total Breakfasts Served	Total Lunches Served	Total Suppers Served*	Total Supplements Served
Agape Community Center	\$4,425.32	\$499.36	1	51	51	0	1,620		1,701
Bruce Guadalupe Community School	\$11,230.88	\$1,295.04	1	238	238	0	5,396	0	0
CR-Social Development Commission	\$271,098.00	\$21,162.00	59	2,295	2,866	0	92,737	0	0
Harambee Community School	\$11,647.00	\$1,208.00	1	145	150	1,821	3,096	0	0
Marquette University	\$36,591.54	\$3,208.67	2	692	767	1,761	12,084	1074*	7,554
Milwaukee Center for Independence	\$63,400.96	\$6,588.51	1	243	927	9,952	18,692	1979*	5,134
Milwaukee Public School District	\$463,339.61	\$29,390.00	53	10,925	10,925	60,697	180,471	0	0
Opportunities Industrialization Center - GM	\$249,363.74	\$27,278.17	21	1,397	2,421	0	89,192		83,438
Urban Day School	\$42,753.54	\$3,592.00	2	411	568	6,927	14,613	0	0
UW Milwaukee PreCollege Center	\$8,825.10	\$767.40	1	143	143	0	3,837	0	0
<b>Totals:</b>	<b>\$1,162,675.69</b>	<b>\$94,989.15</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>16,540</b>	<b>19,056</b>	<b>81,158</b>	<b>421,738</b>	<b>3,053*</b>	<b>97,827</b>

\*Available only to sites enrolled as a "camp," a regularly scheduled food service as part of a residential or day camp program

Appendix 6  
SFSP Food Sites Operating in Milwaukee County, Wisconsin  
June 10 to August 26, 2002



**Appendix 7**  
**2002 Milwaukee County SFSP – Number of Weeks Food Sites Were in Operation**



## Appendix 8

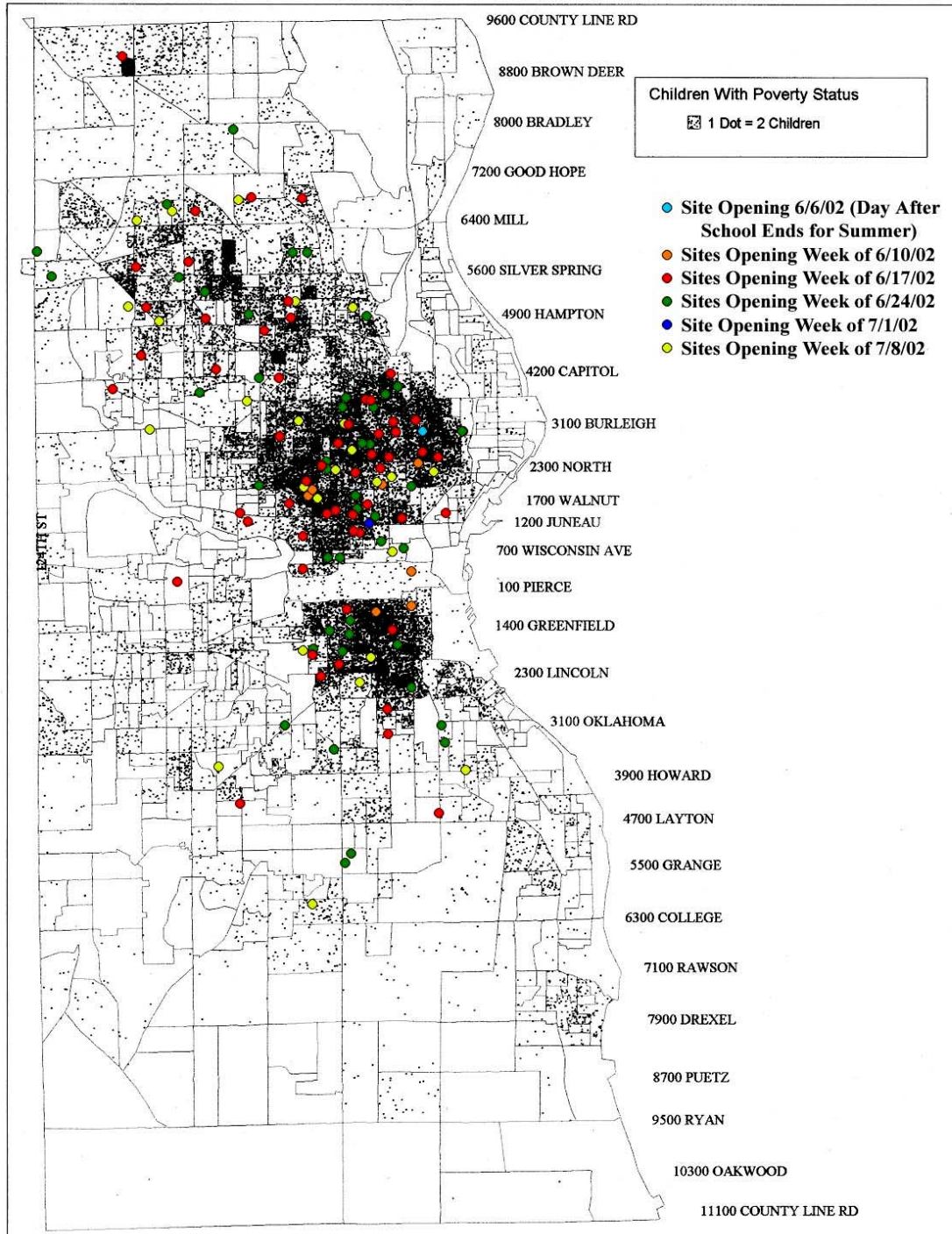
### Membership of the Greater Milwaukee Food Providers Coalition

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b> (Listed alphabetically by organization, updated November 2002)
Sally Callan	16 <sup>th</sup> Street WIC Project
Carol Bedford	America's Second Harvest of Wisconsin
Bonnie Bellehumeur	America's Second Harvest of Wisconsin
Ossie Kendrix	America's Second Harvest of Wisconsin
Jeanie Martin	Community Relations - Social Development Commission (CR-SDC)
Charolette Smith	Community Relations - Social Development Commission (CR-SDC)
Sheila Underwood	Community Relations - Social Development Commission (CR-SDC)
Will Allen	Growing Power
Michele Haas	Hunger Task Force, Inc.
Sherrie Tussler	Hunger Task Force, Inc.
Bob Waite	IMPACT, Inc.
Cheri Yarborough	IMPACT, Inc.
Nanette Stuiber	Milwaukee County Department on Aging
Felice Riley	Milwaukee County Human Services
Ann White	Milwaukee County Division of Public Health
Mary E. Kelly	Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS)
Georgia Cameron	Opportunities Industrialization Center – Greater Milwaukee (OIC-GM)
Paulette Hardin	Self Help And Resource Exchange (SHARE)
Harold Madlom	Salvation Army
Maureen Martin	Salvation Army
Greg Hannon	Society of St. Vincent de Paul
Sandy Malone	Society of St. Vincent de Paul
Tom Plakut	St. Ben's Meal Program
Ginny Schrag	The Gathering
Duane Mireles	United Way of Greater Milwaukee
Julian Jasper	United Way/AFL-CIO-FEMA Liaison
Annie Wacker	United Way/AFL-CIO-FEMA Liaison
Rosa Canales	Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program (WNEP) – University of Wisconsin Extension

## Appendix 9

### Map – Milwaukee County SFSP Sites by Dates Opening

#### MILWAUKEE COUNTY CHILDREN WITH POVERTY STATUS BY BLOCK GROUP



Source: 2000 U.S. Census, WI DPI, Hunger Task Force,  
Milwaukee County Food Providers Coalition

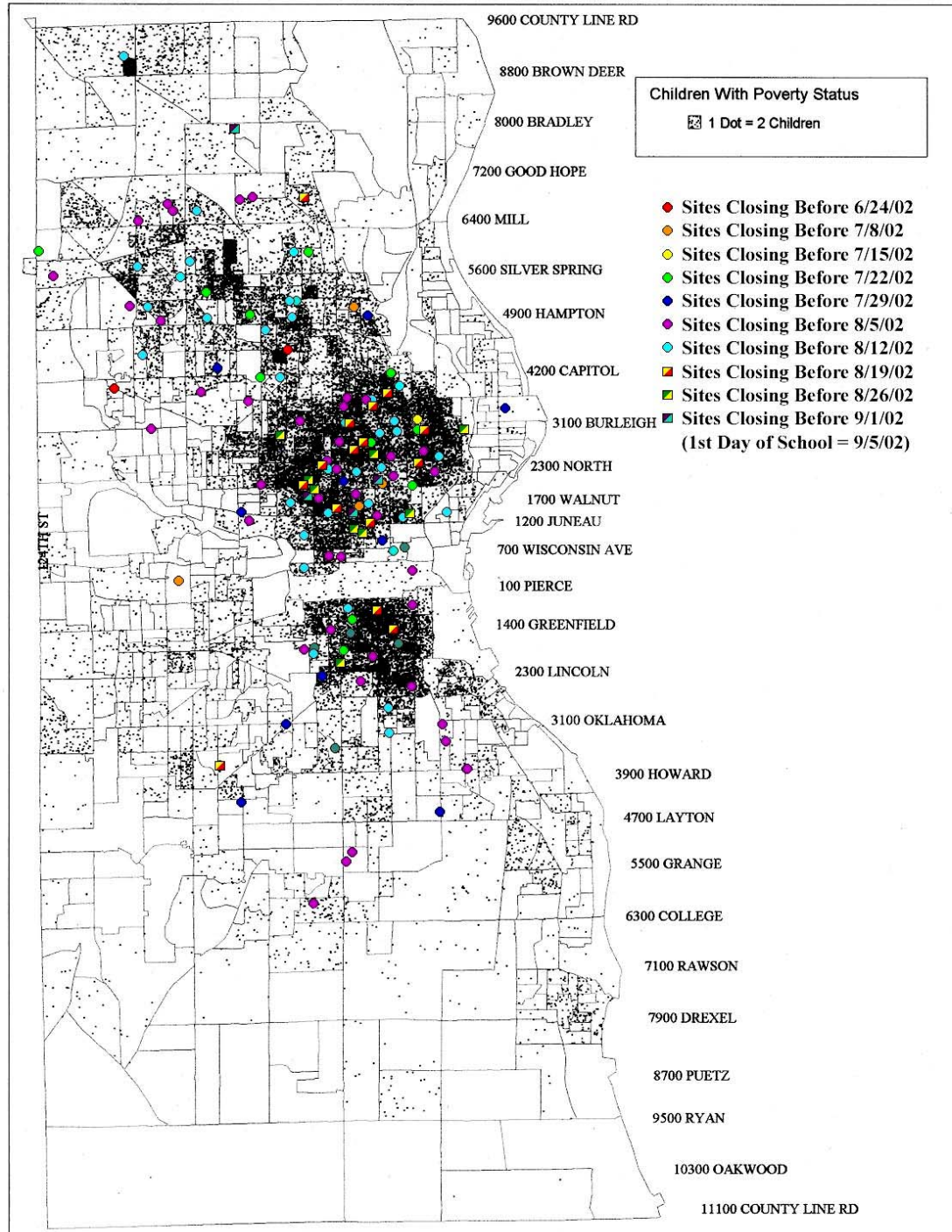
Milwaukee Nonprofit Center - 2002



## Appendix 10

### Map – Milwaukee County SFSP Sites by Dates Opening

#### MILWAUKEE COUNTY CHILDREN WITH POVERTY STATUS BY BLOCK GROUP



Source: 2000 U.S. Census, WI DPI, Hunger Task Force,  
Milwaukee County Food Providers Coalition

Milwaukee Nonprofit Center - 2002