Minnesota Department of Education

MARSS
(Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System)
TRANSPORTATION CATEGORIES

Information and Instructions
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Each public school student's record on the Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System (MARSS) will have a field in which districts will enter the student's "to-and-from" school MARSS Transportation Code for the regular school term. "To-and-from" school transportation is defined as the student's trip to school at the beginning of the school day and the trip home at the end of the school day. The school day will vary for the different types of students in the school. A school day could begin in the morning and end in the morning as it does for kindergarten students enrolled in a morning half-day kindergarten program. A school day could begin in the morning and end in the afternoon as it does for the majority of students. A school day could begin the afternoon and end in the early evening as it does for students enrolled in alternative programs.

This handbook contains information and instructions on how to determine the appropriate MARSS Transportation Code for a student.

MARSS TRANSPORTATION DATA ELEMENT VALUES

MARSS TRANSPORTATION CODE *	TRANSPORTATION CATEGORY ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR TO-AND-FROM SCHOOL CATEGORIES REGULAR SCHOOL TERM
00 WALKERS * OR TRANSPORTATION FIELD DOES NOT APPLY TO THIS STUDENT	♦ TRANSPORTATION IS NOT PROVIDED WHILE THE STUDENT IS ENROLLED IN THE DISTRICT. ALSO, INCLUDE STUDENTS TRANSPORTED TO AND FROM SCHOOL BUT WHO ARE NOT PART OF THIS REPORTING REQUIREMENT - SUCH AS STUDENTS ENROLLED DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS ONLY. INCLUDE STUDENTS SERVED IN THEIR HOMES. ♦ ♦ INCLUDE STUDENTS WHO WOULD HAVE QUALIFIED UNDER OTHER CATEGORIES BUT WHO HAVE SURRENDERED THEIR BUS RIDING PRIVILEGES FOR THE ENTIRE SCHOOL YEAR.
USE "00" FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE A STATE AID CATEGORY (SAC) OF 16-18 (SHARED TIME – NONPUBLIC)	
01 REGULAR *	**INCLUDE ALL STUDENTS WHO ARE PROVIDED FREE, DAILY TRANSPORTATION SERVICES** ♦ ELEMENTARY STUDENTS (K-6) WHO LIVE ONE MILE OR MORE FROM SCHOOL. DISTRICTS MAY USE A DAY CARE SITE AS THE HOME OF THE STUDENT AS LONG AS THE DAY CARE SITE IS LOCATED WITHIN THE ATTENDANCE AREA OF THE SCHOOL. ♦ SECONDARY STUDENTS (7-12) WHO LIVE TWO MILES OR MORE FROM SCHOOL. ♦ STUDENTS WHO ARE CUSTODIAL PARENTS WHEN TRANSPORTATION IS PROVIDED BETWEEN THE STUDENTS' HOMES AND CHILD CARE PROVIDERS AND/OR SCHOOLS. THE HOME AND CHILD CARE PROVIDER MUST BE WITHIN THE ATTENDANCE AREA OF THE SCHOOL. ♦ STUDENTS TRANSPORTED TO LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAMS.
IF A REGULAR CATEGORY STUDENT NEVER RIDES THE BUS, ASSIGN MARSS TRANSPORTATION CODE 00 *TO THE STUDENT RECORD.*	
02 EXCESS *	**INCLUDE ALL STUDENTS WHO ARE PROVIDED FREE, DAILY TRANSPORTATION SERVICES** ♦ SECONDARY STUDENTS (7-12) WHO LIVE ONE MILE OR MORE FROM SCHOOL BUT LESS THAN TWO MILES. ♦ ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY STUDENTS (K-12) WHO LIVE LESS THAN ONE MILE FROM SCHOOL AND WHO ARE PROVIDED DAILY TRANSPORTATION SERVICE TO AND FROM SCHOOL BECAUSE OF THE TRAFFIC, DRUG OR CRIME HAZARDS THEY WOULD ENCOUNTER IF THEY WALKED.
IF AN EXCESS CATEGORY STUDENT NEVER RIDES THE BUS, ASSIGN MARSS TRANSPORTATION CODE 00 TO THE STUDENT RECORD.	
03 DISABLED *	**INCLUDE ONLY THOSE STUDENTS WHO ACTUALLY RECEIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION SERVICES** ♦ STUDENTS WHO RECEIVE SPECIAL EDUCATION TRANSPORTATION (E.G., SPECIAL ROUTE) OR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS (E.G., AIDE ON REGULAR BUS ROUTE). THAT IS IDENTIFIED ON THE STUDENT'S IEP. THERE IS NO MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY DISTANCE FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.
STUDENTS IN THE DISABLED CATEGORY MUST HAVE A PRIMARY DISABILITY CODE OF GREATER THAN ZER0.	
04 DESEGREGATION/ INTEGRATION *	INCLUDE ALL STUDENTS WHO ARE PROVIDED FREE, DAILY TRANSPORTATION SERVICES ♦ STUDENTS WHO ATTEND A DESEGREGATION/INTEGRATION PROGRAM LOCATED EITHER WITHIN OR OUTSIDE OF THE DISTRICT. IF THE PROGRAM IS LOCATED WITHIN THE DISTRICT, THE STUDENTS MUST ATTEND SCHOOLS OUTSIDE THEIR NORMAL ATTENDANCE AREA.
IF A DESEGREGATION/INTEGRATION CATEGORY STUDENT NEVER RIDES THE BUS, ASSIGN MARSS TRANSPORTATION CODE 00 TO THE STUDENT RECORD	
05 INELIGIBLE*	**INCLUDE ONLY THOSE STUDENTS WHO ACTUALLY RECEIVE TRANSPORTATION SERVICES** ♦ ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY STUDENTS WHO LIVE LESS THAN ONE MILE FROM SCHOOL AND WHO WERE TRANSPORTED EVEN THOUGH THEY DID NOT ENCOUNTER ANY HAZARDS. IF THE DISTRICT'S POLICY IS TO ONLY PROVIDE FREE TRANSPORTATION TO STUDENTS IF THEY LIVE TWO MILES OR MORE FROM SCHOOL, INCLUDE ALL STUDENTS WHO LIVE LESS THAN TWO MILES FROM SCHOOL AND WHO PAID A FEE TO RIDE THE BUS.
USE "05" FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE A STATE AID CATEGORY (SAC) OF 15, 20, 21, 25 OR 98 IF THEY RECEIVED TRANSPORTATION SERVICES. IF THESE STUDENTS WERE NOT TRANSPORTED, USE "00." STUDENTS WITH OTHER SAC CODES MAY BE REPORTED IN THIS CATEGORY.	
06 SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION *	**INCLUDE STUDENTS WHO ARE NON-DISABLED BUT RECEIVE SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION** ♦ STUDENTS WHO ARE CONSIDERED HOMELESS, HOMELESS FLAG = Y ♦ STUDENTS WHO ATTEND CARE AND TREATMENT PROGRAMS, SAC 27 or 28 ♦ STUDENTS WHO HAVE A 504 ACCOMODATIONS PLAN WHERE SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION IS INCLUDED AS AN ACCOMMODATION, PRIMARY DISABILITY 54

* INCLUDE ENROLLMENT OPTIONS STUDENTS (SAC CODES 01, 03, 04, 11, 12 AND 13). ELIGIBILITY DISTANCE IS MEASURED FROM THE DISTRICT OR ATTENDANCE AREA BOUNDARY TO THE SCHOOL.

STATE AID CATEGORY - MARSS REPORTING

State Aid Category (SAC) is used to determine which district generates state aid for students and which state aid students are eligible to generate.

00 Resident Enrolled in Resident District
01 Enrollment Options/Open Enrollment
02 Foreign Exchange
03 Graduation Incentives
04 Enrollment Choice for 11th and 12th Grade Students
05 Interdistrict Cooperative Agreement
06 Cooperative Facilities
08 Charter School
10 Joint Powers Cooperatives for Special Education and/or Secondary Vocational Programs
11 Parent Initiated Agreements Between School Boards
14 Enrollment in Another State
15 Non-Minnesota Resident, Tuition Paid by Entity in Another State or Country
16 Shared Time Aid Paid to Resident District
17 Shared Time Aid Paid to Serving District
18 Shared Time - Parent/Guardian Pays Tuition
19 Tuition Agreement with Resident District
20 Tuition Agreement with Parent/Guardian
21 Ineligible Nonresident Student/No Tuition
22 Residents Who Open Enrolled - Then Returned to Resident District Mid-Year
24 Early Graduate
26 Private High School Graduation Incentives
27 Temporary Placement for Nonhandicapped Students for Care and Treatment
28 Resident Student Attending a Nonpublic School Through Either an IEP or for Care and Treatment
34 Tribal Contract/Grant – Students Who Meet BIA Criteria
35 Tribal Contract/Grant – Students Who Do No Meet BIA Criteria
46 Extended School Year
98 Summer Graduate or Dropout

PRIMARY DISABILITY

00 No IEP/IFSP/IIIP, Non-Disabled Student
01 Speech/Language Impaired
02 Mentally Impaired: Mild-Moderate
03 Mentally Impaired: Moderate-Severe
04 Physically Impaired
05 Deaf - Hard of Hearing
06 Visually Impaired
07 Specific Learning Disabilities
08 Emotional/Behavioral Disorders
09 Deaf-Blind
10 Other Health Impaired
11 Autism Spectrum Disorder
12 Developmental Delay
14 Traumatic Brain Injury Disabled
16 Severely Multiply Impaired
54 504 Accommodation Plan

General/Regular Category

Changing Schools Within the District

Districts must review the MARSS Transportation Code for all students who change schools within the district. If a student attends an elementary school through fifth grade and then transfers to a middle school for sixth grade, a district must review the MARSS Transportation Code for the student because the distance to the new school may be different. The same situation would exist when the student moves from a middle school or junior high school to a senior high school. MARSS Transportation Codes 00, 01, 02, and 05 have the distance a student lives from school as a criterion to determine eligibility.

Communication Between the District's Transportation and MARSS Staff

The district's transportation director must work closely with the district's MARSS coordinator. The transportation director has information on how far students live from school, and where the hazardous areas are in the district. The MARSS Coordinator will have a listing of all students enrolled in a school and a student's start and end date at the school and/or district. State policymakers use this information to determine program requirements and funding levels. By working together, the district can ensure that the information the policymakers use is complete and accurate.

Dual Enrollment

Students can enroll concurrently at both a public school and an Area Learning Center (ALC). Usually, the student attends the ALC after school or on weekends. Districts would enter the appropriate MARSS transportation code for the student while attending the public school. Districts must also report the appropriate code while the student is enrolled at the ALC. If the MARSS student records for a student have different transportation codes, the Department will count the student in the category that costs the most. The ranking of transportation services from most expensive to least expensive are: 03 – Disabled, 04 – Desegregation, 06 – Special Transportation, 01 – Regular, 02 – Excess, 05 – Ineligible and 00 – Walker or Transportation Field Does Not Apply To This Student.

Enrollment Options Students

Minnesota Statutes section 123B.92 subd. 3 provides that "A district that enrolls nonresident pupils in programs under sections 124D.03, 124D.06, 124D.08, 123A.05 to 123A.08, and 124D.68, must provide authorized transportation to the pupil within the attendance area for the school that the pupil attends."

The programs included in this statute are:

- Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.03, Enrollment Options/Open Enrollment – MARSS State Aid Category (SAC) 01,

- Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.08, Enrollment Choice for 11th and 12th Grade Students – MARSS SAC 04 and SAC 11,
- Minnesota Statutes, section 123A.05 – 123A.08, Area Learning Center – MARSS SAC 03, or
- Minnesota Statutes, section 124D.68, Graduation Incentives Program – MARSS SAC 03.

Districts must determine the transportation code for each enrollment options student just as they do for a resident student.

One Attendance Area – When a district has only one elementary, middle or secondary school, the distance to determine the student's eligibility is measured from the district border to the school. Following are different examples on how a district would report an open enrollment elementary student when the district has one attendance area:

If an elementary student has open enrolled into the district, and the distance from the border to the school is five miles, the student would be coded as Regular – MARSS Transportation Code 01.

If the distance from the border to the elementary school is eight-tenths of a mile and the district was providing transportation to resident students living in that area because of hazards, the open enrolled elementary student would be coded as Excess – MARSS Transportation Code 02.

If the distance from the border to the elementary school is eight-tenths of a mile and the district was not providing any transportation services, the open enrolled elementary student would be coded as a Walker or Transportation Field Does Not Apply To This Student – MARSS Transportation Code 00.

Multiple Attendance Areas – When a district has more than one elementary, middle or secondary school, the district would establish attendance areas for the schools. Resident students receive transportation to the school in their attendance area. An enrollment options student, who has opted to attend a school on the far side of the district instead of the one that bordered the open enrollment student's resident district, must travel from his or her home to the attendance area boundary. The distance from the attendance area boundary to the school would be used to determine transportation eligibility. The distance the open-enrolled student travels in his or her resident district and the distance across the first school attendance area are not factors in determining transportation eligibility for this student. Following are different examples on how a district would report an open enrollment elementary student when the district has more than one attendance area:

- If the distance from the elementary school attendance area boundary to the school is greater than one mile, the open enrolled elementary student would be given a MARSS Transportation Code of 01 – Regular.

- If the distance from the elementary school attendance area boundary is less than one mile, and resident students who live in the area are being transported to school because of hazards, the open-enrolled elementary student would be given a MARSS Transportation Code of 02 – Excess
- If the distance from the elementary school attendance area boundary is less than one mile, and resident students who live in the area walk to and from school, the open-enrolled elementary student would be given a MARSS Transportation Code of 00 – Walkers or Transportation Field Does Not Apply To This Student.

Most enrollment options students will **not** be assigned a MARSS Transportation Code of 05, Ineligible. The majority of these students will be assigned MARSS Transportation Code 01, Regular.

Greatest Cost of Transportation Service

A district can only count a student once during a school year. If the student has multiple enrollment records, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) will determine the appropriate MARSS Transportation Code in which to report the student. If the student only has one enrollment record, but received different types of transportation services, the "district" will determine the appropriate code.

If a student has more than one enrollment record because the student moved to another school within the district, or withdrew and re-enrolled, the district should assign the appropriate MARSS Transportation Code to each record. The department will select the record that represents the most expensive type of transportation service. The most expensive to the least expensive transportation service ranking that the department uses is: 03 – Disabled, 04 – Desegregation, 06 – Special Transportation, 01 – Regular, 02 – Excess, 05 – Ineligible and 00 - Walker or Transportation Field Not Applicable.

Do not create a new enrollment record for a student who moves within the district but does not change schools. For those students, the district will have to change the MARSS Transportation Code on the one record to reflect the most expensive transportation service that the student received.

Beginning in school year 2009-2010, the MARSS Transportation Category moved to the student's enrollment record for students with the Transportation Category 03-Disabled and 04-Desegregation. These two Transportation Categories are used in funding calculations. It is important to isolate the enrollment record in these cases so that accurate funding can be calculated. Districts will need to create a new date specific record if a student is provided special education or desegregation transportation for only part of the year.

When a student attends both public and nonpublic schools within the same year, the district should determine which transportation service was the most expensive and report the student as either public or nonpublic – but not both.

MARSS Reporting Cycles

There are two MARSS reporting cycles: fall and end-of-year (EOY). The fall submission(s) includes all student records up to and including a designated date set by the MARSS Office of the Program Finance Division. Usually, the final fall reporting date occurs in mid-December of the current school year.

The EOY submission(s) includes all student records for the entire year whether or not the students were enrolled on the last day of school. It also includes the record of students who dropped out of school during the prior summer. The final EOY reporting date is December 30 for the preceding fiscal year. (For example, 2009-10 school year data must be reported by December 30, 2010.)

The reporting dates for both fall and EOY are distributed to school districts through the newsletter, MARSS MEMORANDUM. The newsletter is posted on the Minnesota Department of Education's website at http://education.state.mn.us > School Support > School Finance > MARSS-Student Accounting.

The MARSS Transportation Code for a student is to be included on the student file of the EOY report. The transportation data will be extracted from the file and edited by the MDE Pupil Transportation Office. Any discrepancies between student and financial reporting will be sent to school districts through the Pupil Transportation Data Verification Report.

Measuring Distance From School

In both the Regular and Excess Categories, students must live a certain distance from school in order to be counted as eligible students. Generally, districts should measure the shortest, safest distance on a public walkway or roadway from a student's home to school. Each local school board should adopt a policy on where the measurement will start and end and then apply the policy to all schools within the district. Do not draw circles on a map to determine the one and two mile distances from school.

Districts should have a map of the district indicating which home addresses are one mile or more from schools that house grades K through 6 and which home addresses are two miles or more from schools that house grades 7 through 12. The map should also show which areas of the district have hazardous conditions where the district has chosen to transport the students instead of allowing them to walk to school. (These areas will be located less than one mile from any school within the district.) Some districts use computerized routing software. This software contains a map and can calculate the distance each address is from school.

Paper Report for Some Transportation Data

Only the public school student "to-and-from" school transportation data will be collected on MARSS. A paper report will be used to collect the number of nonpublic school students transported to and from school, bus ownership and annual mileage, hours or routes by category.

Relationship Between MARSS and UFARS Reporting

Once the proper MARSS transportation code is determined for a student, districts must report the total cost of transporting the student in the corresponding Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards (UFARS) Finance Dimension.

MARSS Transportation Code	UFARS Financial Dimension
Walkers or Transportation Field Not Applicable – MARSS Transportation Code 00	No cost if student was not transported Finance Dimension 721 if summer school student. Finance Dimension 719 if adult crossing guards were hired to assist the students in their walk to and from school Other codes may be appropriate depending on the student and services.
Regular – MARSS Transportation Code 01	Finance Dimension 720
Excess – MARSS Transportation Code 02	Finance Dimension 720
Disabled – MARSS Transportation Code 03	Finance Dimension 723
Desegregation/Integration – MARSS Transportation Code 04	Finance Dimension 315 Finance Dimension 714
Ineligible/Nonresident – MARSS Transportation Code 05	Finance Dimension 737
Special Transportation– MARSS Transportation Code 06	Finance Dimension 728

Software Products

Some districts use computerized routing software in their transportation programs. The software may include a field for districts to enter the MARSS transportation code for the student. Districts may be able to export this data to their MARSS software if there is some common linkage such as a student identification number.

Other districts may enter a transportation code on their present MARSS software. If districts are using different codes than the state codes, the districts could possibly use the "find and replace" feature to switch to the state codes. Or, they could retain their present coding system and use the crosswalk feature to change their local codes to the state codes for state reporting purposes. Districts should discuss these possibilities with their software vendors.

Students Changing from Elementary to Secondary

Districts must review the MARSS Transportation Code for students advancing from sixth grade to seventh grade. In order for an elementary student (grades kindergarten through sixth) to be coded as Regular – MARSS Transportation Code 01, the student must live one mile or more from school. For secondary students (grades seven through twelve), the distance a student must live from school is two miles. Districts should review the MARSS Transportation Code given to sixth grade students in the previous school year to see if the code should be changed now that the students have entered seventh grade in the current school year.

Students Who Attend Other Districts Under a Tuition or Pairing Agreement

In a tuition or pairing agreement, students will usually ride school buses into the local community school and then travel from the local community school to the school in the neighboring district. The transportation on both bus routes is considered "to-and-from" school transportation because the students spend the entire day at the school in the neighboring district. In the past, some districts have mistakenly reported these students in two categories - a "to-and-from" school category and a "between-school-buildings" category. The reason a district cannot report these students in a "between-school-buildings" category is because the students did not attend classes in both school buildings. The first school building in the local community was used only as a bus transfer point – not a place where the students attended classes.

When students attend other districts under a tuition or pairing agreement (SAC 19 or SAC 05), the district in which the students are enrolled will do all the MARSS reporting. As part of that reporting process, the districts also include the students' resident district numbers. The General Education Revenue is then sent to the students' resident districts. Because the enrolling district is doing all the MARSS reporting, but the students' resident district is doing all the transporting, the staffs at the two districts will have to work together to determine the proper MARSS Transportation Code for the students. The vast majority of these students will have a MARSS Transportation Code of 01. Students who have Individual Education Plans (IEP) and receive special transportation or accommodations will have a MARSS Transportation Code of 03. The district must have special transportation information in the student's IEP. There may also be a few instances where students attend another district under a desegregation/integration plan. This may happen when a district places a student in a new Interdistrict Desegregation/Integration School and the district is not a member of the cooperative or joint powers agreement that created the school. Those students would have a MARSS Transportation Code of 04. It would be extremely unlikely that tuition or pairing students transported to the neighboring district would have a MARSS Transportation Code of 00, 02 or 05.

Transportation Default Code

Because the majority of students reported by districts are usually Regular Category students, districts may want to set the default MARSS Transportation Code at 01, Regular. This will save time in entering the transportation codes.

Transporting District Number and Type

School districts must report the "Transporting District Number and Type" on the MARSS Student Record. Districts may use the State Aid Category (SAC) to help them determine the "Transporting District Number and Type." A list of the State Aid Categories appears on page two of this document. The possible district types include:

01 – Independent	02 - Common
03 – Special	07 – Charter

The district type always appears as an extension after the district number (e.g., 0626-01 would be used by Independent School District No. 626).

For some State Aid Categories, the "Transporting District Number and Type" may be the student's resident district, the student's serving district, or possibly a third district where the student is living in a foster or group home. Districts must create a new enrollment record if the "Transporting District Number and Type" changes. It is important that the serving district work with the student's resident district to determine the proper MARSS Transportation Code to assign to the student.

Refer to the MARSS Manual for more information about the Transporting District Number and Type field.

WALKERS OR TRANSPORTATION FIELD DOES NOT APPLY TO THIS STUDENT

Eligible Students Who Never Ride the School Bus

Some students may drive to school every day or ride with parents or friends. If these students **never** ride the school bus, assign MARSS Transportation Code 00, Walker or Transportation Field Does Not Apply To This Student. If you are uncertain whether the student ever rode the school bus, then you must assign the appropriate MARSS Transportation Code.

Full-Time Postsecondary Enrollment Options Students

Eleventh and twelfth grade students have the option of attending postsecondary institutions under the Postsecondary Enrollment Options Act. If the students are attending postsecondary institutions full-time, report the students under Walkers or Transportation Field Not Applicable - MARSS Transportation Code 00. These students never attend the high schools in their districts and are not offered any transportation.

If the eleventh and twelfth grade students attend the postsecondary institutions part-time (either for part of the day or part of the year), the students should be given the appropriate MARSS Transportation Code for the time the students spent attending the high school.

General Overview of the Walkers or Transportation Field Not Applicable Category

Students who are transported to and from school, but who are not part of this reporting requirement, will be given a MARSS Transportation Code of 00. Following are examples of different situations where the transported students would be given a MARSS Transportation Code of 00:

Students who enroll in the district for the summer months only. If these students are transported to and from summer school, report the students under MARSS Transportation Code 00. The department is only collecting the number of students transported to and from school during the **regular school term**.

Nonpublic school students who attend shared time classes. Nonpublic shared time students will be reported on a district's MARSS report under State Aid Category (SAC) 16, 17 or 18 – Shared Time Categories. The department only collects **public** school students transported to-and-from school on MARSS. Districts should give all nonpublic shared time students MARSS Transportation Code 00.

Students who are boarded and lodged at residential facilities. If the students live on campus, they are not transported to and from school on a daily basis. Districts should report these students under MARSS Transportation Code 00.

Homebound Instruction

Students referred to as “homebound” are students who are unable to attend classes at the normal school site because of illness, injury, or placement in some type of treatment facility (Source: Appendix E, MARSS Manual). If these students are receiving homebound instruction for the **entire** year, the students will be given MARSS Transportation Code 00 – Walkers or Transportation Field Not Applicable. These students are never transported to and from school.

If these students are able to attend their regularly assigned school site at any time during the year, the students will be reported under the appropriate MARSS Transportation Code for the time that they are transported to and from school. (Note: Also, report Early Childhood Disabled students as Walkers if they are served in the home.)

Residential Programs

When a student is enrolled in a residential program, many times the student is not transported daily to and from school. The student lives at the site where the educational program is offered. Because these students do not receive daily transportation services, they must be coded as Walkers or Transportation Field Not Applicable – MARSS Transportation Code 00.

Shared Time Students

Students who attend nonpublic schools (including home schools), but attend public schools for a class (or classes), would be coded as Walkers or Transportation Field Does Not Apply To This Student – MARSS Transportation Code 00, while enrolled at the public schools. The transportation from the nonpublic school or home to the public school would be considered Between School Buildings transportation. Nonpublic school students' to-and-from school transportation data are collected on the annual (paper) report.

Summer School Students

Students enrolled in a district during the summer months only would be coded as Walkers or Transportation Field Does Not Apply To This Student – MARSS Transportation Code 00, even though the students may have been transported to and from summer school. The transportation code for regular term students only will be reported on MARSS.

Surrender of Transportation Privileges

Minnesota Statutes section 123B.88, subd. 2, provides that the parent or guardian of a student may voluntarily surrender the student’s to-and-from school transportation privileges. This provision allows school districts to design more efficient bus routes because they know that some students will never be riding the buses.

If a district has students who have surrendered their bus riding privileges for the **entire** school year, the student should be given a MARSS Transportation Code 00 - Walkers or Transportation Field Does Not Apply To This Student. The district must have written documentation on file showing which students have surrendered their bus riding privileges.

If the students surrendered their bus riding privileges for a set period of time (quarter, semester, etc.), but rode the school bus for part of the school year, the students would be reported under the appropriate MARSS Transportation Code for the time that they were transported to and from school.

EXCESS

Determination of Hazardous Areas

Local school boards determine what areas in their districts would be classified as hazardous areas. The districts' transportation directors or contractors provide transportation services in the areas that are identified in the board's policy as hazardous.

General Overview of the Excess Category

The excess category consists of two groups of students. They are:

1) Secondary students (Grades 7-12) who live one mile or more from school but less than two miles; and

2) Students (Grades K-12) who live less than one mile from school and who are transported because, if they were to walk, they would encounter traffic, drug or crime hazards.

For the students living less than one mile from school, there has to be a documented hazard (according to board policy) and the students provided daily transportation before the students would qualify in this category. However, for secondary students living one mile or more from school but less than two miles, no hazard has to be present. As long as the secondary one-to-two-mile students meet the requirements for grade level and distance from school, a district can count the student in the Excess Category as long as the student is provided daily transportation service.

Transportation During Cold Weather

Districts may have a policy on providing transportation during cold weather for students that normally walk to school. The district would continue to report the students as 00-Walker or Transportation Does Not Apply even if they provided transportation only during cold weather. These students would not qualify as Excess Category Students because cold weather is not considered a hazardous condition.

DISABLED

All students reported in this category must have a primary disability code of greater than zero excluding 54, 504 Plan. The special education transportation accommodations or adaptations must be specified in the child's IEP, IFSP or IIIP.

Early Childhood and Residential Programs

Most early childhood special education students should be reported in the Disabled Category because they usually ride special routes at least one way. Special transportation must be indicated in the child's IEP, IFSP or IIIP in order to use the 03 MARSS code.

Students with disabilities who live on the campus of a residential facility would be coded as Walkers or Transportation Field Not Applicable – MARSS Transportation Code 00. These students walk from the dormitories to the classrooms on a daily basis. These students may be transported on weekends and holidays from the residential facility to their homes but districts would not report this type of transportation on MARSS. Only daily "to-and-from" school transportation service will be reported on MARSS.

Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, districts must create a new enrollment line if a student's Transportation Cateory changes to 03-Disabled or from 03-Disabled to another category. Transportation Aid is determined using the student's Average Daily Membership (ADM) for the time the student was transported in 03-Disabled. It is important that the student's enrollment record reflect the correct type of transportaion during a specific time.

General Overview of the Disabled Category

Districts are instructed to include only those students who actually receive special transportation services. The special transportation services include both special transportation and special accommodations. Following is further information on each of these services:

Special Education Transportation. Special education transportation is defined as the transportation of students with disabilities who cannot ride on the regular bus routes with the majority of the district's students because of the location of their classes, disabling conditions or the unique time schedules of their programs. Sometimes, however, students with disabilities will be transported on both special and regular routes each day. For example, students may ride the regular routes to the local community school, but then transfer to special bus routes to continue on to the location of their special education classes. The students with disabilities spend the entire day at the other districts and, at the end of the day, reverse the process to return home. Other times, students with disabilities may ride to school on the regular routes but return home on special routes. In both of these examples, the district should report the students with disabilities under MARSS Transportation Code 03 because of the special transportation that was needed to transport the student to and/or from school. When reporting the cost of transporting these students, the district must report the cost of the special transportation in Finance Dimension 723 along with a percentage of the regular route cost for the time the students with disabilities rode the regular bus route.

Special Accommodations. Sometimes, students with disabilities can ride regular bus routes if special accommodations are made to the regular bus routes such as using buses with lifts or ramps or having aides ride the regular bus routes. If districts did not make these special accommodations, the students with disabilities would have to be transported on special routes.

Because of the special accommodations, the district should report the students with disabilities under MARSS Transportation Code 03. The district must report a percentage of the cost of the regular route plus any extra charges that may occur because of the special accommodations (e.g., lift or ramp operation, salary and fringe benefits of aides) in Finance Dimension 723, Disabled.

Parents Transporting Own Children

Districts are instructed to only report students with disabilities under MARSS Transportation Code 03 – Disabled when the students receive special transportation services. Many times parents prefer to transport their own children with disabilities instead of using the district-arranged transportation. For some early childhood special education programs, district-arranged transportation is not available. If the parents are reimbursed for their mileage, the students will be classified as Disabled - MARSS Transportation Code 03. If the parents are not reimbursed for their mileage, the student will be classified as a Walker or Transportation Field Does Not Apply – MARSS Transportation Code 00.

Students with Disabilities Riding Regular Bus Routes Without Special Accommodations

In some cases, students with disabilities can ride regular bus routes to and from school. No special accommodations are made such as having aides ride with the students or using special equipment such as lifts or ramps. If the students with disabilities meet the distance criteria for Regular Category students, the students with disabilities riding the regular bus routes would be reported under Regular – MARSS Transportation Code 01. If the students with disabilities riding the regular bus routes do not meet the distance requirements for the Regular Category, then these students would be reported under Excess – MARSS Transportation Code 02.

DESEGREGATION/INTEGRATION

Transportation To and From School

Students reported in Desegregation Integration, MARSS code 04 must be assigned to an interdistrict desegregation/integration school and receive daily transportation to and from that school. Examples of district/schools are 6065-62 Metropolitan Learning Alliance School, 6067-62 East Metro Integration District, 6069-62 West Metro Education Program, and 6078-62 Northwest Suburban Integration District. Students attending metropolitan school districts under the "Choice is Yours" program should also be coded MARRS Transportation Code 04. However if any of these students have special education transportation identified in their IEP's then code the student as 03-Disabled.

To ensure that students are reported correctly on MARSS, independent and special school districts should request that districts 6065-62, 6067-62, 6069-62 and 6078-62 list their district for their students in the "Transporting District Number and Type" field and they entered the Transportation Code of 04, Desegregation, in the Transportation Category field. Both of these fields are on the MARSS student record.

Beginning with the 2009-2010 school year, districts must create a new enrollment line if a student's Transportation Cateory changes to 04-Deseg when the prior transportaion category was a 00, 01,02,05 or 06. Or if a students transportation category changes from a 04-Deseg to another category. Transportation Aid is determined using the student's Average Daily Membership (ADM) for the time the student was transported in 04-Deseg. It is important that the student's enrollment record reflect the correct type of transportaion during a specific time.

Districts must report the costs of transporting the students in the Uniform Financial Accounting and Reporting Standards (UFARS) Finance Dimension 714 and or Finance Dimension 315. School districts transporting children to multi-district integration/desegregation schools or program must code the transportation expense to Finance Dimension 714. Finance Dimension 315, Desegregation/Integration Transportation will be used by districts for transportation to schools or programs within its boundaries, but outside the student's normal attendance area. Finance Dimension 315 differs from Finance Dimension 714 in that only one district is involved in the desegregation or integration schools or programs.

Transportation to a Class, Program or Event

MARSS Code 04 is not valid code for transportation of students to a class, program or event. Since this transportation is not considered To and From School on a daily basis. Use the appropriate transporting category that designates the To and From transportation of the student.

INELIGIBLE

Fee for Transportation Services

If a school board has a policy that only students living two miles or more from school will receive free transportation to and from school, students who are transported for a district-determined fee will be given MARSS Transportation Code 05, Ineligible.

General Overview of the Ineligible Category

For the Ineligible Category, students must actually be receiving transportation services before the student is given a MARSS Transportation Code of 05. The district may be providing the transportation services, or paying a contractor, another school district, etc., to provide the service. Some districts mistakenly give students an Ineligible Code when the students should have been given a MARSS Transportation Code of 00 – Walkers or Transportation Field Does Not Apply To This Student. The following is an example on how to code ineligible students.

Students who were residents of a neighboring state were reported on the Minnesota district's MARSS report. The district in the other state provided the transportation and did not bill the Minnesota district for the transportation service. These students should be coded as Walkers or Transportation Field Does Not Apply To This Student. These students are not eligible because they are nonresidents. In addition, the Minnesota district did not provide any transportation services for these students nor did they pay somebody to do so.

If a district has a student who would not be eligible for transportation, a district should determine whether transportation services were provided. If the ineligible student was transported, the student would be coded as Ineligible, MARSS Transportation Code 05. If the ineligible student was not transported, the student would be coded as a Walkers or Transportation Field Does Not Apply To This Student – MARSS Transportation Code 00.

State Aid Categories – Special Instructions

Under the Special Instructions Column of the Transportation Category Eligibility Criteria Table, districts are instructed to use MARSS Transportation Code 05 for students who were transported and who have SAC 15, 20, 21 or 98. Students with other SAC codes may also have a MARSS Transportation Code of 05.

SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION

General Overview of the Special Transportation

School districts providing special transportation for selected non-disabled students and students that do not have special education transportation identified in their IEPs must now use the MARSS Transportation Code 06.The special education transportation students consits of three groups of students. They are:

1) Homeless, Homeless Flag = Y
2) Students attending Care and Treatment Programs, SAC 27 and 28
3) Students that have 504 Accomodation Plans that require special transportation, Primary Disability 54.

If any of these students have special education transporation identified in their IEP's code the student 03-Disabled. Also if the student attends a Desegregation/Integration Program on a daily basis and does not have special education transporation identified in their IEP, code the student as 04-Desegregation.

Homeless Students

The McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act ensures educational rights and protections for children and youth experiencing homelessness. School districts must provide students experiencing homelessness, including unaccompanied youth, with transportation to and from their school of origin if requested by the parent, guardian or homeless education liaison.

Care and Treatment Programs for Students Without Disabilities

Minnesota Statutes section 125A.51 provides that districts must report students in the Special Transportation Category, MARSS Code 06 when the students are transported to care and treatment facilities. These students must have a short-term or temporary physical or emotional illness or disability and must be placed temporarily for care and treatment for that illness or disability. The students will have a SAC of 27 or 28 and do not have an IEP, IFSP or IIIP or they have an IEP, IFSP or IIIP that does not identify special education transportation accommodations or adaptations.

Temporary Physical Disabilities

Occasionally, a school district provides special transportation for a student who has a temporary physical disability (e.g., a broken leg). Normally, this student is transported to school on a regular bus route or walked to school. Because of the broken leg, the student now needs special transportation.

The instructions for reporting a student in the Special Transportation Category on MARSS require that the student have a 504 Accommodation Plan. The district should write a 504 Accommodation Plan for the student and use Primary Disability 54.