

Disciplinary Incident Reporting System (DIRS) Guide

Welcome to the Disciplinary Incident Reporting System (DIRS) Guide. This document provides helpful information to complete required reporting within DIRS for the 2012/13 school year. Throughout this document, the term “district” refers to public school districts and charter schools.

As an applicant for federal funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), your district agreed to keep such records and provide such information to the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) as reasonably may be required for fiscal audit and program evaluation, consistent with the responsibilities of MDE under the ESEA. The data collected from DIRS is used to comply with MDE’s state and federal reporting requirements.

Reporting Period

The DIRS data reporting period should include incidents that occurred within the dates of the state’s fiscal year (incident dates between July 1 and June 30 of the following year).

Reporting Deadlines

July 31, 2013: Superintendents must certify that their district’s data is accurate and complete. MDE will not extend the deadline for the 2012/2013 school year.

July 1, 2013: School Principals ensure that all DIRS incidents are entered and the school information is complete. School principals also need to ensure that their school site’s incident submissions are all marked as “Incident complete.” If there are no disciplinary incidents to report, then the principal selects the checkbox verifying the school has no incidents.

The school principal must also complete the school information, which is a left side navigation button on the school site’s home page. The school information section requires reporting of aggregate habitual truancy school count, information about school policies, and the name and email of the school safety specialist. The school safety specialist is the district staff member that MDE can contact regarding crisis planning.

DIRS GUIDE

Window for Submitting, Editing, and Certification

All district disciplinary incident activities (submissions, editing incidents, incident completion, school information, and superintendent certification) must be completed by July 31.

Introduction

The layout of this guide document is based on the layout of the DIRS system. Explanatory text is provided to help districts input incident data. Note that each district has its own discipline policies and will make its own decisions in defining the type of incident. For further information, see the “Offender Activity” section on page nine of this document. Please note that the definition of “dangerous weapon” and “serious bodily injury” is as defined under state and federal law.

If you are not able to find the needed information within this System Guide review the [DIRS USER MANUAL](#), consult these other resources (accessible from the MDE website by selecting Data> Data Submissions> Disciplinary Incidents Reporting System):

- DIRS Help Documentation (including DIRS Frequently Asked Questions)
- DIRS Tutorials
- Submit inquiries to the DIRS email address at Mde.incidents-reporting@state.mn.us. Items submitted are usually addressed within one business day.

To access DIRS, you must have a user ID and password through MDE’s data submission website. If you currently have an MDE user ID and password, please make sure that you have added DIRS to your user profile.

School

Only schools in the district associated with your user ID and password will appear here. If you do not see the school for which you wish to enter a report, ensure the district name is correct. If you need to report for an additional school, you must first update your DIRS user profile.

Note: *DIRS draws its list of schools directly from the Minnesota Department of Education’s District and School Site Verification database. Site information is maintained by authorized district staff that update information in the School Verification database through a secure web address. If the list of schools for your district within DIRS is out of date, your district needs to update the school information by obtaining access to the School Verification website. Once the school information is corrected within the Verification database, DIRS will automatically be updated. Requests for access to the MDE Web Verification site should be sent to mde.school-verify@state.mn.us, accompanied by written authorization from the district superintendent to delegate access to the individual requesting a user ID.*

After identifying the school, in order to proceed with incident reporting you will be provided a number of options from which to choose:

- *Home* – Easy way to get back to the start!
- *Report a New Incident* – To start a submission entry.
- *View/Edit/Delete an Existing Incident* – Search option to view, edit, or delete a previously submitted incident.
- *School Information* – Link to submit school data, including the count of habitual truants at your school, relevant school policies, and the name and email of the school’s safety specialist. (The school’s safety specialist is the district’s staff person that MDE can contact regarding crisis planning.)

- *District Completion Report* – Superintendents sign in to review and ensure all data is complete (incidents and school information for each school). Information that is not complete will show up in red. Once the data is complete and accurate, the superintendent selects the button “Certify district,” which means that the superintendent is certifying that the district’s discipline data is complete and accurate for the school year. Make sure the expulsion and exclusion count is accurate and is based on formal school board actions.
- *District Certification Status*: Superintendent’s link to review printable/exportable version of the district completion report. [the link will be available in a future MDE release]
- *Select Another District* – To switch access to another authorized district.
- *Select Another School* – To switch access to another authorized school.

Note: *Options and components are available dependent upon the DIRS authorized role.*

DIRS Roles

A DIRS user can have access as a data entry user, principal, or superintendent. The three roles are explained in more detail below.

Data Entry User Role and Accountabilities

The data entry user has access to report a new incident.

The user also has the ability to view the DIRS home page to view and edit incomplete incidents and to select the checkbox to view "All incidents." Data entry users are accountable for submitting school incidents and for marking each as Incident Complete by July 1, so the superintendent can certify that the district’s DIRS reporting is complete by the July 31 deadline. Verify that all reported exclusions and expulsions are based on formal school board action.

Principal Role and Accountabilities

The principal of each school site is responsible for ensuring that the DIRS reporting is complete and accurate for each school site. This occurs when all disciplinary incidents and school information is complete (left navigation option on home page). The principal should have this completed by July 1 of each year so that the superintendent has time to review and certify that the district’s DIRS data is complete and accurate by July 31. When a school’s incidents and school information are complete, that school will automatically appear as a completed site on the superintendent’s “District Completion Report.”

The principal has access to review all incidents for a particular school site by choosing “All incidents” on the school site home page. The principal must ensure that there is no red font indicating there are one or more incomplete incidents for that school site. The principal has access to edit a particular incident report. In the event a school site has no disciplinary incidents to report, the principal is responsible for selecting the checkbox “no incidents to report” which will display on the school site’s home page. Verify that all reported exclusions and expulsions are based on formal school board action.

The principal should also open and view the report “List Potential Duplicate Incidents”. Any incidents that are reported in duplication should be deleted from the system prior to certification

by the superintendent. The “List Potential Duplicate Incidents” report can be found under the DIRS Report section of the website.

The principal must also complete the school information for each school site (left navigation option). This includes the summary count of habitual truants at the school, relevant school policies, and the name and email of the school safety specialist (the district staff person MDE can contact regarding crisis planning).

Note: If a user edits or changes a completed incident, it will revert to an incomplete incident until it is once again marked as “Incident Complete.”

Superintendent Role and Accountabilities

The superintendent selects the DIRS reports “District Completion Report” located at the top of the page, link to view each school building’s data, to access any school’s incomplete list or list of all incidents, or keep view of edit individual incidents. The superintendent must ensure the reported data is accurate and complete, prior to certifying the data to complete the district’s DIRS reporting requirements for the school year. This includes reviewing individual incidents to verify that all reported exclusions and expulsions are based on formal school board action.

The superintendent should verify that there are no duplicate incidents reported. The “List Potential Duplicate Incidents” report is available for this purpose and can be found under the DIRS Report section of the website. Any incidents that are reported in duplication should be deleted from the system prior to certifying the data.

When viewing the data in the “District Completion Report” the school information is marked complete when a “Y” appears in the school information box. Once all of the district’s sites have complete incidents, the superintendent will see a “Certify District” button. Until that time, the district cannot certify its data. The superintendent certification must be completed by July 31.

DIRS data can be submitted manually online or through the batch upload process. [View information about the batch upload process.](#)

Report a New Incident – Fields, Values, Descriptions

Refer to the Fields and Values document in DIRS Help Documentation for field, field value, and field details. Filter by desired Field (column C) or Field Value Descriptions (column F) to easily isolate the desired field for display. Visit the MDE website to view the [Fields and Values document](#).

Report A New Incident

Incident Location

Identify at least one location from the list. Be as specific as you can within the categories listed. If an incident took place in more than one location, identify each location.

An incident record is an official report of either a disciplinary incident (an incident at the school for which a student was disciplined), or a report of a dangerous weapon offense, whether or not any disciplinary action was taken against the student. The DIRS system will prompt the person

entering the incident to provide information about the offender, whether or not there is a victim, and information about the incident resulting in a reportable disciplinary action and/or dangerous weapon.

Please note:

- If an incident involves multiple offenders and/or victims, it should all be reported under one incident number.
- Report the most serious incident infraction as described in the infraction/reason section in DIRS.
- Report multiple disciplinary actions (e.g., suspension and expulsion), for the same offender related to the same incident under the same disciplinary incident number.

Offender – Fields, Values, Descriptions

Refer to the Fields and Values document in DIRS Help Documentation for field, field value, and field details. Filter by desired Field (column C) or Field Value Descriptions (column F) to easily isolate the desired field for display. [View the Fields and Values document on the MDE website.](#)

General Tips and Field Tips

Offender Information: You must add at least one offender, except for the case where a dangerous weapon may be found without a known offender. You will be prompted to answer “Are there offenders involved in this incident?”

If there is one or more offender enrolled at your school, select “There are offenders enrolled in this school.” You will be prompted to search your school’s incident date MARSS enrollments to locate and identify each enrolled offender. The frequently asked questions (FAQ) document explains how to enter MARSS information to search for a student offender or student victim: [View the frequently asked questions \(FAQ\).](#)

Searching Using MARSS

How do I use MARSS information to search for an offender or victim or if the student is shown enrolled in another school or district?

Once you select “Add Offender” or “Add Victim,” the student search panel of student MARSS fields is available. Various known MARSS information on the matching incident date MARSS enrollment record can be searched to retrieve matching students for identification as offenders or victims. The more fields you populate, the more restrictive the query. It is recommended to only enter those known, exact pieces to broaden your search result, and to retrieve a likely match record. *Entering any search field different from that exact field content in MARSS, will result in no record found.*

Note that records resulting in display without radio buttons to select indicate matching MARSS incident date enrollment records in another site. Consult with the district’s MARSS coordinator to investigate and resolve these records and allow reasonable process time for MARSS updates to reflect in DIRS.

If there is one or more offenders not enrolled at your school, select “There are offenders not enrolled in this school” and you will be prompted to provide a count.

“Was Under Current Suspension” Question: Indicate whether the offender was under a current suspension.

“Was Referred to Law Enforcement” Question: Indicate whether the offender was referred to law enforcement.

MARSS Number: If there are problems locating the MARSS number in the DIRS system, consult with the district MARSS coordinator.

All entered fields must be an exact match to that submitted by the MARSS coordinator on the matching MARSS record for the incident date. *Therefore, limiting searches to the fewer known pieces of information is recommended.* For instance, if the student is a John Jr., a lot of variability could exist in the placement of the Jr., so refrain from using First Name. In that case, perhaps only use the Last Name.

Results from a broad search (i.e., grade = 11) may result in a list (some may have left hand radio options and others may be missing radio options).

- Radio Options match MARSS enrollment records within the incident district and school.
- Records without radio options only match MARSS enrollment records within the incident district. Students appear to be enrolled at a differing site according to MARSS. The right-hand column indicates the incident date enrolled site. Consult with the MARSS coordinator if changes are needed. Allow for reasonable process time after the MARSS coordinator’s MARSS WES submission for updated MARSS records to appear in DIRS.
- Select the desired radio button to identify the offender or victim.

MARSS Related Fields:

DIRS may prompt for additional fields that are required for incident completion.

Trouble-shooting: If a student cannot be retrieved or there is not an active radio button next to the student’s MARSS number:

- Confirm with the MARSS coordinator that the student’s record was submitted accurately in the last full file submission and that “Upload” was requested by the MARSS coordinator when performing the submission in MARSS WES. Also confirm the date of the last submission. In general, allow for a reasonable process time for the upload process to occur at MDE, at which time the student should then be found via DIRS. MARSS coordinators network with appropriate regional or MARSS MDE support resources.
- Confirm with the MARSS coordinator that the student’s record matched exactly with the criteria identified within the incident’s search criteria:
- Does the Incident Date fall within the Start and End Date, and was the student at the corresponding district and school specified in the incident?
- Are the school and district identifiers matching for the incident date? If not, and a student record appears without a selection to the left of it, then the farthest right-hand column

displays the site where MARSS located an enrollment record for that student on the incident date.

- Were the elements used as search criteria exact as attempted? For example: Could Johnathan be Jonathan on the enrollment record? Such a discrepancy would exclude a hit on “First Name” in DIRS.

Resolving problems with an enrollment record:

- Consult with the MARSS coordinator to correct the enrollment record and resubmit the file using “Upload” in MARSS WES. Allow for a reasonable process time for the upload process to occur at MDE. When the MARSS upload is complete, the student’s MARSS information should be accessible through DIRS.
- If your search is unsuccessful, limit your search fields to reduce the possibility of user entry error.

Offender Activity

DIRS is set up for districts to report one offender infraction for one or more offenders that arise out of the same incident. Districts should report the most serious infraction as described in that section of DIRS. Under the heading, “Offender Activity” you will see the following reporting options. Select the most serious infraction for each offender:

Alcohol: Each school district should follow its own definitions in its discipline policy. Minnesota law addresses the possession, use, or sale of alcohol. School polices may include being intoxicated or possessing alcohol at school, school-sponsored events and on school-sponsored transportation. Determination of use would need to be made based upon school policy consistent with state and federal law on the Office of the Revisor website.

[Minnesota Statute 340A.503](#)

[Minnesota Statute 340A.101](#)

[Minnesota Statute 624A.701](#)

Arson: Use this incident type for student conduct that meets the district’s definition of arson in its disciplinary policy. Arson is defined under state criminal law as an action to unlawfully and intentionally damage, or attempt to damage, any real or personal property by fire or explosives. When inputting arson incidents, document whether or not a combustible or flammable accelerant was used. Minnesota Statutes Section, 609.561; 609.562; 609.563; 609.5631; and 609.5632 [Minnesota Statute 609](#).

Assault: Physical Assault: Use this incident type for student conduct that meets the district’s definition in its disciplinary policy. The criminal definition of physical assault is an action made with intent to cause fear in another of immediate bodily harm or death; or the intentional infliction of or attempt to inflict bodily harm upon another. Minnesota Statutes Section, 609.02, Subd. 10. [Minnesota Statute 609.02](#)

Third degree assault is defined in Minnesota Statutes Section, 609.223. [Minnesota Statute 609.223](#). Include in the description section whether the victim sustained any physical injury.

Sexual Assault: Use this incident type for student conduct that meets the district's definition in its disciplinary policy. The varying levels of criminal sexual assault can be found at Office of the Revisor Statutes Section, 609.341; 609.344; and 609.345. [Minnesota Statute, Section 609.341](#).

[View Minnesota Statute, Section 609.342](#).

[View Minnesota Statute, Section 609.343](#).

[View Minnesota Statute, Section 609.344](#).

[View Minnesota Statute, Section 609.345](#).

Attendance: Use this incident type when a district's discipline policy provides that a student may be subject to a formal in school or out of school dismissal for an unexcused absence. This may include a student's failure to attend detention due to attendance issues. The determination of whether a student has a legitimate exemption to miss school is made by the district consistent with Minnesota Statutes Section, 120A.22, Subd. 12 and the district's attendance policy. [View Minnesota Statute, Section 120A.22](#).

Bomb: Use this incident type for conduct that meets the district's definition of a bomb incident. Under criminal law, a bomb is defined as an explosive or incendiary device. [View the definition of a bomb incident, Minnesota Statute, Section 609.668](#).

Bomb Threat: Use this incident type for student conduct that meets the district's definition of a bomb threat. The criminal definition can be found at Minnesota Statutes Section, 609.713, Subd. 2. [View The criminal definition of Bomb Threats 609.713](#).

Bullying (you can choose "bullying" or "cyber bullying"): An action in violation of the district's written policy prohibiting intimidation and bullying of another student in all forms, including, but not limited to, electronic forms and forms involving Internet use. [To view more information on Bullying visit the View Minnesota Statute, Section 121A.0695](#).

Controlled Substances (prescription): A drug or other substance identified under Schedules I, II, III, IV or V of the Controlled Substance Act. See 21 USC § 812 (c); and Minnesota Statutes Section, 152.01, Subd. 4. The term does not include distilled spirits, wine, malt beverages, intoxicating liquors or tobacco. [View the Controlled Substance Descriptions, Minnesota Statute, Section 152.01](#).

For purposes of DIRS reporting, use this incident type when a student has in his or her possession, prescription medication belonging to that student, and the possession is against school policy, consistent with Minnesota Statutes Section, 121A.221 and Minnesota Statutes Section, 121A.2205. Minnesota Statutes Section, 121A.221 addresses when it is appropriate for a student to possess and use asthma inhalers at school and Minnesota Statutes Section, 121A.2205 addresses when it is appropriate for a student to possess and use nonsyringe injectors of epinephrine at school.

[View Minnesota Statute, Section 121A.221](#)

[View Minnesota Statute, Section 121A.2205](#)

[View Minnesota Statute, Section 152.01](#)

Possession/Use: The possession of a controlled substance (that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed healthcare professional) on school grounds or at a school-sponsored function, if it is in violation of school policy.

Solicitation/Sale: The act of giving away, bartering, exchanging, distributing, delivering, selling or soliciting the sale of a controlled substance (that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed healthcare professional) on school grounds or at a school-sponsored function. This does not include alcohol, tobacco, or prescription medication belonging to another person.

Computer: Use this incident type when a district's disciplinary policy includes incidents that violate a district/school policy related to the appropriate use of computers.

Disruptive/Disorderly/Insubordination: Use this incident type for student conduct meeting the district's definition of disruptive conduct, disorderly conduct, or insubordination. Administrators should consider a student's age and developmentally appropriate behavior before using this category. Examples include: serious instances of classroom or campus disruption (such as pulling a fire alarm, defiance of authority, disobeying or showing disrespect to others); using obscene, offensive, or abusive language or gestures; and disruptive demonstrations.

Extortion: Use this incident type for student conduct that meets the district's definition of extortion. Examples would include taking lunch money from another student on school grounds or at a school-sponsored function after obtaining consent through the use of force or the threat of force.

Fighting: Use this incident type for student conduct that meets the district's definition of fighting as set forth in its disciplinary policy, and which does not rise to the level of the district's definition of physical assault.

Gang Activity: Use this incident type for student conduct that meets the definition of gang activity in the district's disciplinary policy. The definition in criminal statute can be found in Minnesota Statutes, section, 609.229, Subdivision. 1: [View more Gang Activity laws on the Office of the Revisor website.](#)

Hazing: Use this incident type when an action meets the district's definition in its discipline policy, consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.69. Student or staff hazing applies to student behavior that occurs on or off school property and during or after school hours. Hazing is defined in state law as "an act against a student, or coercing a student into committing an act, that creates a substantial risk of harm to a person in order for the student to be initiated into or affiliated with a student organization." [View more information on Hazing on the Office of the Revisor website.](#)

Harassment: Use this incident type for student conduct that meets the district's definition in its discipline policy, consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section, 121A.03. [View more information on Harassment.](#)

Homicide: Homicide is defined as: "the killing of one human being by the act, procurement, or omission of another. The act of a human being in taking away the life of another human being." *Black's Law Dictionary* fifth Edition (1999), page 661.

Sexual Harassment: MDE's Model Harassment and Violence Prohibition Policy defines sexual harassment as unwelcome conduct based upon actual or perceived sex/gender or sexual

orientation. It may include verbal acts and name-calling as well as nonverbal behavior, such as graphic or written statements or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful or humiliating. The conduct is considered harassment if it creates a hostile environment by interfering with a student's ability to participate in or receive the benefits, services or opportunities in the school district's employment or programs including extracurricular programs. The district's discipline policy may provide additional definitions." [Visit the MDE Website to view the Model Harassment Policy.](#)

Racial Harassment: MDE's Model Sexual Harassment and Violence Prohibition Policy defines racial harassment as physical or verbal conduct relating to an individual's actual or perceived race when the conduct has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working or educational environment. The conduct may take many forms including verbal acts and name-calling as well as nonverbal behavior, such as graphic or written statements or conduct that is physically threatening, harmful or humiliating. The district's discipline policy may provide additional definitions. [View more information on the Non-sexual Harassment laws.](#)

Illegal Drugs: An illegal drug is defined under IDEA 2004 as a controlled substance that is not "a substance that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health-care professional or that is legally possessed or used under any other authority under [IDEA] or under any other provision of federal law." (20 U.S.C. § 1415(k)(7)(B)). This incident type is used for controlled substances that do not fit under the controlled substance incident type described above. The drug must be on one of the five schedules of controlled substances listed in Minn. Stat. §,152.02. This does not include alcohol or tobacco. Minn. Stat. §, 152.01.

Possession/Use: The unlawful use or possession of any illegal drug (as defined above) or the possession of devices used for preparing or taking illegal drugs on school grounds or at a school-sponsored function. This does not include alcohol, tobacco or prescription medications belonging to that person. Minnesota Statutes Section,152.01. [View more on the possession of any illegal drug.](#)

Solicitation/Sale: The act of giving away, bartering, exchanging, distributing, delivering, selling or soliciting the sale of an illegal drug (as defined above) on school grounds or at a school-sponsored function. This does not include alcohol, tobacco, or prescription medication belonging to that person. Minnesota Statutes Section, 152.01. [To view more on the Solicitation/Sale.](#)

Over-the-Counter Medications against School Policy: Minnesota statutes, section 121A.22 addresses when it is appropriate for secondary students to have possession and use of nonprescription pain relievers at school, on school grounds, or at a school-sponsored function. Use this incident type if a student's possession of over-the-counter medications is against the district's discipline policy, consistent with Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.22. [Over-the-Counter Medications laws.](#)

Pyrotechnics: Use this incident type for student conduct that meets the district's definition in its disciplinary policy. Minnesota criminal law defines "explosive fireworks" as fireworks that contain pyrotechnic or flash powder, gunpowder, black powder, or any other explosive compound

constructed to produce detonation or deflagration. Minnesota Statutes, section 624.20. [View the laws on Pyrotechnics.](#)

Robbery: District should use this incident type for student conduct that meets the disciplinary policy. Read the state definition of robbery. [View the Minnesota Statutes on Robbery](#)

Terroristic Threats: Use this incident type for student conduct that meets the district's definition of a terroristic threat in its disciplinary policy. If the incident involves a bomb threat, you may wish to record it under that category if your district has a policy that includes bomb threats as a separate disciplinary category. The criminal definition of a terroristic threat involves both a bomb threat and a threat to commit any crime of violence with the purpose to terrorize another person. Minnesota Statutes Section, 609.713. [View the Statutes on Terroristic Threats](#)

Theft: Use this incident type for student conduct that meets the district's definition of theft in its disciplinary policy. The criminal definition of theft is the intentional taking, using, transferring, concealing, or retaining possession of personal property of another without the other's consent and with intent to deprive the owner permanently of possession of the personal property. Minnesota Statutes Section, 609.52. [View the State Statute on Theft.](#)

Threat/Intimidation: Use this incident type for student conduct that meets the district's definition of threat or intimidation in its disciplinary policy. If the action fits both the definition of a threat or intimidation and bullying, pick the incident type that best describes the conduct. If the action fits the definition of a bomb threat or terroristic threat, choose the incident type that the district determines is most appropriate for the conduct.

Tobacco: Each school district should follow its own definitions in the discipline policy to address the possession, use, distribution or sale of tobacco products on school grounds, school-sponsored events and on transportation to and from school or other school transportation. More detail over what may be considered a tobacco product can be found at Minnesota Statutes Section, 297F.01, Subd. 19. [View the State Statute on Tobacco Usage.](#)

Vandalism/Property-Related: Use this incident type for student conduct that meets the district's definition of vandalism in its disciplinary policy. The vandalism act should have occurred at school, on school grounds, or at a school-sponsored activity. Examples include: incidents such as carving initials or words in desktops or spray painting on walls.

Verbal Abuse: Use this incident type for student conduct that meets the district's definition of verbal abuse in its disciplinary policy. The verbal conduct may also fit under the disruptive conduct/intimidation or harassment incident type. It is up to each district to decide which incident type best describes the action based upon its own disciplinary policy.

Weapon: If this option is selected, you will be asked to specify the type of weapon(s). You may choose more than one type of weapon for the same incident. See the Weapon Type section below for the specific options available.

Weapon – Fields, Values, Descriptions

Refer to the Fields and Values document in DIRS Help Documentation for field, field value, and field details. Filter by desired Field (column C) or Field Value Descriptions (column F) to easily isolate the desired field for display. [View more on Weapon violation](#)

Some of the choices will prompt the user for additional information. For example, when reporting a long gun incident, you will be asked, “Was the gun loaded?,” “Was the gun cased?,” and “Was the gun in the trunk of a vehicle?” “When reporting a knife incident, the user will be asked whether the knife is a pocketknife, and whether the knife blade was less than 2 ½” in length or 2 ½” or more in length.

For all incidents involving a weapon, arson, or bomb, you will be asked whether or not the weapon/device/combustible or flammable liquid is a dangerous weapon as defined by law. In making that determination, the district must answer the following questions after reading and reviewing the definitions in the laws that are linked next to each question:

- Is this considered dangerous weapon under state law? (Minnesota Statutes Section, [609.02, subd. 6](#))?
- Is this considered a dangerous weapon under federal law? ([18 U.S.C. § 930\(g\)\(2\)](#) and [18 U.S.C § 921 \(a\) \(3\) and \(a\)\(4\)](#))?

If the weapon meets the state definition of a dangerous weapon, then the weapon must be reported even if there is no corresponding disciplinary action. This may occur if there is a referral to law enforcement or if a weapon is found but possession is not tied to a particular student. The dangerous weapon reporting is mandated under Minnesota Statutes Section, 121A.06, Subd. 1(1).

[Minnesota Statues, Section 121A.06](#)

[Minnesota Statues, Section 609.02](#)

Federal definition of a dangerous weapon:

“The term “dangerous weapon” means a weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, animate or inanimate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury, except that such term does not include a pocket knife with a blade of less than 2 ½ inches in length.” (18 U.S.C. § 930(g)(2)).

As defined above, a pocketknife with a blade of less than 2.5 inches would never be considered a dangerous weapon for placing a special education student in a 45 school day interim setting. If the weapon meets the federal definition of a dangerous weapon, then the school district/charter school would have the authority to unilaterally remove a special education student from his or her current placement. Additional information can be found under “Type of Action” “Unilateral Removal”.

Federal Definition of Firearm:

- (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive;
- (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon;

(C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or

(D) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm.

The term “destructive device” means—

(A) any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas—

(i) bomb,

(ii) grenade,

(iii) rocket having a propellant charge of more than four ounces,

(iv) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce,

(v) mine, or

(vi) device similar to any of the devices described in the preceding clauses;

(B) any type of weapon (other than a shotgun or a shotgun shell which the Attorney General finds is generally recognized as particularly suitable for sporting purposes) by whatever name known which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has any barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter; and

(C) any combination of parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device into any destructive device described in subparagraph (A) or (B) and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.

The term “destructive device” shall not include any device which is neither designed nor redesigned for use as a weapon; any device, although originally designed for use as a weapon, which is redesigned for use as a signaling, pyrotechnic, line throwing, safety, or similar device; surplus ordnance sold, loaned, or given by the Secretary of the Army pursuant to the provisions of section 4684 (2), 4685, or 4686 of title 10; or any other device which the Attorney General finds is not likely to be used as a weapon, is an antique, or is a rifle which the owner intends to use solely for sporting, recreational or cultural purposes.” 18 U.S.C. § 921(a)(3)(4).

BB guns, air guns, paint guns, replica/toy guns and cap guns do not fit the federal definition of a firearm because they do not expel a projectile by the action of an explosive. Accordingly, a school district/charter school is not mandated under Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.44 to expel a student for having one of the weapons named above. A school district may include those guns under its definition of a weapon as delineated in its disciplinary policy.

View Minnesota Statute: [View the State Laws on Expulsion for Possession of Firearm.](#)

Other. If the weapon incident you wish to report is not listed above, select this item. There is no corresponding text box for this selection, therefore, only select “other” if the weapon does not fit any of the other categories.

Victim – Fields, Values, Descriptions: Refer to the Fields and Values document in DIRS Help Documentation for field, field value, and field details. Filter by desired Field (column C) or Field Value Descriptions (column F) to easily isolate the desired field for display. [View the instructions for DIRS fields and Values.](#)

Field Tips:

Victim Information: Answer the question “Are there victims involved in this incident?”

If there is one or more victim enrolled or employed at your school, select “There are victims enrolled or employed in this school” and you will be prompted to identify the appropriate victim type (student – MARSS information known, teacher, district employee, student – MARSS information unknown, or multiple (i.e., bus, class, school-wide) and search your school's incident date MARSS enrollments to locate and identify each known student victim.

If there is one or more victims not enrolled at your school, select “There are victims not enrolled in this school” and you will be prompted to provide a count.

Document whether injury occurred and whether any medical costs were incurred to the victim. Cost can include the extent of victim harm and whether any medical treatment was necessary. Selections include \$0, \$1-\$500 and over \$500.

Please note that for unilateral removals of special education students based upon serious bodily injury, you must first input victim information.

Victim information is also required for the following disciplinary infractions:

- Assault (physical and sexual)
- Bullying (including cyber-bullying)
- Harassment
- Hazing
- Homicide
- Robbery

Minnesota Statutes, section 121A.06, Subd. 2(4)(5). [View the Victim information requirements.](#)

MARSS Number. If there are problems locating the MARSS number in the DIRS system, consult with the district MARSS coordinator.

All fields entered must be an exact match to the matching MARSS record for the incident date. Therefore, limiting searches to the fewer known pieces of information is recommended. For instance, if the student is a John Jr., a lot of variability could exist in the placement of the Jr., so refrain from using First Name. In that case, perhaps only use the Last Name.

Results from a broad search (i.e., grade = 11) may result in a list (some may have left radio options and others may be missing radio options).

- Radio Options match MARSS enrollment records within the incident district and school.
- Records without radio options only match MARSS enrollment records within the incident district. Students appear to be enrolled at a differing site according to MARSS. The right-hand column indicates the incident date enrolled site. Consult with the MARSS

coordinator if changes are needed. Allow for reasonable process time (# days) after the MARSS Coordinator's MARSS WES submission for updated MARSS records to appear in DIRS.

- Select the desired radio button to identify the offender or victim.

Trouble-shooting students not found:

- Confirm with the MARSS coordinator that the student's record was submitted accurately in the last full file submission and that "Upload" was requested by the MARSS coordinator when performing the submission in MARSS WES. Also confirm the date of the last submission. In general, allow for a reasonable process time (# days) for upload process to occur at MDE, at which time the student should then be found via DIRS. MARSS coordinators network with appropriate regional or MARSS MDE support resources.
- Confirm with the MARSS coordinator that the student's record matched **exactly** with the criteria identified within the incident's search criteria:
 - Did the *Incident Date* fall within Start and End Date and was the student at the corresponding district and school specified in the incident?
 - Are the school and district identifiers matching for the incident date? If not, and a student record appears without a selection to the left of it, then the farthest right-hand column displays the site where MARSS located an enrollment record for that student on the incident date.
 - Were the elements used as search criteria exact as attempted? Could Johnathan be Jonathan on the enrollment record? Such a discrepancy would exclude a hit on First Name in DIRS.

Resolving problems with an enrollment record:

- Consult with the MARSS coordinator to correct the enrollment record and resubmit the file using "Upload" in MARSS WES. In general, allow for a reasonable process time (# days) for upload process to occur at MDE, at which time the student should then be found via DIRS.
- If a combo field search was attempted and unsuccessful in locating a match, repeat the search with field at a time to see if a match is located using a differing combination than expected.

Disciplinary Action – Fields, Values, Descriptions:

Refer to the Fields and Values document in DIRS Help Documentation for field, field value, and field details. Filter by desired Field (column C) or Field Value Descriptions (column F) to easily isolate the desired field for display. [Download the document form the MDE website](#)

Field Tips:

Disciplinary Actions

This section of DIRS describes what type of disciplinary action was taken due to the incident. Disciplinary actions include in-school suspensions and removals for a partial day for special education student offenders, and out- of-school suspensions for one day or more and expulsions/exclusions for all student offenders. Exclusions and expulsions must be determined by school board action.

If the offender is a student at the school where the incident occurred, you must record at least one disciplinary action taken against that student. If another action is taken later in the school year against the offender for the same incident, you may add that action to the report at a later date. For instance, if a student is suspended and then is subsequently expelled for the same incident, or a student is suspended and then transfers or withdraws based on that incident. In order to add a second action, note the initial incident report number, then enter that number when prompted under the “edit saved report” option on the DIRS main page. Once in the initial report, choose “add action” from the subsequent “add offender/victim” screen.

In-School Suspension (ISS): This option is only available for special education students. This action applies to the removal of a special education student from his/her educational placement for disciplinary purposes for a half- day or more, up to 10 school days. Districts still need to track all in school suspensions of special education students, including less than half-day to determine if there is a pattern of removals that constitute a disciplinary change of placement.

Out-of-school Suspension (OSS):

- For general education students: Report any formal out-of-school suspension for one school days or more, up to 10 school days, (15 days if pending expulsion action).
- For special education students: Report each time that a student receives a formal out of school suspension or is removed from school for half a school day or more. Removals for more than a half day up to one school day should be reported as a full day of removal. Districts still need to track all removals of special education students, including less than half days to determine if there is a pattern of removals that constitute a disciplinary change of placement. View Minnesota Statute, section 121A.43. [View the Out-of-school Suspension Laws.](#)

Expulsion: Expulsion means a school board action to prohibit an enrolled pupil from further attendance for up to 12 months from the date the student is expelled.

[View the State Statutes on Expulsion.](#)

A district must report expulsions through DIRS within 30 calendar days of the school board’s resolution to expel the student.

When reporting an expulsion, you need to know the start and end date of the expulsion. That information should be contained in the school board’s resolution.

In the event that the student offender returns to school earlier during the current school year, there is a section that allows you to enter the number of days that the expulsion or exclusion was reduced. Please note that the modification information can only be entered for the current school year.

In addition, for expulsions of special education students that do not exceed ten school days, you also need to know the number of school days the student offender will miss during the period of expulsion.

Please note that for purposes of DIRS reporting, the number of days of dismissal for an expulsion must be five or more days. This was added in order to ensure the validity of the reported expulsion and exclusion actions.

Exclusion: Exclusion means an action taken by the school board to prevent enrollment or reenrollment of a pupil for a period that shall not extend beyond the school year. This is a formal process like an expulsion and is not used to report classroom removals, ISS, or OSS. Minnesota Statute, section 121A.41 [To view Exclusion and what it means.](#)

When reporting a formal exclusion, you need to know the start and end date of the exclusion. That information should be contained in the school board's resolution. In the event that the student offender returns to school earlier during the current school year, a section allows you to enter the number of days that the expulsion or exclusion was reduced. Please note that the modification information can only be entered for the current school year.

In addition, for exclusions of special education students that do not exceed ten school days, you also need to know the number of school days the student offender will miss during the period of exclusion.

Please note that for purposes of DIRS reporting, the number of days of dismissal for an expulsion must be five or more days. This was added in order to ensure the validity of the reported expulsion and exclusion actions.

A district must report exclusions through DIRS within 30 calendar days of the school board's resolution to exclude the student. [View the DIRS information on Expulsions and Exclusions.](#)

Unilateral Removal to an Alternative Educational Setting: This option is only to be used for special education students. This choice is not available for general education students. This option can only be used if the incident type meets one of three situations described below. If a special education student's conduct met the definition of "serious bodily injury," you must report a victim in order to select the unilateral removal action. If the incident type meets one of the three categories, you need to specify which category is applicable. A unilateral removal cannot exceed 45 school days and cannot be of a longer duration than the district would discipline a nondisabled student for similar conduct. The three types of incidents that can result in a unilateral removal are set forth in 20 U.S.C. § 1415 (k)(1)(A)(ii):

(k) Placement in alternative educational setting

(1) Authority of school personnel

(G) School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability in cases where a child-

(i) carries or possesses a dangerous weapon as defined in federal law to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a state or a local educational agency; or

(ii) knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a state or local educational agency (does not include alcohol or tobacco)

(iii) has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a state or local education agency.

As set forth in 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(i), the definitions for a controlled substance is a scheduled drug or substance as defined in 21 U.S.C. § 812(c). 34 C.F.R. § 300.530(h)(i)(2) defines an illegal drug as a controlled substance that is not legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health care professional or under any other legal authority.

The definition for serious bodily injury is as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 1365(h)(3). The definition for weapon is a dangerous weapon as defined in 18 U.S.C. § 930(g)(2).

18 U.S.C. § 1365(h)(3) provides:

(3) the term “serious bodily injury” means bodily injury which involves—

(A) a substantial risk of death;

(B) extreme physical pain;

(C) protracted and obvious disfigurement; or

(D) protracted loss or impairment of the function of a bodily member, organ, or mental faculty; ...

Dangerous weapon is defined under 18 U.S.C. § 930(g)(2) as: “a weapon, device, instrument, material, or substance, inanimate or animate, that is used for, or is readily capable of, causing death or serious bodily injury, except that, such term does not include a pocket knife with a blade of less than 2.5 inches in length.”

Removal by Hearing Officer on Determination of Likely Injury. This option is to be used only for special education students. This choice will not appear up for general education students. Use this option if a hearing officer removes a special education student from the student’s educational placement due to the likelihood of injury to the student or others.

Administrative Transfer. This option applies when a school chooses to transfer the offender to another school within the district in lieu of or in conjunction with another type of disciplinary action.

Offender Requested to Transfer within the School District. This option applies when the offender asks to transfer to another school within the school district in lieu of or in conjunction with another type of disciplinary action.

Offender Requested to Transfer to Another District. This option applies when the offender asks to transfer to another school district in lieu of or in conjunction with another type of disciplinary action.

Offender Withdrew from School: This option applies when the offender withdraws from school in lieu of or in conjunction with another type of disciplinary action.

Field Tips:

School Record – Fields, Values, Descriptions

Refer to the Fields and Values document in DIRS Help Documentation for field, field value, and field details. Filter by desired Field (column C) or Field Value Descriptions (column F) to easily isolate the desired field for display. [DIRS Help Documentation for field, field value, and field details](#)

Habitual Truants

As part of the federal July 1 reporting requirements for Title IV, each school must report aggregate truancy rates. By July of each school year, each school should report the total number of students who meet the definition of a habitual truant as defined in Minnesota Statutes, section 260C.007, Subdivision. 19. Once a student meets that definition, they are counted only once, no matter how many additional days that student is truant. The count is based upon the state definition of a habitual truant, not whether the district has referred the matter to the county attorney's office. The habitual truancy count includes students who met the definition of a habitual truant and then transferred or withdrew from school.

For elementary students, a student is habitually truant if he or she missed seven cumulative school days without lawful excuse during a school year.

For students in middle school, junior high, or high school, a student is habitually truant if he or she missed one or more class periods without lawful excuse over seven school days during a school year. Students under the age of 16 (and students between the ages of 16 and 18 who have not legally withdrawn from school) are subject to the truancy statute. [View Minnesota Statutes on Habitual Truants](#)

District Completion Report

District superintendents are required to certify that the information recorded in the DIRS system accurately reflects the data collected by the schools in their district. This selection allows the superintendent to review the cumulative data entered for the district and electronically confirm that the data is complete and accurate. By certifying the district's disciplinary data, the superintendent is ensuring that each school has accurately entered all of the disciplinary incidents and accurately completed the truancy and safety reports and has confirmed that there are no duplicate incidents reported (see "List Potential Duplicate Incidents" report). This includes that exclusion and expulsion proceedings are timely and accurately reported throughout the school year. Districts must verify that the expulsions and exclusions are based on school board action. The "District Completion" button will not be accessible until all incidents and the school information is complete.

DIRS Reports

Incomplete incidents can be viewed on the DIRS home page. A checkbox is available to display "All incidents". The superintendent has the additional ability to view the list of district and school statuses on completion, which offer drill-down capabilities to view any respective school page or individual incidents.

Principals and superintendents should review the "List of Potential Duplicate Incidents" report prior to determining that the inputted DIRS data is accurate and complete. If there are any duplicate entries, they must be corrected before the district completes certification.