

Inside This Issue

MDE School Finance Student Data Staffing Update.....	1
MARSS Reporting Timelines.....	2
REMINDER: Uploading MARSS Data Before and During the Testing Window.....	2
Graduation Rates and Summer Leavers.....	2
Reporting High School Graduates.....	3
Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS)	3
MARSS Coordinator List	3
MARSS WES Edits.....	4
Single Student Names.....	5
School Calendar Requirements and Snow Days	6
Homeless and Foster.....	7
Uniform Billing for Residential Care and Treatment for Students Without an Individual Education Program (IEP)	8

MDE School Finance Student Data Staffing Update

Roxann Neu has joined the Division of School Finance as our statewide MARSS Coordinator. Roxann was the MARSS Coordinator at Independent School District #750, Rocori. Welcome, Roxann! Roxann can be reached at marss@state.mn.us or roxann.neu@state.mn.us, her telephone number is 651-582-8486. We prefer that you use marss@state.mn.us as the primary contact for MARSS reporting questions. Four School Finance staff have access to this e-mail account assuring that you receive a response as soon as possible even when some staff are out of the office.

Jeanne Krile is our new Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO) Finance Specialist. She continues to work with districts and charter schools for their average daily membership (ADM) and English Learners (EL) ADM estimates on EDRS. However, she traded special education responsibilities for PSEO. Please direct PSEO eligibility questions to Jeanne as well as questions on the PSEO and PSEO Concurrent reports. She can be reached at jeanne.krile@state.mn.us or 651-582-8637. Questions on reporting PSEO and PSEO Concurrent students on MARSS and/or computing PSEO High School Hours should be addressed to marss@state.mn.us.

MARSS Reporting Timelines

MARSS files are due to the department on the following dates. [View the posted timelines for more detail](#). We are currently working on the FY 2014 MARSS reporting timelines and will notify you when they have been posted.

1. May 7, 2013 – EOY FY 2013 data files due from all districts and charter schools. Selected reports will be posted to MARSS WES after the statewide edit is completed.
2. June 11, 2013 – EOY FY 2013 files due from school districts and charter schools. The full spectrum of reports will be posted to MARSS WES and Minnesota Funding Reports (MFR) after the statewide edit is completed.

Contact: marss@state.mn.us

REMINDER: Uploading MARSS Data Before and During the Testing Window

The MARSS coordinator should be uploading new MARSS files whenever a student is withdrawn and/or enrolls in a school before or during the testing window. If the student leaves school “A” and enters school “B,” school “B” cannot test this student until school “A” withdraws the student and does a new MARSS upload. This is creating issues for testing staff as it can take 48 hours for the student to be uploaded from MARSS into Test Wes and then into AIR, the testing database. So please make sure you are updating and uploading new MARSS files whenever students withdraw and/or re-enroll in a new school/district.

Contact: marss@state.mn.us

Graduation Rates and Summer Leavers

[Refer to the September 18, 2012 MARSS Memo](#) for a lengthy article on reporting summer leavers and how these records impact a district’s or charter school’s graduation rates. Also, [refer to the MARSS Manual](#), Reporting Procedure 12 for instructions on how to report summer leavers. On Page 4 is an article entitled “MARSS WES Edits” for information on how the age edit has been updated.

The four-year graduation rate is a four-year, on-time graduation rate based on a cohort of first time ninth grade students plus transfers into the cohort within the four year period minus transfers out of the cohort within the four year period. For more information on how the graduation rates are computed, refer to the help files posted to the [Data Reports and Analytics web page](#), select Student under Student Data at the bottom of the list. On the next page, select the Graduation Rate category, 2012 year and Graduation subcategory. Select List Files and then the PDF icon under Help Files.

A spreadsheet list of students who were included in a school’s 2012 graduation rate calculation is posted to the [Data Reports and Analytics web page](#) under MDE Secured Reports. Students are identified in one of the following categories:

Graduate – The student was reported as a graduate (Status End 08).

Stop – The student transferred to another Minnesota public school, a nonpublic or home school, or to a school in another state; the student is deceased (Status End 11); or the student moved out of the country (Status End 05).

Drop – The student dropped out of school entirely.

Continue – The student is still enrolled in a high school program.

Unknown – The student was last enrolled in this school but no later enrollment record or leaver record has been reported.

Students in the Unknown category should be researched to learn if a summer leaver record should have been reported. Refer to the MARSS Reporting Procedure 12 for more information on reporting a summer leaver.

1. If a student in the Unknown category received a diploma from this district or charter school while not enrolled in school, report the student as a summer graduate. The student's transcript serves as the written documentation.
2. If the student transferred to a nonpublic or home school that is in compliance with the compulsory attendance law, report the student as a summer transfer to a nonpublic school, Status End 03. The school should have a request for transcript from the nonpublic/home school as written documentation.
3. If the student is deceased, report the student as a summer leaver, Status End 11. An obituary or newspaper article can serve as the written documentation.
4. If the student moved out of the country, a written and dated description of a parent conversation can serve as the written documentation.

The school must have written documentation to report students as summer leavers per the federal guidance. [View the High School Graduation Non-Regulatory Guidance.](#)

Contact: marss@state.mn.us

Reporting High School Graduates

Most student software defaults to Status End 08 graduate for seniors. However, not all seniors graduate at the end of the school year. The local MARSS WES report called MARSS 11 Graduate Student Report should be shared with your high school counselor so that they can identify seniors who will not/do not graduate at the end of the senior year. These seniors should be reported with either Status End 40 (student enrolled on the last day of the school year without graduating) or 42 (all credits completed but missing one or more GRAD tests).

Contact: marss@state.mn.us

Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS)

[Refer to the October 18, 2012 MARSS Memo](#) for information on reporting for Coordinated Early Intervening Services (CEIS).

MARSS Coordinator List

[View an updated MARSS Coordinators Contact List](#) that was posted to the MDE website earlier this month.

Contact: marss@state.mn.us

MARSS WES Edits

All EOY MARSS WES edits were activated on Monday, April 8, 2013, following the April 4, 2013, reporting deadline. Be sure to enter one (1) attendance and membership hour for students who are required to be reported in terms of hours, e.g., early childhood special education, learning year, area learning center (ALC), etc. Records that require Special Education Service Hours can have one (1) entered as well so that the record does not error out. If the student's enrollment record was terminated prior to the file extract date, actual attendance, membership and service hours should be reported. The warning messages below will notify you of the single attendance and/or service hour so that student records can be corrected during the summer.

- #361 *W* Low Service Hours – Special Education Service Hours are less than 2.0.
- #362 *W* Low Attendance – Attendance is one or less.

Several edits were added or updated on April 8, 2013.

New Messages

#365 Status End Code equals 07 but student is less than 16 years old.

The definition of Status End Code 07 is a student who dropped out of school upon reaching age 16 and met with school staff under Minnesota Statutes, section 120A.22, Subdivision 8. If the birthdate is accurate, assign a different Status End Code.

#366 Grade 11 or 12 in an elementary or middle school.

Schools that serve 12th graders will have a graduation rate computed. Verify that the school classification is correct. If so, move the students to a high school or secondary school. If the school classification is incorrect, send an e-mail to mde.school-verify@state.mn.us.

#367 *W* Ethnic Code conflict.

This message is triggered in one of two ways:

1. If the individual race/ethnic code (the original one) is not one of the selections in the new federal race codes, the warning will be generated.
2. If the student has been flagged as Hispanic in the new federal ethnic codes, consider changing the original race/ethnic code to Hispanic.

The warning message is looking for data entry errors. Although the new federal race/ethnic codes are being used primarily for federal reporting, eventually MDE will switch to the new codes. Assuring that these are consistent with each other will avoid unexpected swings in counts by race/ethnicity.

#368 CY (current year) Ineligible LYP (learning year program) enrollment; not enrolled last year

Kindergarten students are ineligible to report as Targeted Services (school classification 45) or other learning year (school classification 44) participants during the summer if they were not enrolled in a Minnesota public school during the prior school year. For kindergarten students, the optional summer portion of the school year is available only to students who had been enrolled in a Minnesota public school the year before. This student's summer enrollment record should be removed from the MARSS file.

#369 *W* Warning CY (current year) – Graduate or deceased prior year.

Students who graduated or passed away during the prior school year cannot be enrolled during the current school year. Remove the student from MARSS. If the Status End Code reported in the prior year is in error and that reporting cycle is still open, correct the EOY file and resubmit. If the EOY cycle is closed at the time this warning message is first displayed, it is too late to correct the prior year's MARSS data. Ignore the warning message.

Updated Edits

#188 Grade not valid at specific charter school.

This edit was updated to verify that grades reported by learning year and online learning (OLL) charter school sites have been approved in the original or amended learning year or OLL application. These programs require additional MDE approval. If the school has authority for the reported grade levels, send a copy of the approval letter that lists the grade levels that have been flagged in error to marss@state.mn.us. We can update the table that sits behind the edit with the newer information.

#128 Age >= 21 First Record.

#133 Age >= 20 prior to September 1.

Two updates were made to these error messages:

1. Students who graduate in the summer but have since turned age 21 will pass the edit so that all graduates can be reported. This will be a permanent change.
2. In order to allow districts and charter schools to identify summer leavers who had not been reported in the last four years, the edit will temporarily allow schools to report selected summer leavers up to the age of 25. This applies to 9th through 12th grade students who during one of the summers since 2009:
 - a. were deceased,
 - b. transferred to a school in another state,
 - c. transferred to a nonpublic/home school, or
 - d. moved out of the country.

The increase in age to report summer graduates and dropouts will be a permanent change to the MARSS edit. The increase in age to report summer leavers is temporary to allow schools a year to identify students they had not accurately reported in the past. It will be in effective for FY 2013 reporting.

Contact: marss@state.mn.us

Single Student Names

We were asked how to report students who had only one name. The consensus is to report that single name in the student's last name field. In the first name field enter a dash (-). This will pass both the MARSS edit and the Student ID Validation System.

Contact: marss@state.mn.us

School Calendar Requirements and Snow Days

Q. How do I mark a day when school was canceled?

A. Mark the day as “no school,” as for a Saturday or school break. For state purposes, this day is not an instructional day for the school/grade and not an attendance/membership day for students. It does not matter if school is closed for weather, fire, boiler breakdown, staff development, funeral, school break, etc. No school is no school. This does not affect Average Daily Membership (ADM) for most full-year students, which is the comparison of a student’s membership days to instructional days. For example, 175 membership days divided by 175 instructional days is 1.0 ADM, as is 174 membership days divided by 174 instructional days.

Q. Do I need to reschedule the school day later in the year?

A. The local school board must determine whether or not to make up a canceled school day. They set the original calendar and they have the authority to amend it. For accountability purposes, the board should formally amend the calendar to show the day as canceled and then indicate any school make-up days. Charter schools should send a copy of the amended calendar to Jeanne Krile in School Finance.

Q. Will we lose state aid if we do not make it up?

A. There is no direct financial penalty for having too few instructional hours. The statute requires schools to have a minimum number of instructional hours per year; it does not provide a penalty for not meeting this schedule.

Minimum Annual Instructional Hours

- 425 for non-disabled kindergarten
- 935 for grades 1-6
- 1,020 for grades 7-12

However, students whose ADM is based on a statute-defined number of hours will generate fewer membership hours if the canceled instruction is not rescheduled. Specifically, kindergarten-disabled and early childhood students with more than 231 membership hours are affected, i.e., fewer membership hours results in less ADM.

Also, if the lost days cause a district's annual instructional hours to fall below 1,020 for grades 7 - 12 or 935 for grades 5 - 6, students who are also enrolled at a state-approved alternative program (SAAP) at any time during the fiscal year will generate less ADM at the SAAP. Students enrolled at SAAPs other than Targeted Services generate ADM based on the greater of the actual instructional hours provided or the minimum annual instructional hours as described above.

Q. How do I code a late start/early dismissal?

A. Emergency late starts or early dismissals can be reported as a regular full school day. However, scheduled late starts and early dismissals for any reason (staff development, state tournaments, parent-teacher conferences, etc.) affect the length of day that is reported on the MARSS school file. Use the Flexible Scheduling worksheet to calculate an average length of day to report on MARSS when the scheduled length of day varies during the school year. [Click here](#) for a link to the webpage where the Flexible Scheduling worksheet is posted.

Q. How do I code an emergency late start/early dismissal when one section of kindergarten is canceled?

A. For half-day, daily kindergarten:

- When morning kindergarten is canceled but either afternoon kindergarten is held or there is no afternoon class, mark the morning kindergarten as a non-school day.
- When afternoon kindergarten is canceled but either morning kindergarten is held or there is no morning class, mark the afternoon kindergarten as a non-school day.
- For full-day, alternative day kindergarten:

The kindergarten section that was scheduled to meet on a canceled day should be marked as “no school.”

Making Up Lost School Days

School boards have leeway in making up the lost instructional time. Classes can be held on Saturday, the length of day can be extended, non-school days can be converted to student instructional days, and/or days can be added at the end of the school year in May and June.

If school is held on Saturday(s), non-school days converted to student instructional days, and/or days are added at the end of the year, mark them as instructional days in your student software. They should be reported as instructional days on the MARSS A School File and as membership days for students enrolled on the MARSS B Student File.

If the length of day is extended, use the Flexible Scheduling worksheet to compute the average length of day to report on the MARSS A School File. The worksheet can be found on the public MARSS-Student Accounting website. Click [here](#) for a link to the webpage where the Flexible Scheduling worksheet is posted. This “report” does not need to be returned to the department but keep a copy on file in case of a student attendance audit.

Whether or not the canceled school days are made-up, the board needs to adopt a new school calendar showing the canceled school days as non-school days. If any new days are added as student instructional days, mark them on the amended calendar as well. Only charter schools need to send a copy of the amended school calendar to Jeanne Krile in School Finance.

Contact: [Sharon Peck](#) at 651-582-8811.

Homeless and Foster

The June 10, 2012 MARSS, memo described legislative changes to residency determinations for students determined to be homeless by the district’s or charter school’s Homeless Liaison. Basically, the resident district is where the parent or court-appointed guardian, if there is no parent, resides.

What we have since learned is that many students who are initially placed in a foster home meet the McKinney-Vento eligibility criteria and can be identified on MARSS with the Homeless flag. Once a student has been identified by the Homeless Liaison as homeless, the homeless flag stays set to ‘Y’ on the student’s MARSS enrollment records through the remainder of the school year, even if the student/family obtains permanent housing prior to the end of the school year.

Once the required court hearings have been held and the student remains in the foster system, the student is considered in permanent foster care. The following school year the student would not be considered homeless. The determination of homelessness needs to be reviewed annually at the beginning of the following school year. If, at that time, the Homeless Liaison determines the student continues to meet the federal definition, the student is reported as homeless. However, if the Homeless Liaison determines that the student/family no longer meets the federal criteria, the student must be flagged as Homeless ‘N.’

Contacts: [Roberto Reyes](#), MDE Homeless Specialist, at 651-582-8302.

Send questions on reporting students experiencing homelessness to marss@state.mn.us.

Uniform Billing for Residential Care and Treatment for Students Without an IEP

The 2012 Legislature required MDE to develop a uniform tuition billing form for students without IEPs who are placed for residential care and treatment. Financial responsibility for students placed in residential treatment programs who do not have an IEP rests with the resident district and is not covered under Tuition Billing which applies only to students with IEPs.

Information was sent to both the business managers and special education directors' listservs. Contact either of these staff in your district for information on how this might impact you. These students are reported on MARSS by the public school district that provides instruction.

This Uniform Tuition Billing for Care and Treatment does not apply to districts which have contracted with a private facility to provide instruction.

Contact: [George Holt](#), Special Education Funding, at 651-582-8889

This publication is produced by:

Minnesota Department of Education
Division of School Finance
1500 Highway 36 West
Roseville, MN 55113-4266
Phone: 651-582-8779
Fax: 651-582-8878
<http://education.state.mn.us>
E-Mail: marss@state.mn.us