



Greetings,

I am writing to encourage your participation in the **2019 Minnesota Student Survey (MSS)**. The MSS has been the most consistent source of data about the health and well-being of Minnesota's students for the past 30 years! This would not be possible without the commitment and support of dedicated school leaders like you.

Since 1989, the MSS has grown and evolved while also maintaining core aspects of the survey. Some key highlights include the following:

- The MSS will be administered entirely online to students in grades 5, 8, 9 and 11.
- The survey will be open from January to May 2019. Each school can choose their own date.
- Students will have the option to listen to questions, in addition to reading them on the screen.
- The MSS is anonymous and voluntary.

The MSS provides **local data** that are crucial for schools and communities to address the needs of their students. Here are some ways that MSS data have been used:

- A community group obtained a grant for substance use prevention after observing an increase in alcohol and drug use by students.
- A school district used data on suicide ideation to advocate for adding staff dedicated to mental health programming.
- A family clinic handed out "prescriptions" for fruits and vegetables to be redeemed at a local grocery store after noticing a high percentage of students were not eating enough healthy foods.

In 2016, nearly 170,000 students from more than 85 percent of public school districts and many charter schools participated in the MSS. I invite you to join this statewide effort to better understand the experiences of Minnesota students. If you have any questions about the MSS, please contact Megan Harms at (651) 582-8587 or MDE.StudentSurvey@state.mn.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brenda Cassellius'.

Dr. Brenda Cassellius
Commissioner