



2025 Minnesota Student Survey

Web Survey Administration Instructions

Public School Districts

Additional information on the 2025 Minnesota Student Survey is located at: [MSS 2025](#)

REMINDER!

DO *NOT* ADMINISTER THE

MINNESOTA STUDENT SURVEY

UNTIL YOU HAVE COMPLETED

ALL OF YOUR LEGALLY REQUIRED

PROTECTION OF PUPIL RIGHTS

AMENDMENT (PPRA) NOTIFICATIONS!!

The person who registered your school for the MSS agreed to comply with PPRA requirements. This means providing all parents/guardians the right to opt their child out of the survey. Before proceeding, check with your MSS on-site coordinator to see if any students were opted out by their parent/guardian.

If the Minnesota Student Survey is administered without the legally required Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) notifications, you **will not** receive your district's or school's results, and your results **will not** be included in **any** analysis or reports.

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Minnesota Student Survey – Overview

The **MINNESOTA STUDENT SURVEY** (MSS) provides youth, parents and their communities a dynamic vehicle for on-going communication about issues vital to the health, safety and academic success of youth. Since the survey was first offered in 1989, it has gained a solid reputation as a reflection of the needs and strengths of adolescents. It is a valuable tool for school districts, county agencies and state agencies in planning meaningful and effective ways of supporting students and families.

The survey is voluntary, confidential and anonymous on the part of students. It is designed to be given to 5th, 8th, 9th and 11th graders and asks students questions about their activities, opinions and behaviors. The broad array of issues addressed include substance abuse (tobacco, alcohol and other drugs), school climate and safety, nutrition, academics, connections with school, family and community and many other topics. **At the senior high level, there are questions asked about sexual activity and more extensive questions about drug usage.** The survey is offered to traditional public elementary and secondary schools, charter schools, tribal schools, alternative learning centers and to youth in juvenile correctional facilities. Findings for the juvenile correctional facilities and alternative learning settings are reported separately.

State, county and district-level data are made available on the Minnesota Department of Education website. Beginning with 2013, data are available in an interactive format that allows users to customize their view of the results. Data from 2013 through 2022 are available here:

<https://public.education.mn.gov/MDEAnalytics/DataTopic.jsp?TOPICID=242>.

School district findings often satisfy the requirement for objective data for state and federal grants. As important partners in providing services to students and their families, local public health and social service agencies find that the data are important for planning and programming. State agencies use the findings to monitor trends in health and risk behaviors, to design and adjust programming to meet current and anticipated needs of youth, to apply for funding for statewide initiatives and to assist schools and communities in efficient planning and implementation of youth programs.

The survey is offered every three years; 2025 will be the 13th administration. There have been high levels of participation on the part of school districts in the past and high participation rates among youth within those districts, making the data a strong depiction

of the factors that bolster Minnesota students as well as those that put them at risk for health, social or learning problems. Statewide in 2022, over 135,000 youth participated.

For the 2025 survey administration, the Minnesota Departments of Education, Health, Public Safety and Human Services are working together to manage the tasks of preparation, survey administration, data analysis and reporting.

If you have questions, please contact:

Minnesota Student Survey Interagency Team: 651-582-8488 or
mde.studentsurvey@state.mn.us

Minnesota Student Survey – Frequently Asked Questions

Who should take the survey?

- The Minnesota Student Survey is a population based survey. All students in 5th, 8th, 9th and 11th grades may participate in the survey. Schools may also opt to include other grade levels.
- The survey responses of students who are enrolled in area learning centers (ALC) or alternative learning programs (ALP) are reported separately. If you have students who are dual-enrolled, please take steps to ensure that these students only take the survey once, either with the general school population or as part of the ALC/ALP population.

Is the survey mandatory?

- Your school has chosen to participate in the Minnesota Student Survey. However, students may choose whether to participate. The survey is entirely voluntary, anonymous and confidential. Students may choose to complete the survey, complete part of the survey or not to take the survey at all. **There is a script that survey administrators are required to read to students prior to the administration of the survey. The script is located at the end of these instructions.**
- Find tip sheets on confidentiality and building buy-in for staff administering the survey at <https://mss.mn.gov/MSS/mss2025/>

Do we need to notify parents before the students take the survey?

- Yes. All school districts are required by law to notify parents of the school's participation in the Minnesota Student Survey. According to the federal education law revised in 2002 under No Child Left Behind, school districts must inform parents of surveys containing sensitive questions. The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) **requires** that parents are informed at the beginning of the school year regarding the content and approximate schedule of the surveys.
- A **second** notification is required prior to the survey administration for the parents of students who are eligible to participate in the survey. The second notification must include the specific survey schedule, the content of the survey and the process for reviewing the survey instrument.

- Parents also must be informed of their right to exclude their child(ren) from participating in the survey (passive consent procedure). Written consent to participate is not required.
- Information about PPRA and sample parental notification letters are available on the 2025 MSS website: <https://mss.mn.gov/MSS/mss2025/>.
- It is extremely important to complete the PPRA and notification procedures. **ANY surveys conducted without PPRA notifications cannot be included in any analysis nor can their results be released in any format.**

How long is the survey? How long does it take students to complete?

- The Level 3 (grades 9, 10, 11, 12, ALCs and JCFs) survey has approximately 126 questions. There are skip patterns (e.g., if a student says no to the question about alcohol use in the past year, they will then skip the follow-up questions about alcohol).
- Level 2 (grades 7 and 8) has 119 questions. Skip patterns also exist within the Level 2 survey instrument.
- The Level 1 survey (grades 5 and 6) has 62 questions. Skip patterns also exist within the Level 1 survey instrument.
- The survey typically takes 35-50 minutes, or one regular class period, to complete. Students should be under no time constraints to complete the survey. Students should complete the survey in one sitting.
- There is a back button in the survey. Students can change their answers at will. The survey will close for a given student after 4 hours from when they first started the survey. Once students reach the end of the survey, there will be a confirmation of survey completion.



We thank you for your time spent taking this survey.
Your response has been recorded.

How should we survey online learners?

- Online schools will only receive links to the versions of the surveys for online learners. While the surveys for online and in-person students are generally the same, some questions are omitted for online learners and/or response options may differ. For example, online learners will not be asked how they get to and from school.
- Schools that are Online Learning Provisional Providers will receive separate survey links for online students and in-person students. If you have questions about which students should be considered online, please contact the Minnesota Department of Education at mde.studentsurvey@state.mn.us.
- For tips on how to best administer the survey for online learners, please see [Minnesota Student Survey Tip Sheet: Remote Survey Administration](#).

When should we administer the survey?

- The administration of the 2025 Minnesota Student Survey will take place during Winter/Spring 2025. The preferred administration window is **from January through March 2025**. School that complete administration by March 14, 2025 will be able to get one-page preliminary results, and they will receive more comprehensive results later in the summer.
- All surveys are to be completed **by June 6, 2025**.

Which web browsers can I use for the online survey?

- When taking the survey it is recommended that students use the latest version of Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari as their web browser. The use of Internet Explorer is discouraged as some screens may not be compatible with the survey software.

Which computer or tablet operating systems can I use for the online survey?

- The survey is compatible with many operating systems. Please ensure that the computers or tablets you are using have one of the following operating systems:
 - Windows 7, 8, or 10
 - Apple OS X 10.8 - 12.0
 - iPad tablets up to 4 years old, but not older

What should be done to test the web survey before it is administered to the students?

- Test survey link: https://mss.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_4G7QPrDkoFf2QbY
- The survey web links for students will be active from January to June.

- To confirm that the survey web links work at your school's laptops/computers, please open the TEST SURVEY on your laptop/computer.
- The test survey links have text on the first screen that reads **"TEST SURVEY – NOT FOR STUDENTS."**
- Testing the survey is strongly recommended. Please complete testing before the actual survey administration week if possible so that MSS team has time to help with troubleshooting. Ideally, test the survey using the same browsers, operating systems, and internet networks the students will be using when they take the actual survey.

Directions for Minnesota Student Survey Onsite Contacts

Generally speaking, **students should take the survey as seriously as it is presented.**

Here are some factors to consider for setting the tone:

1. Students need to understand that responding accurately on their thoughts and activities regarding health and social factors is important. Every person contributes to the whole picture of the students at your school.
2. The survey is voluntary on the part of students. They may choose not to participate in the survey or not to answer specific questions, with this choice being reinforced in the script read by each survey administrator.
3. Remember that the survey is to be anonymous, confidential and private. To ensure the privacy of student's responses:
 - a. Plan to take measures to space students apart so that individual responses cannot be viewed by staff or other students. The survey is **confidential**.
 - b. At no time is personally identifiable information such as names or identification numbers asked in the survey. The survey is **anonymous**.

Please make sure that the staff who are administering the survey have the following materials:

1. Administration Instructions (pages 10-12 of this packet).
2. Minnesota Student Survey Administration Script (pages 13-15 of this packet).
 - a. **Please read this script in its entirety each time the survey is administered.** This helps to achieve a greater degree of uniformity within a site and across the state.
3. **School code** provided by MSS Interagency Team.
 - a. Students should type school code and school name in the survey. Please make sure to note this code and school name on a board or on a paper for students to see. Make sure all students type the school code correctly. This better ensures the accuracy of your school's results.
4. Web Survey Troubleshooting Tips (page 17 of this packet).
5. Small sheets of paper and pens or pencils for students to write down the school code they are given at the beginning of the survey.
6. A list of students whose parents have opted them out of taking the survey.

Additional optional materials for survey administrators include a series of tip sheets was created for school staff who will be administering the survey. The tips, which can be found at <https://mss.mn.gov/MSS/mss2025/>, cover the following topics:

- Confidentiality
- Trauma-informed resources
- Administering the survey to online learners

Directions for School Staff Administering the MSS

Administration Instructions

Please read prior to survey administration to see if you have any questions. If you have questions, please contact MSS Interagency Team at mde.studentsurvey@state.mn.us or 651-582-8359.

As a person administering the survey, you should have the following:

- Minnesota Student Survey Administration Script.
- A list of students whose parents have opted them out of taking the survey.
- Before the students have entered the room, please write the **school name**, and the **school code** (seven digit number with a dash in the middle) in a location where all students can see them.
- Set all computers or tablets that will be used to the introductory screen of the MSS web survey (either by clicking on the link that was provided via email or inputting the URL). If you are unable to preset all computers or tablets to the appropriate web link, write the full web link in a place where all students can see and instruct your students to type this web link into the URL bar on their computer or tablet.
 - When taking the survey it is recommended that students use the latest version of Chrome, Firefox, Edge, or Safari as their web browser. The use of Internet Explorer is discouraged as some screens may not be compatible with the survey software.
 - The survey is compatible with many operating systems. For the best user experience please ensure that the computers or tablets you are using have one of the following operating systems:
 - Windows 7, 8, or 10
 - Apple OS X 10.8 - 12.0
 - iPad tablets up to 4 years old, but not older
 - **Please ensure that you are setting the computers/tablets to the correct survey.** The level 1 survey is for 5th and 6th graders. The level 2 survey is for 7th and 8th graders. The level 3 survey is for 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th graders as well as students at ALCs or JCFs. The text on the introductory screen reads “This survey is intended for **Grade Levels.**” Please use this information to confirm that the appropriate survey is loaded for the students who are about to complete it.

- Ensure that small sheets of paper and pencils or pens are available for students. At the beginning of the survey, students will be asked to type the school code and school name.

The administration script contains both instructions and statements to be read out loud to the students.

- Text that is marked by an  consists of instructions for you to follow.
- Text that is in **bold** is to be read out loud to the students.

The tone set by you as the survey administrator affects how students respond.

THANK YOU for your investment and support of the Minnesota Student Survey.

1. Students need to understand that responding accurately on their thoughts and activities regarding health and social factors is important. Every person contributes to the whole picture of the students at your school.
2. The survey is voluntary on the part of students. They may choose not to participate in the survey or not to answer specific questions.
3. Remember that the survey is to be anonymous, confidential and private. To ensure the **privacy** of students' responses:
 - Plan to take measures to space students apart so that individual responses cannot be viewed. The survey is **confidential**.
 - At no time is personally identifiable information such as names or identification numbers asked in the survey. The survey is anonymous.
 - No staff or other students at their school have access or will review their individual responses..
 - When students have completed their survey, instruct them to destroy the sheet that has their ticket number written on it.

The survey includes many questions, including some sensitive questions. All levels of the survey include some questions about mental health and substance use. The Level 2 and 3 surveys include questions about suicidal ideation, adverse childhood experiences, and dating violence. The Level 3 survey includes questions about sexual health. In the event that a student has a heightened response to some survey questions:

- **Know what resources are available on-site.** This may be a guidance counselor, school social worker, school nurse, or other on-site adult the student has a close relationship with.
- **Refer to the student resource sheet.** Share this link with students as needed. Student Crisis Resource (<https://mss.mn.gov/MSS/res/>).
- **[Refer to Minnesota Student Survey Tip Sheet: Trauma-Informed Survey Administration](https://mss.mn.gov/MSS/mss2025/)** (<https://mss.mn.gov/MSS/mss2025/>).

THANK YOU for your investment and support of the Minnesota Student Survey!

Administration Script

Please read through the following **prior to** administering the survey to students. This script must be read to students in its entirety each time the survey is administered.



Greet the students and introduce yourself to students if not known by the students in your setting.

The survey you are going to participate in is called the Minnesota Student Survey. You can help our school and community learn more about young people by honestly answering the questions in this survey. These questions cover many areas. Your answers will help many youth and adults to understand the experiences and concerns of people your age and to plan and develop better responses, programs, and services for all youth in our community. It is important to our school that your voice is a part of this process.

The survey is conducted in partnership with the Minnesota Departments of Education, Health, Human Services and Public Safety. These state agencies prepare many state and county reports using data from the survey. They also produce reports for our school district that are used at our school and in our community.

The survey is voluntary. At any time, you can choose not to complete the survey.

You do not have to answer any question you do not want to answer. You can also change your answer to a question. If you want to leave a question blank, just click {Next}, and you will move on to the next page.

The survey is also anonymous. No one will know your specific answers. The survey does not ask for your name, identification number, or other identifying information.

You should see a screen welcoming you to the 2025 Student Survey. Check the text on the screen and make sure you are doing the right survey. It should say “This survey is intended for students in grade [appropriate #s].”

If you see your grade number, please click {Next} to continue. If you do not see your grade number, let me know.

You should complete the survey in one sitting. It is okay to skip any question that you are not sure or you do not want to answer. If you want to go back and change a response, please click {Back} button and select your response. Then click {Next} button again. Some questions may be different because of how you answered other questions.

The first page has information about the survey as well as information about how to navigate through the survey. To move through the survey screens, you must use the {Next} or {Back} buttons found at the bottom of the screen. Do NOT click the forward or back buttons of your web browser.

After reading information on the first page, please click {Next} button to continue to the next page. This first question will ask you to write your school code and school name. Please write this number and the school name in the blanks.



Show/point out students the school code you received in the email and pause long enough for all students to write the code on paper provided or type the code directly into the survey. Make sure students typed the correct number.

After you have written the school code and school name, please click {Next} to continue. You should see a question asking about your grade. Stop when you get there.

There are no right or wrong answers. This survey is about your experiences, thoughts, and opinions. I am (we are) not allowed to answer any questions. Simply do the best that you can. You can leave a question blank if you do not understand it.



Provide students with instructions on what they should do when finished with the survey. For example, arrange for them to have other quiet work to complete at their seat, and remind them to be quiet and respectful of others still completing the survey. Avoid having students leave the room as they finish to prevent students from seeing others' screens as they walk by.



Remind students not to worry about those who finish more quickly or more slowly than others.

You may begin your survey now. Please click {Continue} to begin the survey.



During the session, make sure to provide enough privacy for students by limiting movement around the room by anyone, including you.

[When all students have finished, or when it's near the end of the time allotted to complete the survey] Thank you for your participation in the Minnesota Student Survey. Please close the web browser on your computer.



Make sure that all web browsers used for the Minnesota Student Survey are closed on each computer or tablet so that the next students who use the computer cannot see someone else's results if they did not finish the survey.

THANK YOU, again, for your investment and support for Minnesota youth!!

Web Survey Troubleshooting Tips

1. *I'm having trouble accessing the website for the survey.*

- a) Double check the link that you were provided and make sure it is correct. Make sure you are not using the test survey link.
- b) Make sure you are typing the link in the address section of your browser, not in the search engine.
- c) Check with your school's network administrator and make sure your school's network is allowing access to the site.

2. *My student had to stop/pause the survey.*

- a) Make sure students access all their needs (e.g. using bathroom, eating, etc.) before they start taking the survey. Once they close the browser, they will not be able to retrieve or retake the survey again. The survey for a given student will close within 4 hours of starting the survey.

3. *The power went out and everyone got kicked out of the survey.*

- a) Ask everyone to completely close any web browsers that may pop up again upon start-up. Contact with MSS Interagency team immediately to give details about the incident.

4. *My students are entering answers, but it does not appear to save them.*

- a) Make sure the student is using the {Next} and {Back} buttons at the bottom of the screen. They should NOT be using the browser's back or forward buttons.
- b) You need to click the {Next} button on each screen to save the answers. If you hit {Back} before moving forward, it will not save the answers.

If you are still having trouble contact MSS Interagency Team at 651-582-8488 or mde.studentsurvey@state.mn.us.

We are very appreciative and thankful of your time and help.

Brief Administration Checklist:

- Students are able to open the survey on their computer and the survey lists the right grades for your school.
- Students are able to enter the school code provided, as well as their school name.
- Students who finish their survey should confirm with you that they reached the end before closing their browser.
- Students who did not finish the survey should be reminded to close the browser before they leave.