



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor



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DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

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Colt Gill

Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction

Dear Superintendent:

School districts in Oregon have an opportunity to participate in an important survey in spring 2019 that will provide valuable data to schools to ensure that every student has the opportunity to learn, thrive, and succeed.

OHT data can assist schools with assessing Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) compliance. The OHT survey provides an opportunity to gather information about students that can be used to improve academic outcomes by:

- Assessing students' resilience, as measured by the Positive Youth Development (PYD) benchmark and other measures of mental, emotional and physical health
- Examining disparities by race/ethnicity, home language, disability, gender identity or sexual orientation
- Identifying risk factors (JUULING and other substance use, homelessness, bullying) that can be barriers to successful learning
- Examining protective behaviors (nutrition, physical activity, pregnancy and STI prevention) that can help academic success
- Evaluating performance over time on key areas

OHT Survey highlights the link between health and academic outcomes. The OHT Survey provides schools and their communities with the data needed for longer-term planning and evaluation of their efforts to improve youth outcomes. Research has demonstrated that healthy students have better attendance, get higher grades and test scores and are less likely to skip school, drop out, or engage in risky behaviors. The Oregon Healthy Teens Survey is a comprehensive, school-based, anonymous and voluntary survey that is a key part of a state-wide effort to help local schools and communities ensure that all Oregon youth are healthy and successful learners who contribute positively to their communities. The OHT survey looks at the whole child, focusing on resiliency factors, such as mental and physical health, activity and nutrition, sexual health, substance use/abuse, as well as school climate.

OHT enables schools and communities to know how many students are developing successfully and how many are having problems. Schools can then focus on improving outcomes for young people. It is an important tool that schools can use to help students achieve their full potential. OHT results help schools and communities identify problems and measure progress towards addressing them.

The survey is completely anonymous. Students are not asked to write their name or any other identifying information on their answer booklet. The survey can be completed in one class period using paper-and-pencil and even less time using the online survey version. The students' teachers will administer the survey at each school to 8th and 11th graders. **The survey administration will be conducted February 2019 to May 2019.**

OREGON STATE PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION
Office of the State Public Health Director

Kate Brown, Governor



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October 1, 2018

Dear Superintendent/Principal:

We've spent the past six months getting feedback about the survey from administrators and students and have been working hard to address concerns about the Oregon Healthy Teens (OHT) Survey's length, process, and content. Our intent is to make the survey a useful tool in assessing student health, school climate, and other factors that affect the academic success of your students. While most of the 2019 OHT Survey will be familiar to you, a few questions were included to address emerging issues. Questions have been revised or added to help districts and schools:

- Address the increasing racial and ethnic diversity of their students, who now have the option of identifying as Middle Eastern or North African.
- Comply with the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Program by obtaining valid, reliable data to identify the prevalence of homelessness among students and the associated health risks to help design interventions to mitigate those risks. Other states that have included these questions on homelessness have discovered that current methods for counting homeless youth severely undercount the population, missing as many as two out of three homeless students.
- Foster an educational environment that is safe for all students and aligns with state and federal laws. Coupled with gender identity, the sex at birth question aligns with the new Oregon Department of Education non-binary category and will help to address the unique needs of students whose identity differs from their sex at birth.
- Explore the impact of social media.
- Examine knowledge of STD and pregnancy prevention, as well as healthy dating relationships.
- Capture the extent of JUULing among students.

Improving the survey is an ongoing effort, and we acknowledge that survey length is an issue that we are still working to resolve. The state's new youth survey, the Student Health Survey, which integrates the OHT and Student Wellness surveys, will launch in 2020 and be conducted in even years. This new survey will better address length by having two shorter versions of the 8th and 11th grade questionnaires, as well as a shorter questionnaire for 6th-graders. Expect to see more communications from us in the future about the Student Health Survey.

If you have any questions about the survey, please contact the OHT Survey Coordinator, Renee Boyd, at 971-673-1145 or renee.k.boyd@state.or.us.

Thank you in advance for your participation in and support of the survey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katrina Hedberg".

Katrina Hedberg, MD, MPH
Health Officer and State Epidemiologist
Office of the State Public Health Director