

**Sample Parent Notification
To Be Sent by School**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

Your child's school will be taking part in the Oregon Student Wellness Survey (SWS). The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) Addictions and Mental Health Division and Oregon Department of Education sponsor this survey. It will ask 6th, 8th and 11th grade students about academic commitment, the school environment, positive youth development, and behavioral risks such as fighting, depression, substance use, and gambling. The SWS gathers information that is used to plan and evaluate programs that address these areas.

The survey will take 30 to 45 minutes during the regular school day. Survey procedures have been designed to protect your child's privacy. The data gathered from this survey will be anonymous; your child will not put his or her name or other identifying information on the survey.

Your child will be free to skip questions or stop filling out the survey at any time. Refusing to participate or withdrawing from the survey will not affect your child's school grade or class standing in any way. If you or your child does not want to participate, your child can read or do some other activity while his or her classmates complete the survey.

Like many opinion polls, all results from the study will be presented only about groups. No individual data will be reported. Completed questionnaires will be sent to International Survey Associates (ISA) for analysis and reporting.

If you would like to see a copy of the survey, one is available at your child's school or from <http://www.oregon.gov/oha/analytics/pages/student-wellness.aspx>

For questions about the survey, please feel free to contact Rusha Grinstead at OHA-Office of Health Analytics (email: rusha.grinstead@state.or.us or phone: 503-602-9214).

Please mark and return this completed form only if you do not wish your child to participate in the survey. The deadline for returning the form to the school is March 28, 2016.

School Name: _____

Child's Name: _____

[] My child **may not** participate in the Student Wellness Survey.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Telephone Number: (____) _____

Frequently Asked Questions For Parents

Oregon **STUDENT WELLNESS** Survey

Why should students participate in the Student Wellness Survey?

- Oregon youth spend a large part of their lives in school. Only parents and family are more influential. Teachers, administrators and school boards work to create a learning environment where all students can thrive.
- By tapping into issues associated with school climate, positive youth development, and behavioral health, the survey assesses key factors that influence student success.
- Most Oregon school districts participated in the 2010, 2012 and 2014 surveys, yielding rich sets of data. Because of this high participation rate, the survey results provided educators, parents, citizens, health care providers and policymakers with information that is vital to making decisions that will shape a positive future for Oregon's youth.

What are the goals of the SWS?

- Provide schools, communities, and our state with a clear picture of youth problems and strengths in order to help students succeed.
- Allow schools and communities to find out what prevention efforts are working and which need improvement.

Are sensitive questions asked?

- Some questions, such as those about mental health, suicide, harassment, fighting, tobacco, alcohol and other drug use may be considered sensitive. However, the only way to determine how adolescents put their well-being at risk in these areas is to ask such questions.
- Questions are age appropriate and are presented in a straightforward manner.
- Students can choose to not answer any questions they feel are objectionable.
- *Please note: The SWS does not ask questions about sexual activity.*

How will my family's privacy be protected?

- The survey is *anonymous*. Survey administration procedures are designed to protect student privacy and allow for anonymous participation.
- Students will not put their names or other identifying information on the questionnaires or answer sheets. When the surveys have been completed and collected, we will have *no identifying information* linking a questionnaire to an individual student or parent.

Will any students be surveyed again to see how their behavior changes?

- No. Although an individual student might participate again in future years, it will be impossible to track individual students who participate because no identifying information will be collected.

When are results available?

- Initial confidential, results will be released to schools and districts in June, before school lets out.
- County and state results will be posted to the public via the web in September at: <http://www.oregon.gov/oha/analytics/pages/student-wellness.aspx>