

July 22,2022

Dear School Administrator and Staff:

This letter is to show our full support of the 2022-2023 Basic Screening Survey for Third Graders (BSS) and to strongly encourage all schools that have been selected this year to participate.

The BSS is a dental screening of third graders in public schools paired with height and weight measurements. It is conducted every five years in Minnesota public schools, as required by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for public health surveillance. The purpose of the screening is to assess the overall dental health and growth among children in the state. A team of licensed dental professionals contracted with the Minnesota Department of Health and trained in data collection, data privacy, and COVID-19 infection control will screen third graders at randomly selected schools across Minnesota. All screeners will follow federal, state, school district, and school-specific guidelines and policies for COVID-19 safety in schools and dentistry.

The Team will assess:

- the number of teeth with untreated and treated decay (cavities)
- the number of molar teeth with dental sealants
- any need for dental treatment
- height and weight

If an urgent dental problem is identified during the screening, the Team will notify the school nurse or health representative for follow-up with the child's parent or guardian.

Children's oral health and growth impacts school readiness and performance. Understanding what oral health and growth looks like among Minnesota's children can help state and local leaders develop policies and strategies to address problems and disparities to help kids grow, develop, and learn. We thank you in advance for making the contribution to the health and well-being of Minnesota's children.

For more information, please see the attached handout “Basic Screening Survey for Third Graders: Information for Schools.” For questions or concerns, please contact the State Oral Health Director, Prasida Khanal at 651-201-3538, prasida.khanal@state.mn.us, and the OSHII/SHIP Healthy Systems Supervisor, Cherylee Sherry at 651-201-3769, cherylee.sherry@state.mn.us.

Sincerely,

Jan K. Malcom
Commissioner
Minnesota Department of Health
P.O. Box 64975
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975

Heather Mueller, Ed.D., M.Ed.
Commissioner
Minnesota Department of Education
1500 Highway 36 West
St. Paul, MN 55113