**Selected Composite Indicators on the Minnesota Student Survey,**

**2019 Administration**

**Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs):** ACEs are stressful or traumatic experiences, including abuse, neglect and a range of household dysfunction. ACE scores are calculated by adding up the number of adverse experiences reported by each student (from 0 to 8):

* Having a parent/guardian who is currently in jail, and/or has ever been in jail
* Living with someone who drinks too much alcohol
* Living with someone who uses illegal drugs or abuses prescription drugs
* Living with someone who is depressed or has any other mental health issues (*New!*)
* Having been verbally abused by a parent or adult in the household
* Having been physically abused by a parent or adult in the household
* Witnessing domestic abuse of parents/adults in household
* Having been sexually abused by an older or stronger family member and/or and adult or other person outside the family

**Anxiety:** Anxiety is measured using the 2-item Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD). Students are asked: "Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?":

* Feeling nervous, anxious or on edge
* Not being able to stop or control worrying

Response options include: not at all, several days, more than half the days, and nearly every day. These response options are scored from 0 to 3, and the two items are summed. A score of 3 or more points (out of 6 possible) is the cut-off for identifying possible cases of anxiety.

**Can talk to a parent or guardian about problems:** Students were asked which adults they can talk to about problems they are having. Response options included: parent or guardian, adult at school, some other adult, and "I don't have any adults I can talk to about problems I am having."

**Depression:** Depression is measured using the 2-item Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ). Students are asked: "Over the last 2 weeks, how often have you been bothered by the following problems?":

* Little interest or pleasure in doing things
* Feeling down, depressed or hopeless

Response options include: not at all, several days, more than half the days, and nearly every day. These response options are scored from 0 to 3, and the two items are summed. A score of 3 or more points (out of 6 possible) is the cut-off for identifying possible cases of depression.

**Educational engagement:** Students with greater educational engagement reported that they care about doing well in school, pay attention in class and go to class prepared most or all of the time. In addition, they strongly agreed or agreed that if something interests them they try to learn more about it, the things they learn in school are useful, and being a student is one of the most important parts of who they are. Each item is scored on a scale from 1 to 4, then the 6 items are summed. Students with a score of 18 or more have greater educational engagement.

**Empowerment\*:** For *each* of the 3 MSS items below, students could respond with: not at all or rarely, somewhat or sometimes, very or often, or extremely or almost always. Items were scored on a scale from 1 to 4, summed and averaged. Students with an average score of at least 3 were considered to have greater empowerment.

* I feel valued and appreciated by others
* I am included in family tasks and decisions
* I am given useful roles and responsibilities

**Greater educational engagement:** Students have greater educational engagement if they answered all/most of the time or strongly agree/agree to *each* the following questions:

* How often do you care about doing well in school?
* How often do you pay attention in class?
* How often do you go to class prepared?
* If something interests me, I try to learn more about it.
* I think the things I learn at school are useful.
* Being a student is one of the most important parts of who I am.

**Participate in 1-5 activities:** Students reporting that they participate in one to five activities (outside of the regular school day) on one or more days per week during a typical week. Data show that participation in some activities is beneficial, but that participation in too many activities can pose as much risk as no participation at all. Activities asked about on the MSS include:

* Sports teams (i.e., park and rec teams, school teams, in-house teams or traveling teams)
* School sponsored activities or clubs other than sports (i.e., drama, music, chess, science club)
* Tutoring, homework help or academic programs
* Leadership activities such as student government, youth councils or committees
* Artistic lessons (i.e., music, dance)
* Physical activity lessons (i.e., tennis, karate)
* Other community clubs and programs (i.e., 4-H, Scouts, Y-clubs or Community Ed)
* Religious activities (i.e., religious services, education or youth groups)

**Positive identity\*:** For *each* of the 6 MSS items below, students could respond with: not at all or rarely, somewhat or sometimes, very or often, or extremely or almost always. Items were scored on a scale from 1 to 4, summed and averaged. Students with an average score of at least 3 were considered to have greater positive identity.

* I feel in control of my life and future
* I feel good about myself
* I feel good about my future
* I deal with disappointment without getting too upset
* I find ways to deal with the things that are hard in my life
* I am thinking about what my purpose in life is

**Social Competency\*:** For *each* of the 8 MSS items below, students could respond with: not at all or rarely, somewhat or sometimes, very or often, or extremely or almost always. Items were scored on a scale from 1 to 4, summed and averaged. Students with an average score of at least 3 were considered to have greater social competency.

* I say no to things that are dangerous or unhealthy
* I build friendships with other people
* I express my feelings in proper ways
* I plan ahead and make good choices
* I stay away from bad influences
* I resolve conflicts without anyone getting hurt
* I accept people who are different from me
* I am sensitive to the needs and feelings of others

\*Positive Identity, Social Competence, and Empowerment are categories of skills and behaviors based on a Search Institute framework of adolescent development. They are used and adapted here with permission from Search Institute (2004). *The Developmental Assets Profile*. Minneapolis: Author. Copyright **©** 2004 by Search Institute (www.search-institute.org). All rights reserved.