STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
23 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333-0023

PAUL R. LEPAGE
GOVERNOR

JAMES E. RIER, JR.
COMMISSIONER

August 18, 2014

Dear Principal:

The Maine Department of Education, in collaboration with the Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention, and Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services both in the Department of Health and Human Services, is pleased to announce the fourth administration of the Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey (MIYHS) with a survey administration period between **February 2 and 13, 2015**. We are delighted to report that Pan Atlantic SMS Group, a Portland-based research firm, will continue as the contractor administering the 2015 MIYHS. Pan Atlantic SMS Group has a long track record administering school surveys in Maine and has a proven ability to ensure school confidentiality and protect student anonymity.

Your school has been chosen as part of the following samples for the 2015 MIYHS:

- **K/3 module** (parents of students in Kindergarten and 3rd grade)[1]
- **5/6 module** (students in grades 5 and 6)[1]
- **Middle School (MS) module** (students in grades 7 and 8)[2]
- **High School (HS) module** (students in grades 9 through 12)[2]

[1] Because only some schools have been chosen to participate in the MIYHS, your school's involvement is especially critical to its success.
[2] While all public schools with any grades 7–12 are invited and encouraged to participate in the 2015 MIYHS, your school's participation in the survey will greatly aid your county's and/or public health district's ability to get representative data.

Schools participating in the 2015 MIYHS can choose when they would like to administer the survey within the two-week timeframe, February 2 – 13, 2015.

Enclosed are the following materials:

- **2015 MIYHS Information Sheet** – This should answer many of your questions about the survey project.
- **2015 MIYHS School Response Fax-Back Form –** To confirm your school's participation in the 2015 MIYHS; please fax this form to Pan Atlantic SMS Group **no later than September 30, 2014**.
- **2015 MIYHS Parental Consent Form** – This letter must be sent to parents **via the U.S. postal service** at least two weeks prior to your school's survey administration date. Be sure to use THIS version of the parent consent form, without alteration, and not any previous version of MYDAUS, YRBS, or MIYHS. We ask, however, that it be sent no more than six weeks prior to the survey administration. In order to meet No Child Left Behind regulations, you should alert parents of your school's participation in the 2015 MIYHS at the beginning of the school year. We suggest the following paragraph be included in your beginning of the year notifications to parents:

This coming school year, students in this school will be asked to take an anonymous health survey. The data from this survey is used at school, county and state levels. It supports grant funding, assessment of student needs, and the design and evaluation of programs. You will receive more information on this survey closer to when we are doing it. You have the choice of asking that your child not take this survey. Your child will also have the option of not taking the survey.

- **Example of a 2015 MIYHS School Report** – Assuming that reporting requirements are met, schools participating in the 5/6, Middle School, and/or High School modules will receive a school level report. Enclosed you will find a sample page of a High School module school report; you will note that comparisons will be made to the last MIYHS administration, as well as to the State. Similar reports will be made at the SAU level.

  As in the past, the MIYHS protocol is designed to protect student confidentiality and anyone other than principals who request school data will be asked to obtain written permission from the superintendent or designee(s). Principals should have prior user account access to the MIYHS website, https://data.mainepublichealth.gov/miyhs/home, to securely download school level reports from previous years. Should you have any questions about your school's data and/or have a local data/report request, please contact Stephen Corral at Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services at 287-2964 or Stephen.Corral@maine.gov.

Please note that an **Administration Manual for MIYHS Coordinators** and the **2015 MIYHS Questionnaires** are in the process of being finalized. These will be emailed to schools as they sign on to participate in the 2015 MIYHS using the School Response Fax-Back Form; they can also be made available upon request.

Should you have any further questions regarding the survey, please contact one of the following people:

Kristina Record, Pan Atlantic SMS Group
miyhs@panatlanticsmsgroup.com
1-866-487-2810 (toll-free) or 207-871-8622 x106

Stephen Corral, Data & Research Program Specialist
Substance Abuse and Mental Services
Stephen.Corral@maine.gov or 207-287-2964

Jessie Meisner, MIYHS Project Coordinator
Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention
Jessie.Meisner@maine.gov or 207-287-5084

Jean Zimmerman, Health Education & Physical Education Consultant
Maine Department of Education
Jean.Zimmerman@maine.gov or 207-624-6687

I strongly encourage you and your school to participate in this worthwhile initiative to assess the risk behaviors of Maine's youth. The data is a valuable resource in assisting with the implementation of state, community, and school-wide policies and programs, as well as monitoring trend data regarding health related issues.

Sincerely,

James E. Rier, Jr.
Commissioner of Education

SB/JZ/jl