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Minnesota Selected to Participate in International Math and Science Assessment

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MINNEAPOLIS - Minnesota is one of eight states selected by the U.S. Department of Education to participate in a state-level administration of the 2011 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS).

Minnesota's participation is part of an effort to link national and international assessments so states can compare their students' performance against international benchmarks. Approximately 55 Minnesota schools in 50 districts will administer the mathematics and science assessment to a sample of eighth-grade students during the TIMSS window beginning April 4, 2011, and continuing through May 27, 2011. By participating in the study, Minnesota eighth-graders will provide educators, state policymakers, and the public with state-level TIMSS achievement data that can be compared to student achievement data in more than 60 countries.

"This is an opportunity to provide trend data for Minnesota in an international environment," said Education Commissioner Alice Seagren. "By participating in TIMSS 2011, we will have important data to consider when evaluating our efforts to increase academic rigor for students and improve professional development for educators in math and science."

Minnesota participated in TIMSS in 1995 and 2007 for both fourth and eighth grades. In 2007, Minnesota students performed very well in math and science compared to students from other nations. TIMSS data also indicated Minnesota students made significant improvements in 4th-grade math since 1995. Minnesota was one of only two states to participate in the test as a benchmark participant. This status allowed state policymakers and educators to evaluate the performance of Minnesota students as compared to students from other nations.

Minnesota students were able to participate in the 2007 TIMSS due to state and private funding. The Minnesota Business Partnership, Minnesota Chamber of Commerce and Minnesota High Tech Association were instrumental in building that private/public partnership.

In the past, states have paid an estimated \$500,000 to participate in state-level TIMSS. Since Minnesota was selected by the U.S. Department of Education, there will be no cost to the state.

Although TIMSS is not designed to provide specific district-, school- or student-level results, the TIMSS results will provide international benchmarking data which is very expensive to obtain and would likely be unavailable during these financially difficult times.

Schools and students are selected by the U.S. Department of Education and TIMSS administrators to provide a representative sample of students from Minnesota.

To view Minnesota's 2007 TIMSS results, visit:
<http://education.state.mn.us>