

Message from Chancellor Malhotra to Minnesota State students | Aug. 2, 2021

From: Chancellor Devinder Malhotra <noreply@minnstate.edu>

Sent: Monday, August 2, 2021 4:03 PM

To: All students

Subject: Covid-19 mask update from Minnesota State

Hello students!

I have the honor of being the Chancellor of Minnesota State, the system of colleges and universities which your school is a part of. We are here to help you with your educational journey, which will prepare you for life and work.

I am writing to give you an update regarding COVID-19 and the data that is emerging that will likely affect all of us as we enter into the fall semester. The data shows the Delta variant is moving case numbers up throughout the state and is even more contagious than what was experienced in the past.

I know that we've all heard the message regarding vaccination – it is one lever to control the virus and be in a place where all our students can move forward with minimal restrictions. Unfortunately, vaccination levels for Minnesotans aged 20-25 is about 35%. We must work together to increase those numbers significantly. Doing so will protect our campus communities and give us a path to a successful academic year. I know that there are many strong feelings regarding vaccinations, so I don't take lightly my continued encouragement to get vaccinated. I just believe it's our best tool to keep everyone healthy and moving toward their goals.

I understand there is [a new program](#) from the state offering Minnesotans who get their first dose between now and August 15 a \$100 gift card. I hope you'll consider this offer!

Meanwhile, because of the rising case numbers in Minnesota, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has given us guidance regarding county case counts and masking indoors, which Minnesota State will follow. Based on the most recent CDC data, an increasing number of Minnesota counties have “substantial” or “high” levels of transmission such that the CDC masking recommendation applies. As a result, a number of Minnesota State campuses are implementing masking protocols consistent with the new CDC guidance at their earliest opportunity. **I share your frustration with wearing a mask – once again, the best way for us to move past these safety requirements and this pandemic is to be vaccinated as early as possible.**

You will be receiving more information in the coming weeks about COVID protocols from your specific campus. Let's work together to keep everyone healthy and successfully working toward their goals.

Devinder Malhotra

Chancellor

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