

**Executive Summary**  
**Vision Screening Pilot Project**  
**March 1, 2011**

During the 2010 Special Session, the Oregon Legislature passed House Bill 3626, which directed the Oregon Department of Education (ODE) to establish a Vision Screening Pilot Project. The Oregon Lions Sight and Hearing Foundation (OLSHF) was awarded Contract # 8921 to provide the following objectives:

- Arrange and conduct vision screenings in three Oregon school districts
- Screen all students in grades one through eight in those districts
- Provide parents or guardians of students an 'opt out' option for the vision screenings
- Conduct background checks on all staff and volunteers
- Establish a system of documentation and tracking which provides:
  - the school districts where vision screening occurred;
  - the number of students screened and the results of those screenings;
  - the grades which were screened;
  - the number of students who, based on the vision screenings, were:
    - referred to an ophthalmologist or an optometric physician for an eye exam;
    - identified as requiring vision correction or treatment; and
    - provided vision correction or treatment
- The estimated cost for the students who received vision screenings
- Make recommendations for how to fund and implement statewide a program that provides students with vision screenings, and
- Provide a final written report to the Legislature by March 1, 2011

Provision of vision screening programs in schools is a vital part of identification of students with visual impairments. Visual problems can and do affect the physical, intellectual, social and emotional development of children. Early detection of vision problems can provide a child with an improved opportunity for educational success. Because vision loss may impede normal development, early diagnosis and treatment lead to a more favorable outlook for correction or improvement of the child's well-being.

Experts estimate that vision problems affect 25% of all school children in the United States. It is also estimated that only 10% of 9 to 15 year old children who need glasses actually have them. When children are identified during vision screening as needing follow up care from a qualified eye care specialist, between 40 and 67% do not receive the recommended follow-up care and eyeglasses.

In this Oregon Department of Education Vision Screening Pilot Project, an evidence-based, cost-effective method for identifying students who may have vision problems is presented. These vision problems may interfere with learning and school performance.

As part of this Pilot Project, vision screening was provided for 6,821 school children in grades 1 to 8, in 6 Oregon school districts from September 13 through November 19, 2010. The Oregon Lions Sight and Hearing Foundation worked with partners at Lions Clubs, the Oregon Health and Sciences University's Casey Eye Institute, and Prevent Blindness America to coordinate and provide screenings, and provide follow-up contact with the parents or guardians of the children referred for eye examination.

The report and recommendations may be accessed at:

<http://www.ode.state.or.us/groups/supportstaff/hklb/schoolnurses/visionscreeningpilotprgm.pdf>

Respectfully submitted this first day of March, 2011,

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