



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

To: Superintendents, Principals, and School Nurses

From: Jolene Bracale, MSN, RN, School Nursing Specialist

Date: September 3, 2025

Subject: Hearing Screening Guidance

Indiana Hearing Screening Information

The Indiana Hearing Screening Guidelines, created jointly by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) and the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH), are new for 2025-2026 and provide step-by-step instructions for completing the hearing screening process. Guidelines can be found [here](#).

Indiana Code ([IC 20-34-3-14](#)) requires public school corporations, including charter schools, to conduct a hearing screening for students in first, fourth, seventh, and tenth grades, students who have transferred into the school corporation, as well as students suspected of having a hearing deficit.

Teachers and families are encouraged to refer students in the non-mandatory grade levels for a screening if they are suspected of having a hearing deficit.

Students experiencing hearing difficulties can sometimes be mistaken for ADHD, learning disabilities, or behavioral disorders. Signs that students may be at risk for having a hearing deficit include:

- Limited or unclear speech or those who may struggle to produce sounds;
- General language delays - struggles with vocabulary or sentence structure;
- Frequent ear infections;
- Medical conditions or diagnoses (e.g., Down Syndrome, Waardenburg Syndrome, Treacher Collins Syndrome, etc.) that predispose them to hearing difficulty;
- Inattention or distractibility - may appear as daydreaming, not following directions, or students who request frequent repetition;
- Poor academic performance - especially in reading, language arts, or when instructions are given verbally; or
- Difficulty following conversations - especially in noisy environments or group discussions.



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Parent Notification and Referrals

Information, including the date of the screening, general screening information, and the school's process for parents to decline the hearing screening of their child if they wish to do so, must be shared with parents prior to the screening.

When describing the screening, the school should inform parents that they will be notified of any student that fails the screening. Additionally, the school should share with parents that even if a student passes the screening, this does not rule out all types of hearing issues that might be present, and that if the parent suspects a hearing issue they should consult with their child's healthcare provider.

Potential Resources for Assisting Schools with Completing Hearing Screenings

- [Indiana Department of Health Emergency Preparedness Team – Mobile Response Operations](#)
- [Local Health Departments](#)

Resources to Provide Trainings for Staff, Technical Assistance for Questions, and Parent Assistance with Referrals or Funding for Students Without Health Insurance

- Indiana Department of Health - [Center for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Education](#)
 - Dr. Rebekah Cunningham, Audiologist, audiology@health.in.gov, (317) 232-7349
- Indiana Department of Health - [Early Hearing Detection and Intervention Program](#)
 - Dr. Suzanne Foley, Audiologist, sfoley@health.in.gov, (317) 233-0972

Vision Screening

Schools are also required to conduct vision screenings. IDOE and IDOH have created a guidance document that provides step-by-step instructions for completing the vision screening process and can be found [here](#).



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Vision and Hearing Screening Quick Reference Chart

	K or 1	1	3	4	5	7	8	10
Near and Distant Visual Acuity Screening done by School or Designee	X		X		X		X	
MCT Vision Screening done by a Licensed Eye Professional	X							
Hearing Screening done by School or Designee		X		X		X		X

If a student is enrolled at one school, but attends another (due to programming), it is the responsibility of the enrolling school to ensure the mandated screenings are completed and the results are reported to IDOE via the School Health Report.

School Health Report

Public schools, including charter schools, report their vision and hearing data annually to IDOE via the School Health Report.

The School Health Report will annually open on the first Monday in January and close on the last Friday in April. Schools may enter their screening data into the School Health Report as soon as the screenings in the mandatory grade levels have been completed. For vision screenings, this would include the initial vision screening, the MCT screening, and make-up screenings to ensure any students absent or missed during the initial screenings are completed. For hearing screenings, this would include the initial hearing screening and make-up screenings to ensure any students absent or missed during the initial screenings are completed.

Detailed instructions for completing the School Health Report can be found [here](#).