



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 2, 2025

Subject: Vision Screening Guidance

Indiana Vision Screening Information

The Indiana Vision Screening Guidelines, created jointly by the Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) and the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH), provides step-by-step instructions for completing the vision screening process and can be found [here](#).

Near and Distant Visual Acuity Screening Summary

- Indiana Code ([IC 20-34-3-12](#)) requires public school corporations, including charter schools, to conduct a near and distant visual acuity screening for students in kindergarten or first grade, students in third, fifth, and eighth grades, as well as students suspected of having a visual deficit.
- Teachers and families are encouraged to refer students in the non-mandatory grade levels for screening if they are suspected of having a visual deficit.
- A new recommendation this year is to conduct near vision screening with both eyes open as opposed to screening the right eye and then the left eye. Evidence has shown screening for near vision with both eyes open provides similar results and takes less time. Distant vision screening should still be conducted with the right and then the left eye.

Please note the following:

- Technology devices, including photoscreeners and autorefractors, are only to be used for students who are unable to perform the tests using the Snellen, Sloan letter, HOTV letter, or LEA symbol charts.
- 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.



Modified Clinical Technique (MCT) Vision Testing Guidelines

- In addition to the visual acuity screening conducted by the school corporation or charter school, a more extensive visual testing using the MCT performed by a licensed eye professional is required for students in kindergarten or first grade.
- Local optometrists, who serve as regional liaisons, are able to assist schools with locating optometrists in their area. If schools are unable to locate an optometrist to perform the MCT vision testing, schools are encouraged to contact their regional liaison. A list of regional liaisons can be found [here](#). A map to determine which regional liaison serves your area can be found [here](#).
- Under certain circumstances, Indiana state law does provide a waiver for the MCT portion of the vision screening. In order to be eligible for a possible waiver, schools must identify the reason(s) for the request on the waiver application and the extent to which they attempted to comply with the MCT vision screening requirement.
- If schools are unable to obtain the services of a licensed eye professional after making attempts to comply with the MCT vision screening requirement, a waiver can be requested by completing this [form](#). The waiver request form will open on the first Monday in January.
- The waiver only applies to the MCT portion of the vision screening. Schools cannot submit a waiver for the near and distant vision screening requirement.
- If a school requests an MCT waiver but is later able to obtain the services of a licensed eye professional, the school should facilitate the MCT screening requirement and notify IDOE of this completion.

Parent Notification and Referrals

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

When describing the screenings, 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 vision issues that might be present, and that if the parent suspects a vision issue they should consult with their child's healthcare provider.



Indiana Department of Education

Dr. Katie Jenner, Secretary of Education

Hearing Screening

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

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

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](#).