

# Annual Summary Report of Vision Screenings

In

Arkansas Public and Charter Schools

School Year 2018-2019

As required by A.C.A §6-18-1803

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### **Vision Summary Report for 2018-2019**

The vision screening for school-age children in Arkansas public and charter schools includes Pre-K (4 year old), K, 1, 2, 4, 6, 8 grades, any transfer student, or if a student is suspected of having a problem by a parent, teacher, or other school personnel. Only school nurses certified for vision screening in the schools may perform the vision screening procedure mandated by A.C.A §6-18-1501 (2005). If a child has been evaluated by an optometrist or ophthalmologist in the last six months and documentation is provided to the district, a screening is not required. In the 2018-2019 school year, Arkansas school nurses screened 264,074 students of which 27,730 were referred for follow-up. Of those referred, 9,703 students received a follow-up exam and 8,074 (83%) were confirmed to have difficulty and received treatment.

Many children with vision disorders have unmet needs for care, leaving them vulnerable to learning and development delays. It is important to provide a system of services to contribute to a comprehensive approach in supporting the whole child. Better health makes better learners, and identifying gaps with school-age children will strengthen the actions necessary to convene stakeholders to promote vision and eye health. Access to care remains to be the key component for the low numbers of students receiving a comprehensive eye and vision exam follow-up.

According to A.C.A §6-18-1501 (2005), the Arkansas Commission on Eye and Vision Care of School Age Children and the Department of Education implemented the tests, procedures, equipment, and instrument requirements used in screening school-age children. This protocol continues as best practice. The regional Community Health Nurse Specialists (CHNS) with the Arkansas Department of Health housed at the local education cooperatives train and assist school nurses on the protocol and procedure for vision screening in school districts. The CHNS provide school nurses with additional training and education using experts in specific areas for school nurses on vision issues affecting student behavior and perception development. In addition, the CHNS educate school nurses on improving documentation of services provided and follow-up to those services while enlisting administrative support to ensure children receive follow-up, when necessary.

In October 2017, the Arkansas Department of Education, in consultation with the Arkansas Commission on Eye and Vision Care, provided a formal recommendation outlining the criteria and protocol for the vision screener auto refractor instrument to be used as an additional resource to perform additional vision screening tests beyond state requirements in certain circumstances (Commissioner's Memo LS-18-027).

The following are resources utilized by school districts to help assist parents with diagnostic eye exams and treatment:

- VSP Global® for *Sight for Students*®, an Eyes of Hope® gift certificate program, school nurses that are members of the National Association of School Nurses receive 25 vouchers yearly for those who qualify
- Brandon Burlsworth Foundation, Eyes of Champion program (online certificate service)
- List of Optometrists and Ophthalmologists for Arkansas
- Local chapter of Lions Club International
- Parent educational materials on benefits and FAQs
- Referral to the school-based health center, if available
- Visit My School Info using the URL: <https://myschoolinfo.arkansas.gov> and access the Student Medical Vision Screening for Districts and Schools

*Note: Reported data by the districts and schools may reflect duplicated student data (meaning the same student receiving a screening at two different schools may be entered)*

Of the 264,074 students receiving a vision screening during the 2018-2019 school year, 27,730 (10%) were referred to a physician and/or eye doctor, yet only 35% of those referred received a comprehensive eye exam. Arkansas public school nurses have consistently shown an 83% accuracy rate when referring a student confirmed to need treatment. Given the 83% accuracy rate of referral, approximately 23,016 of the 27,730 students referred for a follow-up in the 2018-2019 school year are at potential risk for a vision deficit and need vision treatment while only 9,703 actually received the follow-up exam. The data clearly indicates a major gap between the school nurse screening and the follow-up exam with a doctor for a comprehensive approach to vision and eye health for Arkansas students.

#### 2018-2019 VISION SCREENING INFORMATION

- Table Contains Pre-Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade-Screenings, Referrals, Confirmed Difficulty, and Normal Exams/No Lens
- Three Year Summary of Pre-Kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> Grade-Screenings, Referrals, and Confirmed Difficulty

Grades	Total Screened	Referred	Percent %	Received Exam	Percent %	Confirmed Difficulty	Percent %	Confirmed Normal/No Treatment and/or Lens	Percent %
Pre-Kindergarten	9358	998	11%	389	39%	287	74%	102	26%
Kindergarten	35500	3609	10%	1466	41%	1112	76%	354	24%
1st Grade	35609	3909	11%	1535	39%	1219	79%	316	21%
2nd Grade	34947	4004	11%	1473	37%	1188	81%	285	19%
3rd Grade	8124	988	12%	422	43%	366	87%	56	13%
4th Grade	36401	4317	12%	1519	35%	1307	86%	212	14%
5th Grade	7710	900	12%	320	36%	285	89%	35	11%
6th Grade	37548	3723	10%	1137	31%	1019	90%	118	10%
7th Grade	5411	577	11%	177	31%	162	92%	15	8%
8th Grade	34229	3268	10%	842	26%	746	89%	96	11%
9th Grade	4935	414	8%	116	28%	106	91%	10	9%
10th Grade	5820	471	8%	144	31%	129	90%	15	10%
11th Grade	4803	324	7%	104	32%	94	90%	10	10%
12th Grade	3679	228	6%	59	26%	54	92%	5	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>264074</b>	<b>27730</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>9703</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>8074</b>	<b>83%</b>	<b>1629</b>	<b>17%</b>

### 3 Year Summary of Pre-K-12th

