

THE MANDATED EYE EXAMINATION
COMPLIANCE STATUS OF
ILLINOIS SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN FOR THE
2008-2009 SCHOOL YEAR

ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
DIVISION OF DATA ANALYSIS AND
PROGRESS REPORTING

SEPTEMBER 2009

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Foreword

Eye examination data are collected annually from Illinois public and nonpublic schools as required by Section 27-8.1 of the Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/27-8.1). This report is a compilation of the 2008-2009 data on the eye examination compliance status of Illinois school-age children, with the exception of children served by City of Chicago School District 299. The interpretations and conclusions expressed herein were based on the available data and do not necessarily reflect the official position or policy of the Illinois State Board of Education. Inquiries regarding this report should be directed to Mr. Md. Shafiqul Azam in the ISBE Division of Data Analysis and Progress Reporting at 217/782-3950 or mazam@isbe.net.

Background

As mandated by Section 27-8.1 of the Illinois School Code (105 ILCS 5/27-8.1), all children entering kindergarten and any children entering any grade level above kindergarten for the first time in an Illinois school are to have eye examinations by October 15 of each school year to be in compliance with the rules adopted by the Illinois Department of Public Health. In addition, the Illinois School Code requires all public school districts and nonpublic schools to submit completed surveys to the Illinois State Board of Education that summarize the eye examination compliance status of all children by June 30 of each school year. This report provides a summary of the data collected.

Major Findings

The 2008-2009 eye examination status data reported for Illinois school-age children (excluding City of Chicago School District 299) indicates the following:

- The compliance level of all students in all reported schools was 75.12 percent.
- The compliance level of public school students in all reported schools was 71.41 percent.
- The compliance level of nonpublic school students in all reported schools was 90.22 percent.
- A statewide total of 41,543 reported students (24.88 percent) of the total reported students (166,966) were in noncompliance with the eye examination mandates on October 15, 2008.
- The compliance level of all reported students in kindergarten was 74.98 percent. Compliance rates for public and nonpublic schools were 72.34 percent and 90.30 percent, respectively.
- The compliance level of all reported students in other grades (grades 1-12) was 75.55 percent. Compliance rates for public and nonpublic schools were 67.97 percent and 90.11 percent, respectively.
- Compliance levels obtained for nonpublic schools were much higher than those for public schools, by overall measure as well as by grade level.

Limitations

The following should be considered when interpreting the results provided in this report:

- Eye examination data obtained from public schools do not include data from City of Chicago School District 299, the largest public school district in Illinois.
- Eye examination data were submitted by 2,217 public schools and 872 nonpublic schools.
- Public school eye examination data represent 716 of the 869 Illinois public school districts.
- In some instances, the total percentage may not add up to 100 percent due to rounding errors.

Procedures

All students entering kindergarten and any student entering any grade level above kindergarten for the first time in an Illinois school are required to have an eye examination. The 2008-2009 school year was the first year of school eye examination data collection. Data are collected via a Web-based online survey. The data collection instruments and procedures were developed by Illinois State Board of Education staff, in consultation with Illinois Department of Public Health staff.

School administrators are required to provide information on the number of children who have received the required eye examination, the number of children who have not received the required eye examination, the number of children who are exempt from the eye examination on religious grounds, the number of children who have received a waiver or exemption, and the number of children with scheduled appointments. The online eye examination survey must be completed no sooner than October 16 and no later than June 30 of each year.

Results

Compliance Data

Compliance for students were calculated based on the information provided by Illinois school officials. Data reported by school officials show overall compliance with the requirements of the eye examination mandate. Students in noncompliance may have their report cards withheld by school authorities.

Students were identified as being in compliance with state law if they presented proof of having an eye examination; had religious exemptions; had received a waiver for the eye examination due to 1) being enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program and ineligible for public insurance (Medicaid/All Kids), 2) being enrolled in Medicaid/All Kids but unable to locate an optometrist or medical doctor who performs eye examinations to examine the child and accept Medicaid/All Kids, or 3) having no medical or eye care/vision insurance coverage and there were no low-cost eye/vision clinics in the community that would examine the child; or if they had an approved appointment scheduled for an eye examination.

Statewide Compliance

Table 1 shows the 2008-2009 compliance levels for all reported Illinois school-age children. The compliance level for the total 166,996 reported public and nonpublic children in Illinois was 75.12 percent. The data show 41,543 children (24.88 percent) in noncompliance because they did not have a completed eye examination or did not receive a waiver or exemption.

Public School District Compliance

For Illinois public school districts, the compliance level for the total 134,014 reported children was 71.41 percent. (See Table 1.)

Nonpublic School Compliance

Of the 872 nonpublic schools that submitted eye examination data, the compliance level was 90.22 percent, which is significantly higher than that for public schools. (See Table 1.)

Table 2 shows statewide eye examination status information, including the number of students who obtained waivers, scheduled eye examination appointments, or obtained exemptions. Statewide, 70.51 percent of students completed eye examinations; 4.61 percent complied by obtaining a waiver or a religious exemption, or had approved schedules for an eye examination appointment; and 24.88 percent were in noncompliance.

Table 3 shows public school eye examination status information, including the number of students who obtained waivers, scheduled eye examination appointments, or obtained exemptions. Within public school districts, 66.82 percent of students completed eye examinations; 4.59 percent complied by obtaining a waiver or a religious exemption, or had

approved schedules for an eye examination appointment; and 28.59 percent were in noncompliance.

Table 4 shows nonpublic school eye examination status information, including the number of students who obtained waivers, scheduled an eye examination appointment, or obtained exemptions. Within nonpublic schools, 85.49 percent of students completed eye examinations; 4.72 percent complied by obtaining a waiver or a religious exemption, or had approved schedules for an eye examination appointment, and 9.78 percent were in noncompliance. Compliance rates for nonpublic schools were much higher than the compliance rates for public schools.

Compliance by Grade Level

Tables 5 and 6 provide eye examination status for kindergarten students and for students in grades other than kindergarten (statewide, public, and nonpublic facilities).

Kindergarten—When public and nonpublic schools are considered together, 74.98 percent of students were found to be in compliance (including those with waivers, exemptions, or approved schedules for eye examinations). The compliance rate for public schools was 72.34 percent and the compliance rate for nonpublic schools was 90.30 percent, which is appreciably higher than the public school compliance rate.

Other Grades—A compliance rate of 75.55 percent was observed with combined public and nonpublic school students. The public school compliance rate was 67.97 percent and the nonpublic school compliance rate was 90.11 percent, which is much higher than the public school compliance rate.

Table 1. 2008-2009 Eye Examination Compliance Summary of Reported Educational Facilities

Compliance Status	Public Schools		Nonpublic Schools		All Schools	
	Number of Students	Percent	Number of Students	Percent	Number of Students	Percent
Students in compliance	95,698	71.41	29,755	90.22	125,453	75.12
Students not in compliance	38,316	28.59	3,227	9.78	41,543	24.88
All students	134,014	100.00	32,982	100.00	166,996	100.00

Table 2. 2008-2009 Eye Examination Status for All Reported Illinois Public and Nonpublic School Students

Compliance Status	Number of Students	Percent
In compliance with complete eye examination	117,749	70.51
Approved appointment scheduled	2,752	1.65
Religious exemption	400	0.24
Waiver:		
Enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program and ineligible for public insurance (Medicaid/All Kids)	1,690	1.01
Enrolled in Medicaid/All Kids but unable to locate an optometrist or medical doctor who performs eye examinations to examine the child and who will accept Medicaid/All Kids	1,209	0.72
Does not have medical or eye care/vision insurance and there are no low-cost eye/vision clinics in the community that will examine the child	1,653	0.99
Students not in compliance	41,543	24.88
Total	166,996	100.00

Table 3. 2008-2009 Eye Examination Status for All Reported Illinois Public School Students

Compliance Status	Number of Students	Percent
In compliance with complete eye examination	89,554	66.82
Approved appointment scheduled	1,845	1.38
Religious exemption	373	0.28
Waiver:		
Enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program and ineligible for public insurance (Medicaid/All Kids)	1,600	1.19
Enrolled in Medicaid/All Kids but unable to locate an optometrist or medical doctor who performs eye examinations to examine the child and who will accept Medicaid/All Kids	938	0.70
Does not have medical or eye care/vision insurance and there are no low-cost eye/vision clinics in the community that will examine the child	1,388	1.04
Students not in compliance	38,316	28.59
Total	134,014	100.00

Table 4. 2008-2009 Eye Examination Status for All Reported Illinois Nonpublic School Students

Compliance Status	Number of Students	Percent
In compliance with complete eye examination	28,195	85.49
Approved appointment scheduled	907	2.75
Religious exemption	27	0.08
Waiver:		
Enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program and ineligible for public insurance (Medicaid/All Kids)	90	0.27
Enrolled in Medicaid/All Kids but unable to locate an optometrist or medical doctor who performs eye examinations to examine the child and who will accept Medicaid/All Kids	271	0.82
Does not have medical or eye care/vision insurance and there are no low-cost eye/vision clinics in the community that will examine the child	265	0.80
Students not in compliance	3,227	9.78
Total	35,982	100.00

Table 5. 2008-2009 Eye Examination Status of Kindergarten Students in All Reported Public and Nonpublic Educational Facilities

Compliance Status	Public Schools		Nonpublic Schools		All Schools	
	Number of Students	Percent	Number of Students	Percent	Number of Students	Percent
In compliance with complete eye examination	71,934	68.16	15,688	86.34	87,622	70.83
Approved appointment scheduled	1,517	1.44	478	2.63	1,995	1.61
Religious exemption	364	0.34	16	0.09	380	0.31
Waiver:						
Enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program and ineligible for public insurance (Medicaid/All Kids)	516	0.49	56	0.31	572	0.46
Enrolled in Medicaid/All Kids but unable to locate an optometrist or medical doctor who performs eye examinations to examine the child and who will accept Medicaid/All Kids	851	0.81	31	0.17	882	0.71
Does not have medical or eye care/vision insurance and there are no low-cost eye/vision clinics in the community that will examine the child	1,158	1.10	139	0.76	1,297	1.05
Students not in compliance	29,194	27.66	1,762	9.70	30,956	25.02
Total	105,534	100.00	18,170	100.00	123,704	100.00

**Table 6. 2008-2009 Eye Examination Status of Students in Grades Other Than Kindergarten
in All Reported Public and Nonpublic Educational Facilities**

Compliance Status	Public Schools		Nonpublic Schools		All Schools	
	Number of Students	Percent	Number of Students	Percent	Number of Students	Percent
In compliance with complete eye examination	17,620	61.87	12,507	84.44	30,127	69.59
Approved appointment scheduled	328	1.15	429	2.90	757	1.75
Religious exemption	9	0.03	11	0.07	20	0.05
Waiver:						
Enrolled in the free and reduced lunch program and ineligible for public insurance (Medicaid/All Kids)	1,084	3.81	34	0.23	1,118	2.58
Enrolled in Medicaid/All Kids but unable to locate an optometrist or medical doctor who performs eye examinations to examine the child and who will accept Medicaid/All Kids	87	0.31	240	1.62	327	0.76
Does not have medical or eye care/vision insurance and there are no low-cost eye/vision clinics in the community that will examine the child	230	0.81	126	0.85	356	0.82
Students not in compliance	9,122	32.03	1,465	9.89	10,587	24.45
Total	28,480	100.00	14,812	100.00	43,292	100.00