

THE MANDATED EYE EXAMINATION  
COMPLIANCE STATUS OF  
ILLINOIS SCHOOL-AGE CHILDREN FOR THE  
2009-2010 SCHOOL YEAR

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# Table of Contents

Foreword.....	i
Background.....	ii
Major Findings.....	1
Limitations .....	2
Procedures.....	3
Results.....	4
Compliance Data.....	4
Statewide Compliance .....	4
Public School District Compliance.....	4
Nonpublic School Compliance .....	4
Compliance by Grade Level .....	5

# Table of Tables

Table 1 2009-2010 Eye Examination Compliance Summary of Reported Educational Facilities..... 6

Table 2 2009-2010 Eye Examination Status for All Reported Illinois Public and Nonpublic School Students..... 7

Table 3 2009-2010 Eye Examination Status for All Reported Illinois Public School Students ..... 8

Table 4 2009-2010 Eye Examination Status for All Reported Illinois Nonpublic School Students..... 9

Table 5 2009-2010 Eye Examination Status of Kindergarten Students in All Reported Public and Nonpublic Educational Facilities ..... 10

Table 6 2009-2010 Eye Examination Status of Students in Grades Other than Kindergarten in All Reported Public and Nonpublic Educational Facilities..... 11

# 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 2009-2010 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](mailto: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 in order 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 to the Illinois State Board of Education completed surveys 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 2009-2010 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 77.06 percent.
- The compliance level of public school students in all reported schools was 74.22 percent.
- The compliance level of nonpublic school students in all reported schools was 91.78 percent.
- A statewide total of 36,575 reported students (22.94 percent) of the total reported students (159,469) were in noncompliance with the eye examination mandates on October 15, 2009.
- The compliance level of all reported students in kindergarten was 77.52 percent. Compliance rates for public and nonpublic schools were 74.97 percent and 93.22 percent, respectively.
- The compliance level of all reported students in other grades (grades 1-12) was 75.03 percent. Compliance rates for public and nonpublic schools were 70.39 percent and 88.31 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 represent 2,401 public schools and 876 nonpublic schools.
- Public school eye examination data represent 770 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 2009-2010 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 was 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 not in compliance 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-price lunch program and ineligible for public insurance (Medicaid/All Kids), 2) being enrolled in Medicaid/All Kids but unable to locate an optometrist or a 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 2009-2010 compliance levels for all reported Illinois school-age children. The compliance level for the total 159,469 reported public and nonpublic children in Illinois was 77.06 percent. The data show 36,575 children (22.94 percent) not in compliance 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 133,633 reported children was 74.22 percent. (See Table 1.)

## Nonpublic School Compliance

Of the 876 nonpublic schools that submitted eye examination data, the compliance level was 91.78 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, 73.40 percent of students completed eye examinations; 3.66 percent complied by obtaining a waiver or a religious exemption, or had approved schedules for an eye examination appointment; and 22.94 percent were not in compliance.

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, 70.59 percent of students completed eye examinations; 3.62 percent complied by obtaining a waiver or a religious exemption, or had

approved schedules for an eye examination appointment; and 25.78 percent were not in compliance.

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, 87.91 percent of students completed eye examinations; 3.87 percent complied by obtaining a waiver or a religious exemption, or had approved schedules for an eye examination appointment; and 8.22 percent were not in compliance. 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, 77.53 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 74.97 percent and the compliance rate for nonpublic schools was 93.22 percent, which is appreciably higher than the public school compliance rate.

*Other Grades*—A compliance rate of 75.03 percent was observed with combined public and nonpublic school students. The public school compliance rate was 70.39 percent and the nonpublic school compliance rate was 88.31 percent, which is much higher than the public school compliance rate.

**Table 1. 2009-2010 Eye Examination Compliance Summary of Reported Educational Facilities**

<b>Compliance Status</b>	<b>Public Schools</b>		<b>Nonpublic Schools</b>		<b>All Schools</b>	
	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Students in compliance	99,183	74.22	23,711	91.78	122,894	77.06
Students not in compliance	34,450	25.78	2,125	8.22	36,575	22.94
All students	133,633	100.00	25,836	100.00	159,469	100.00

**Table 2. 2009-2010 Eye Examination Status for All Reported Illinois Public and Nonpublic School Students**

<b>Compliance Status</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent</b>
In compliance with complete eye examination	117,049	73.40
Approved appointment scheduled	2,286	1.43
Religious exemption	186	0.12
Waiver:		
Enrolled in the free- and reduced-priced lunch program and ineligible for public insurance (Medicaid/All Kids)	1,496	0.94
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	628	0.39
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	1,249	0.78
Students not in compliance	36,575	22.94
<b>Total</b>	<b>159,469</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Table 3. 2009-2010 Eye Examination Status for All Reported Illinois Public School Students**

<b>Compliance Status</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent</b>
In compliance with complete eye examination	94,336	70.59
Approved appointment scheduled	1,662	1.24
Religious exemption	160	0.12
Waiver:		
Enrolled in the free- and reduced-price lunch program and ineligible for public insurance (Medicaid/All Kids)	1,335	1.00
Enrolled in Medicaid/All Kids but unable to locate an optometrist or a medical doctor who performs eye examinations to examine the child and who will accept Medicaid/All Kids	551	0.41
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	1,139	0.85
Students not in compliance	34,450	25.78
<b>Total</b>	<b>133,633</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Table 4. 2009-2010 Eye Examination Status for All Reported Illinois Nonpublic School Students**

<b>Compliance Status</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>	<b>Percent</b>
In compliance with complete eye examination	22,713	87.91
Approved appointment scheduled	624	2.42
Religious exemption	26	0.10
Waiver:		
Enrolled in the free- and reduced-price lunch program and ineligible for public insurance (Medicaid/All Kids)	161	0.62
Enrolled in Medicaid/All Kids but unable to locate an optometrist or a medical doctor who performs eye examinations to examine the child and who will accept Medicaid/All Kids	77	0.30
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	110	0.43
Students not in compliance	2,125	8.22
<b>Total</b>	<b>25,836</b>	<b>100</b>

**Table 5. 2009-2010 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	80,199	71.68	16,405	89.97	96,604	74.25
Approved appointment scheduled	1,302	1.16	380	2.08	1,682	1.29
Religious exemption	145	0.13	19	0.10	164	0.13
Waiver:						
Enrolled in the free- and reduced-price lunch program and ineligible for public insurance (Medicaid/All Kids)	936	0.84	108	0.59	1,044	0.80
Enrolled in Medicaid/All Kids but unable to locate an optometrist or a medical doctor who performs eye examinations to examine the child and who will accept Medicaid/All Kids	398	0.36	40	0.22	438	0.34
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	890	0.80	46	0.25	936	0.72
Students not in compliance	28,008	25.03	1,236	6.78	29,244	22.48
<b>Total</b>	<b>111,878</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>18,234</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>130,112</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Table 6. 2009-2010 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	14,137	64.98	6,308	82.98	20,445	69.64
Approved appointment scheduled	360	1.65	244	3.21	604	2.06
Religious exemption	15	0.07	7	0.09	22	0.07
Waiver:						
Enrolled in the free- and reduced-price lunch program and ineligible for public insurance (Medicaid/All Kids)	399	1.83	53	0.70	452	1.54
Enrolled in Medicaid/All Kids but unable to locate an optometrist or a medical doctor who performs eye examinations to examine the child and who will accept Medicaid/All Kids	153	0.70	37	0.49	190	0.65
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	249	1.14	64	0.84	313	1.07
Students not in compliance	6,442	29.61	889	11.69	7,331	24.97
<b>Total</b>	<b>21,755</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7,602</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>29,357</b>	<b>100</b>