



Early Childhood Screening

*Duluth Public Schools, ISD No. 709
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Lions Club- Duluth
C/O Gail Tate
327 Kenilworth Ave.
Duluth, MN 55803

March 5, 2010

Dear Lions Club,

As Early Childhood Screening Coordinator for the Duluth Public Schools, I oversee the comprehensive health and developmental screening that the State of Minnesota requires for all children before they enroll in kindergarten. In 2006, the MN Department of Education, MN Department of Health and MN Department of Human Services announced new Minnesota Vision Screening Guidelines. This included procedural guidelines and rescreen/referral criteria for use at Early Childhood Screening and other vision screenings by school nurses. The recommended vision chart for children ages 3-6 years is the 10 foot HOTV or LEA chart with 50% spaced rectangle boxes around each line and a required 20/25 line (manufactured by Good-Lite).

During the course of a school year, I have the opportunity to work with our school nurses and became aware that they are working with dated vision screening equipment. Most notably, the current eye charts in use are missing the required 20/25 line. This matters when identifying children with a two line difference between their right and left eyes. If the 20/25 line is not a part of the exam, a referral could be missed. For example, a 20/20 right eye and 20/30 left eye result on an old eye chart is a one line difference, therefore “passing”. On the currently recommended eye chart, this result would be a two-line difference, resulting in an eye doctor referral upon a second “failure”.

In the spring of last school year, a child was seen at Early Childhood Screening who needed a second screen to determine if a referral to the eye doctor should be made. Her original screening results were 20/20 right eye and 20/30 left eye (a difference of two lines on the eye chart). For convenience, the mother asked if the second screen could be arranged at the school where she teaches. It was completed by the school nurse with the same result, but on an old eye chart this was considered “passing”. I encouraged the mother to return to ECS for another rescreen on a current eye chart, which resulted in a referral to the eye doctor. Subsequently, she got glasses just in time for kindergarten. Recently, this same mother happened to email about arranging screening for her youngest daughter. In the note, she expressed her appreciation and wrote about her kindergartner: She is loving school- she is flying in- as per her teacher. She loves her glasses. They made a world of difference.

The team of nurses who serve our Duluth public and non-public schools need current vision charts to properly screen young children and to meet the expectations of Minnesota's guidelines. During these challenging economic times, Camille Murphy, RN Licensed School Nurse and I seek a solution to this need by making a request of the Duluth Lion's Club on behalf of the Duluth school nurses group. The nurses request funding for 14 sets of HOTV vision charts, as described below:

14 Mass Test HOTV Distance Charts @ \$30.00 each	= \$420.00
<u>Shipping and handling</u>	<u>= \$ 14.00</u>
TOTAL:	\$434.00

Your consideration of this request is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Kathy Johnson
Early Childhood Screening Coordinator
218-336-8816

Camille Murphy, RN Licensed School Nurse
Lowell Elementary School
218-336-8895

Attachments:
Good-Lite quote
Mass Test HOTV Distance Chart information