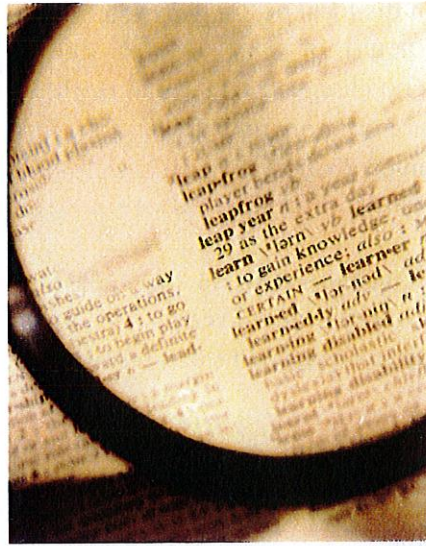# MEMORANDUM
Michigan Department of Health and Human Services

DATE: February 10, 2017

TO: Principals and Superintendents of all Michigan Public, Private and Parochial Schools

SUBJECT: VISION SCREENING and REPORTING FOR KINDERGARTEN

The screening of children's vision prior to the start of Kindergarten is required in Michigan. Several laws mandate the screening, confirmation of screening, and the reporting of these screenings.

Public Health Code Act 368 of 1978, Section 9307 states that "a parent, guardian, or person in loco parentis applying to have a child registered for the first time in a kindergarten or first grade in a school in this state **shall present to school officials, at the time of registration or not later than the first day of school,** a certificate of hearing and vision testing or screening or statements of exception under Section 9311".

The Revised School Code (Act 451 of 1976, section 380.1177) requires that parents of children entering kindergarten **present a statement to school officials** confirming that they have received the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services Vision Screening **OR** a statement, signed by a licensed eye care practitioner (optometrist or ophthalmologist) or medical/osteopathic physician, indicating that a child's eyes have been examined at least once after age three and **before initial school entry** may also be presented. **School officials are required to enter vision screening data into the MCIR/SIRS system** for all kindergarten or developmental kindergarten new entrants by November 1 of each year.

Please note the following points regarding Kindergarten Vision Screening in Michigan:

- Parents are responsible for getting their child's vision screened prior to the first day of kindergarten
- Schools facilitate the screenings by communicating the requirement to parents
- Local public health departments offer free screenings for all children in their service area
- Schools can facilitate the screenings by including the local health department screening staff during Round-Ups or registration days, if available
- Screening statements from the local health department, a licensed eye care practitioner (optometrist or ophthalmologist) or medical/osteopathic physician are acceptable
- Screenings are available at no charge to families through your local health department
- Screenings should take place no more than 6 months prior to the start of school
- Students should not be denied access to school because the parent did not have the screening completed. Parents should have the screening completed within the first week of school
- School officials enter the screenings onto the immunization data entry screen in the MCIR no later than November 1 of each school year
- November 1 is the deadline to report that the screenings have been completed prior to the first day of school
- A separate report to MDHHS is no longer required
- Schools and screening sites should ensure the following when scheduling their screening day:
  - Have available a quiet room with table and appropriate chairs for either preschool or school-age screening
  - Have available a room with adequate space, outlets, air flow, etc.
  - Screenings should never be conducted in bathrooms or rooms where other events are taking place or where unsafe conditions exist
  - Observers (including parents) must not communicate with children during the screening to prevent leading responses which can result in false negatives
  - Failure to ensure the above necessities will result in being asked to reschedule the screening date

If you, or your support personnel responsible for entering vision screening data, have questions regarding this requirement, **please contact your local health department's Vision Screening Program** or Dr. Rachel Schumann, Vision Program Consultant for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, at 517-335-6596.

On behalf of the children of Michigan, many thanks for helping ensure that all Michigan children have good vision as they begin their journey to success in learning and life.