

# Better Access to Quality Eye Care

Nebraska's Doctors of Optometry

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Nebraska Foundation for Children's Vision Partners with Lincoln Public Schools**

*Vision and Learning Pilot Program for Students with Financial Needs*

**Lincoln, NE** – More than 40 Lincoln Public Schools students received vision exams and care in the first year of the “Vision and Learning Program,” a pilot program sponsored by the Nebraska Foundation for Children’s Vision in cooperation with the Nebraska Optometric Association and Lincoln Public Schools. According to Dr. Mike Hausmann, a Vision & Learning Program participating optometrist, the program’s goal is to ensure that every child in Nebraska is visually ready to learn.

“The pilot project, launched in January 2013, has referred 63 Lincoln Public School students, and 43 of those have had exams by a participating optometrist. Almost 80 percent of those examined were prescribed glasses, demonstrating that the need is definitely there,” Dr. Hausmann said.

Sharon Baker, Lincoln Public School Nurse and President of the Nebraska School Nurses Association said the target population is uninsured students enrolled in Kindergarten through 12th grade in the LPS system.

“An LPS school nurse can refer any student who is not covered under vision insurance or Medicaid, or does not have other financial means to afford an exam or prescription glasses,” Baker said.

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“Studies indicate that nearly 75 percent of the school day is spent in visual activities, and more than 80 percent of what we learn is through visual processing. We also know that, between 17 and 25 percent of school age children have undetected and treatable vision problems that can interfere with learning. When a child is visually ready to learn, that child will succeed, not just in the classroom, but also in life,” Baker said.

“The goal of the Vision & Learning Program is to reach those kids, and to make sure they are on an even playing field visually with their peers. We want to ensure that those students facing financial barriers to appropriate vision care receive the professional care they need,” Dr. Hausmann said.

According to Dr. Hausmann, the program was recently awarded a \$5,000 grant through the American Optometric Association’s 2014 Healthy Eyes Healthy People® (HEHP) Community Grant Program. The grant is one of 17 grants made possible by the generous support of Luxottica USA.

“We are encouraged by the results in Lincoln, and are hoping to expand the Vision & Learning Project to other communities in Nebraska.”

To learn more visit: [www.nchildrensvision.org](http://www.nchildrensvision.org)

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***About the Nebraska Foundation for Children’s Vision (NFCV)***

The Nebraska Foundation for Children’s Vision (NFCV) is a non-profit organization, whose mission is to ensure that every child in Nebraska is visually prepared to succeed in school and life. As experts in vision care, NFCV provides outreach and education, encourages comprehensive eye exams by eye care professionals and develops and shares models and best practices related to children's vision.

***About the Nebraska Optometric Association (NOA):***

The NOA represents over 240 doctors of optometry serving in more than 80 communities throughout the state. Doctors of Optometry (ODs) are the independent primary health care professionals for the eye. Optometrists examine, diagnose, treat, and manage disease, injuries, and disorders of the visual system, the eye, and associated structures as well as identify related systemic conditions affecting the eyes. Association members in Nebraska are also leading providers of pediatric vision care and offer two statewide public service programs to serve children. Learn more about both programs and other valuable eye care information on the Nebraska Optometric Association website at [www.BetterEyecareNebraska.com](http://www.BetterEyecareNebraska.com)