

**ASSEMBLY, No. 1399**

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**STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

**219th LEGISLATURE**

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PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywoman YVONNE LOPEZ**

**District 19 (Middlesex)**

**Assemblywoman ANGELA V. MCKNIGHT**

**District 31 (Hudson)**

**Assemblyman ANTHONY S. VERRELLI**

**District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

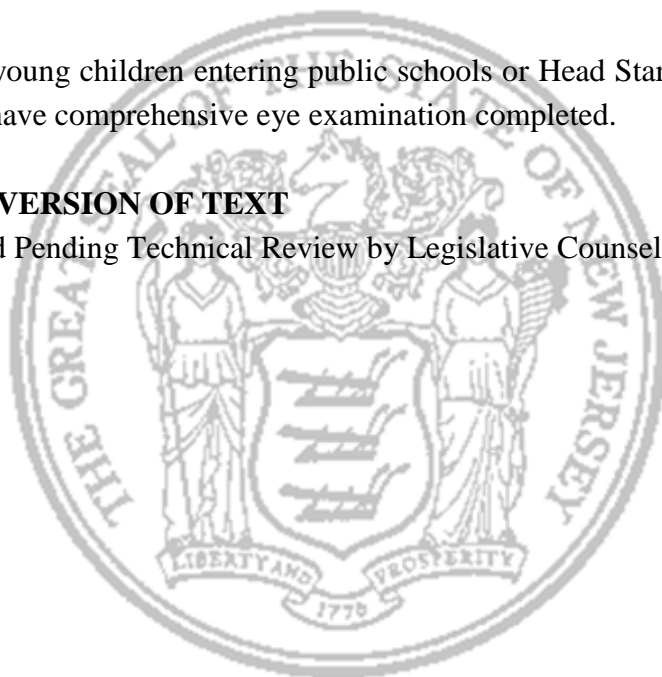
**Assemblymen Benson, Thomson, S.Kean, Assemblywoman Murphy,  
Assemblymen Calabrese, Chiaravalloti, Assemblywomen Jasey, Jimenez,  
Assemblyman Caputo, Assemblywoman Reynolds-Jackson, Assemblymen  
Danielsen, Zwicker, Assemblywomen Timberlake, DiMaso, Assemblyman  
Schaer, Assemblywomen Quijano, N.Munoz, Assemblymen Mejia, Auth,  
Assemblywomen Vainieri Huttie, Mosquera, Speight and Dunn**

**SYNOPSIS**

Requires young children entering public schools or Head Start Programs for first time to have comprehensive eye examination completed.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/12/2021)**

1 AN ACT concerning the vision of certain children and  
2 supplementing chapter 40 of Title 18A of the New Jersey  
3 Statutes.

4  
5 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*  
6 *of New Jersey:*

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8 1. a. The State Board of Education shall require a child age 6  
9 and under who is entering a public preschool, public school, or a  
10 Head Start Program for the first time to have a comprehensive eye  
11 examination completed by an optometrist or ophthalmologist by  
12 January 1 of the child's initial year of enrollment in the school or  
13 program.

14 b. The Department of Health shall maintain a list of resources  
15 from which a parent or guardian may obtain a free or reduced price  
16 comprehensive eye examination for a child. The list shall be posted  
17 on the department's Internet website and updated annually. The  
18 department shall also provide the list annually to each public  
19 preschool, public school, and Head Start Program, and the list shall  
20 be made available by the public preschool, public school, and Head  
21 Start Program to the parents or guardians of all enrolled children.

22 c. A principal, director, or other person in charge of a public  
23 preschool, public school, or Head Start Program shall collect from  
24 the child's parent or guardian evidence of the child's  
25 comprehensive eye examination, as provided by regulation of the  
26 State board.

27 In the case of a parent or guardian who has not provided  
28 evidence of the child's comprehensive eye exam, the principal,  
29 director, or other person in charge of a public preschool, public  
30 school, or Head Start Program shall notify the parents or guardians  
31 every three months following the child's initial enrollment of the  
32 requirement regarding the comprehensive eye examination.

33 d. A comprehensive eye examination that was performed 1no  
34 more than one year1 prior to a child's initial enrollment in a public  
35 preschool, public school, or Head Start Program shall be deemed to  
36 satisfy the requirement of this section.

37 e. The State Board of Education shall adopt rules and regulations  
38 pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410  
39 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), to implement the provisions of this section.

40 f. There is hereby created a special fund in the Department of  
41 Education, which shall be entitled the "Comprehensive Eye  
42 Examination Fund." The fund shall be maintained in a separate  
43 account and administered by the commissioner to carry out the  
44 provisions of this section. The fund shall consist of (1) any monies  
45 appropriated by the State for the purposes of the fund; (2) any  
46 monies donated for the purposes of the fund; and (3) all interest and  
47 investment earnings received on monies in the fund. The fund shall  
48 be used to cover the costs of comprehensive eye examinations

1 conducted pursuant to this section, for any uninsured children and  
2 children without applicable healthcare coverage.

3 g. As used in this section, "comprehensive eye examination"  
4 means an evaluation that includes a child's history, external and  
5 ophthalmoscopic examination, visual acuity, ocular alignment and  
6 motility, refraction, and assessment of accommodation and  
7 binocular vision, performed by an optometrist or ophthalmologist.

8

9 2. This act shall take effect in the first full school year  
10 following the date of enactment.

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### STATEMENT

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15 This bill directs the State Board of Education to require each  
16 child age 6 and under who is entering a public preschool, public  
17 school, or a Head Start Program for the first time to have a  
18 comprehensive eye examination completed by an optometrist or  
19 ophthalmologist by January 1 of the child's initial year of  
20 enrollment in the school or program. The Department of Health  
21 will maintain a list of resources from which a parent or guardian  
22 may obtain a free or reduced price comprehensive eye examination.  
23 The list will be posted on the Department of Health's website and  
24 will be provided to each public preschool, public school, and Head  
25 Start Program.

26 A principal, director, or other person in charge of a public  
27 preschool, public school, or Head Start Program must collect from  
28 the child's parent or guardian evidence of the child's  
29 comprehensive eye examination, as provided by regulation of the  
30 State board. A comprehensive eye examination that was performed  
31 no more than one year prior to a child's initial enrollment in a  
32 public preschool, public school, or Head Start Program will satisfy  
33 the requirements under the bill.