

# SENATE, No. 1032

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 30, 2020

**Sponsored by:**

**Senator M. TERESA RUIZ**

**District 29 (Essex)**

**Senator SHIRLEY K. TURNER**

**District 15 (Hunterdon and Mercer)**

**SYNOPSIS**

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

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 2/10/2020)

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:*

7  
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 no  
34 more than one year 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  
38 regulations pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act,"  
39 P.L.1968, c.410 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.), to implement the provisions  
40 of this section.

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

1 be used to cover the costs of comprehensive eye examinations  
2 conducted pursuant to this section, for any uninsured children and  
3 children without applicable healthcare coverage.

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

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

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STATEMENT

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16 This bill directs the State Board of Education to require each child  
17 age 6 and under who is entering a public preschool, public school, or a  
18 Head Start Program for the first time to have a comprehensive eye  
19 examination completed by an optometrist or ophthalmologist by  
20 January 1 of the child's initial year of enrollment in the school or  
21 program. The Department of Health will maintain a list of resources  
22 from which a parent or guardian may obtain a free or reduced price  
23 comprehensive eye examination. The list will be posted on the  
24 Department of Health's website and will be provided to each public  
25 preschool, public school, and Head 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 the  
28 child's parent or guardian evidence of the child's comprehensive eye  
29 examination, as provided by regulation of the State board. A  
30 comprehensive eye examination that was performed no more than one  
31 year prior to a child's initial enrollment in a public preschool, public  
32 school, or Head Start Program will satisfy the requirements under the  
33 bill.

34 Under the bill, a special fund will be created in the Department  
35 of Education, to be entitled the "Comprehensive Eye Examination  
36 Fund." The fund must be maintained in a separate account and  
37 administered by the commissioner to carry out the provisions of the  
38 bill. The fund will consist of (1) any monies appropriated by the  
39 State for the purposes of the fund; (2) any monies donated for the  
40 purposes of the fund; and (3) all interest and investment earnings  
41 received on monies in the fund. The fund is to be used to cover the  
42 costs of comprehensive eye examinations conducted pursuant to the  
43 bill, for any uninsured children and children without applicable  
44 healthcare coverage.