

Illinois PTA Resolution
Adopted at the 2004 Convention
**REQUIRED VISION EXAMINATION
BEFORE ENTERING KINDERGARTEN**
Education and Legislation

- Whereas, Item 7a of the Illinois PTA Legislation Platform supports adequate legislation and/or financial support for the protection, health and welfare of children and youth; and
- Whereas, It is estimated that one-in-four school-aged children have a vision problem and that undiagnosed and untreated vision impairments during the important formative years of a child's development can seriously interfere with learning and cause poor performance in school; and
- Whereas, Vision screenings are mandated by the Illinois Department of Public Health for all children in any public, private, or parochial preschool, kindergarten, second grade, eighth grade, including transfer students, teacher referrals, and those receiving special education services, yet according to the current 2002 Illinois Department of Public Health Vision Conservation Annual Report, only 29% of all parents, whose child failed a vision screening, completed the *recommended* referrals to an eye doctor; and
- Whereas, Vision screenings are limited, cannot provide a diagnosis nor prescribe treatment, and can only identify *possible* vision problems, thus leaving the children *not* identified at risk with undetected and untreated eye or vision problems; and
- Whereas, Eye and vision problems are best detected and treated early; including amblyopia, a loss of vision, which develops after constant suppression of vision of one eye and usually needs to be diagnosed by the age of 6 years in order to prevent the leading cause of monocular blindness in children and young adults; and
- Whereas, Illinois law, Public Act 93-0504, confirms that vision screening is *not a substitute* for a complete eye and vision evaluation by an eye doctor; and
- Whereas, Knowledge regarding the critical importance of an examination by an eye doctor, to ensure healthy eyes and adequate vision skills *as a child's best school supply*, is not widely understood by parents, teachers, administrators, nor the public at large; now therefore be it
- Resolved, That Illinois PTA, through its constituent organizations, provide information to educate members, parents, teachers, administrators, and the public at large about children's vision and the critical importance of comprehensive eye and vision examinations for all children during their school-aged years; and be it further**
- Resolved, That Illinois PTA, through its constituent organizations, support legislation to require a comprehensive eye and vision examination, by an optometrist or ophthalmologist, for all children entering kindergarten (or first grade) as a necessary prerequisite to academic learning; and be it further**
- Resolved, That the Illinois PTA bring this resolution to the National PTA for presentation at their 2005 convention.**