



## What does a Vision Referral mean for your child?

Each year, RRPS school nurses and health assistants screen children for vision shortfalls that could affect their learning. Vision and success in school are linked. Motor, cognitive, language, self-help and social development are affected when vision is reduced or absent. <sup>1</sup>

Amblyopia or “Lazy Eye” occurs when vision in one eye is weaker than the vision in the other eye. Signs of lazy eye are:

- Favoring one eye
- Tilting the head
- Rubbing the eyes or excessive blinking
- Closing one eye especially in the sunlight
- One eye drifting when child is tired or sick
- Holding things close to eyes

Amblyopia can be completely reversed if detected and treated early. If left untreated, permanent vision loss can occur.

We know that vision problems are common in schools, 20-30% of school age children have vision deficits. Most children with reading problems have vision problems. Studies show that 5-10% of students have an undetected vision deficit. <sup>2</sup>

In some cases, vision changes occur *slowly*. Children may not complain about their eye sight because they are unaware their vision has changed. When a child can not see the passing line, an exam by an eye care professional is recommended.

Letters are sent out to parents when their child can not read the vision chart at a

passing line or if other problems were detected during their vision screening. It is important that parents follow-up with their child's eye care provider so that a complete eye exam can be performed by a qualified eye professional.

***If you are in need of financial assistance in obtaining a vision exam, glasses, or both for your child, please do not hesitate to contact your child's school nurse. Programs and funding are available to qualified families.***

Bishop, V. (1996). *Teaching Visually Impaired Children*. Charles C Thomas, Publisher, Springfield, Illinois

Kimel, L. (2006). Lack of Follow-up Exams after Failed School Vision Screenings: An investigation of contributing factors. *Journal of School Nursing*, 22(3), 156-162.