

Floyd W. Woods, M.Ed., O.D.

June 26, 2008

Ms. Susan Meister
Administrative Rules Coordinator
Illinois Department of Public Health
535 West Jefferson Street, 5th Floor
Springfield, Illinois 62761
dph.rules@illinois.gov

RE: DPH Emergency Rule and the Vision First report form needed
for Public Act 95-0671

Dear Ms Meister:

I am a member of the board of directors of the Vision First Foundation. I am a semi-retired optometrist with over fifty-six years experience of working with children who have learning-related vision problems. I hold a doctorate degree in optometry from the Illinois College of Optometry as well as a Masters in Education degree from Loyola University of Chicago.

Now that I have properly introduced myself, I would like to discuss in all seriousness, the strenuous objection I have to the omission of the Vision First report form from consideration as an approved document for reporting eye examinations. I support the use of the Vision First report form for the following reasons:

- #1. The members of the committee that created this form were all professionals representing ophthalmology, general medicine, pediatrics, optometry, special education, kindergarten teachers, and parents. The mission of the committee was to develop a form, consistent with today's standards of eye and vision care.
- #2. The committee spent many hours individually and collectively to use the best language in communicating to all interested parties, the results of the eye and vision examination in a meaningful and useful way.
- #3. Many resources were used in developing the Vision First Foundation form such as the recent Ophthalmology Journal research article describing a condition called convergence insufficiency and how it influences the reading process. Clinical Guidelines for Examining the Eyes and Vision of School Children was used extensively as this is the Holy Grail of the optometric eye examination. *The State report form only asks the basic questions about the eye examination, most of which has absolutely no relation to schoolwork.*
- #4. Are we to ignore more recent evidence that indicates we are sacrificing our school children at the alter of education simply because we ignore the massive research accumulated in the last twenty-to-thirty years on the relationship of academic achievement and eyes and vision? I would hope not.

As you can see, the Vision First Foundation has anticipated the mandatory eye examination. The Vision First Foundation was one of the primary movers in passing this legislation. Please consider these remarks, not as condemnation, but as a sincere effort to establish for our children the most modern eye and vision care that is available. We are willing to meet anytime and at any place in an attempt to explain our position on this matter.

Sincerely,
Floyd W. Woods, M.Ed., O.D.