

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Mandatory Changes to School Health Screenings for Nebraska Public Schools Starting 2014-2015 School Year**

**Lincoln** – It's no secret that health is important to student success. School health screenings are one tool to help keep students' health on track. Screenings can identify poor eyesight or hearing, dental issues as well as address other health-related concerns that may interfere with learning.

New school health screening regulations go into effect July 1, 2014 for the 2014-2015 school year. Highlights include:

- Children in grades Pre-K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 10 will receive school health screenings instead of all students.
- Required screenings will also include height, weight and BMI in addition to vision, hearing and dental.
- A variety of people help perform health screenings in Nebraska schools including licensed health care professionals and volunteers. All screeners must meet certain competency requirements to perform a health screening.
- Schools can conduct school health screenings throughout the school year versus only the first quarter.

The goal of these changes is to help improve and assure quality practices for school health screenings.

If a student's health screening shows a need for further evaluation, the school will send a written notice to parents. All school health screening information is protected by state confidentiality laws and will be stored securely in the student's personal record.

If a student has a physical exam with his/her physician that includes school health screening information, the screening won't have to be repeated if a parent or guardian provides the school with a statement signed by a health care provider stating the child had the required screening. The physician's office health screening must be within the six months prior to the school's scheduled health screening.

For more information about school health screenings go to: <http://dhhs.ne.gov/SchoolHealth> or call 402-471-0196.