

Good Afternoon Chairman Dembrow, Vice Chair Thompson and Senators Gelser, Gorsek and Robinson. My name is Brad King and I work at the Oregon Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation and do school vision screenings. What a great job!

One day this pandemic will abate. While we must continue to be careful and our behavior will change ... we will find a new normal. A big part of that new normal will be making sure all of our students in Oregon schools achieve their fullest educational potential. As a part of that we all realize that 80% of K-12 learning is **VISUAL**, yet almost 25% of students have undetected, correctable vision issues. To identify those students in need of vision assistance, like eyeglasses, the Lions of Oregon and the Oregon Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation has and will continue to advocate for and provide the highest quality, state-of-the-art, objective and equitable school based vision screening and effective follow-up referral resources for underserved student families.

A quick word about how equitable OLSHF screenings are: Based on the Oregon Department of Education's "School Report Card" published in October, 2020, the student population that receives vision screening from OLSHF, and its racial/ethnic diversity, remarkably matches Oregon's overall student population diversity.

For the past 8 years OLSHF has used the SPOT photo-vision screener. In virtually seconds, the SPOT takes 13 measures of the students eyes, looking for 8 conditions common to young people that negatively affect learning. These screenings take place no closer than a meter from the student. Hundreds of thousands of students have received these screenings since 2013. As a matter of fact, another report from the Oregon Department of Education concerns Oregon's High School Graduation rate over the last 5-6 years. Most of that cadre of graduating students received quality vision screening during their school career and ODE's report shows an 8% increase in graduation. I'm not saying that "A" equals "B", but 1 plus 2 always equals 3.

From the very beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, OLSHF worked quickly and effectively to establish a safe methodology to continue to provide school vision screenings, safe for students, school staff and volunteers. This included mounting a SPOT on a dollied tripod with a meter long panning handle in conjunction with all appropriate Personal Protective Equipment. This methodology is CDC and OHA compliant and provides a greater than 6' safe "social" distance between the student and screener. This methodology was "beta" tested during the summer of 2020 and has been in safe and successful use in small, rural school districts throughout Oregon during times when Governor's orders allowed in-class learning.

Even with this new safe distance methodology, screenings remain quick and efficient and they take students out of the classroom learning environment for a very short time, only minutes, minimally impacting the valuable learning day.

Pandemic or no pandemic, as a school nurse friend says: “If Johnny can’t see, Johnny can’t read. If Johnny can’t read, Johnny can’t learn.”

Chairman Dembrow and Senator Gorsek, we screen students at a number of private schools in your districts and we work with the Multnomah County Education Service District in efforts with all of the public school students in your districts.

Senator Robinson, my team-mates Tim and Dr. Steve screen your students in Josephine and Jackson Counties at The Grants Pass, Central Point and Eagle Point School Districts.

Senator Gelser, Robert and Jerry screen all of the public school students in your district including the Greater Albany SD 8j, Corvallis SD and Philomath SD 17j.

And co-chair, Senator Thompson, I get to screen most of the students all over your district including the Hood River County School District, North Clackamas SD and Oregon Trail SD.

Senators, given the appropriate resources we will screen every student in every corner of Oregon with no regard for their socio-economic status, racial/ethnic background, etc. Our “20-20 Vision” is to see that every student in Oregon gets regular vision screening so they can achieve their full educational potential and improve their life potential. Thank you.



*Please note the greater than 6' "social" distance and proper PPE.*