



## PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Rainy River District School Board promoting Children's Vision Month

As children are settling into the new school year, it's important that they are seeing properly. With October being Children's Vision Month, the Rainy River District School Board wants to remind parents and guardians to ensure their child is ready to learn – and this starts with an eye exam from an optometrist.

The Ontario Association of Optometrists (OAO) recommends that children have their first eye exam at six months-old, and again between the ages of two and five, and annually thereafter, to ensure good vision and development. In Ontario, eye exams are covered by OHIP for children up to 19 years-old.

In addition to eye exams, the Rainy River District School Board is pleased to have local Lions Club volunteers and the Northwestern Health Unit on board to provide free eye screenings to students in Kindergarten and Grade 1. Using a hand-held, portable scanner, vision issues can quickly and easily be detected in a non-invasive and confidential manner. Lions Club volunteers will begin visiting schools and conducting eye screenings next week. Thank you to both partners for their support to provide eye screening in our schools.

Within the region, about 18.9 percent of children who have had their eyes screened have been referred to an optometrist. Parents are also reminded that there are local programs to assist in purchasing glasses so kids do not go without.

Eighty per cent of classroom learning is visual making a child's eyes an essential tool that should not be neglected. Vision problems that go undetected not only cause literacy challenges, but create academic, social and athletic performance barriers. Staying consistent with annual eye exams will not only help your child to have better vision, but will improve their ability to concentrate and perform to their potential, especially when it comes to school.

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Mission: *"Together, we empower all students to believe in themselves, to achieve, and to dream."*

Vision: *"The Rainy River District School Board is an innovative community, nurturing hearts and minds, to build a foundation for tomorrow, today."*

*This publication is available in accessible formats upon request.*