

Charter Center Update

Date: 9/20/2022

To: Camryn Krause Ferris

From: Margo Chresand

RE: Assuring all children are at their optimal health and development

Assuring all children are at their optimal health through an Early Childhood Health and Developmental Screening (ECS) which includes: vision, hearing, height/weight, health care provider/coverage, immunization review, risk factors which may impact learning review, developmental (cognitive, speech/language, fine/gross motor) and social emotional screening and referral, is tied to successful learning. Many kindergartners attending charter schools never receive an early childhood screening which would help to identify barriers that may limit their ability to learn.

- Ensuring all children receive ECS prior to or within the first 90 days of prekindergarten or 30 days of kindergarten is **best practice** to identify early those barriers to learning. This is required for charters who elect to provide an [Early Childhood Health and Developmental Screening Program](#).
- November through August is the ideal time for parents to contact local public school districts to complete an early childhood screening, if the charter school their child is enrolled in does not screen. Many districts lack the capacity to screen in September and October, due to statutory screening requirements. [Minnesota Statutes 121A.16 - 121A.19](#).
- [HelpMeConnect](#) provides resources and contact information that any school can use in early childhood screening programs. Freely share the link with families.
- Children enrolled in a charter school may have previously been screened during a well-child check or a Child and teen Checkup by their health care provider, local public health agency or Head Start. All charters, whether or not they elect to provide a screening program, may request copies of any previous screenings as part of their admission process, in order to assure all children are screened. Parents may also decline or conscientiously object to the early childhood screening by submitting a statement in writing.

[Early Childhood Screening Kindergarten Cohort Report](#) includes the number of kindergartners who have completed or not completed their screening for each charter school, for the purpose of determining how many children could benefit from expanded screening. The data may also indicate the large number of children who may need vision, hearing and developmental supports in order to be successful learners.

[Charter Authorizer Resources](#) lists the Early Childhood Health and Developmental Screening Program Request Instructions and Supplemental Affidavit documents, if your charter is interested in adding an additional program to provide ECS. Currently only 10 charters provide a screening program. State aid encourages early childhood screenings and referrals to assure optimal health and development.

For any questions about early childhood screening contact Margaret.Chresand@state.mn.us.

For questions about starting the process to add an screening program to your Charter contact Mike.Schultz@state.mn.us.