

NEWS RELEASE

Essilor Canada donates 1000+ pairs of glasses to WSD students through Mobile Vision Care Clinic

October 5, 2018 (Winnipeg, MB) – More than a thousand students in Winnipeg School Division (WSD) are about to benefit from a generous donation of funds for eye glasses. Essilor Canada, committed to eliminating poor vision and its lifelong consequences, and to providing underprivileged people the opportunity to live a better life through better sight, has made an agreement with the Mobile Vision Care Clinic, partnered with WSD, to provide 1,000 pairs of glasses this year, with a retail value of about \$150,000.

“Essilor Canada is pleased to partner with the Mobile Vision Care Clinic to help make sure that every student who needs vision correction has access to better sight. We know that 80 percent of a child’s learning before the age of 12 comes through their eyes, therefore it is critical we ensure our youth is equipped for the future. The Mobile Vision Care Clinic has made a significant impact on this community and we are thrilled that we are able to help amplify their efforts,” said Tom Weissberger, National Director, Essilor Technologies.

“Essilor Canada is helping us, as we continue to do comprehensive eye exams for students in Winnipeg School Division, by providing glasses for students who need them, regardless of their family’s ability to pay,” said Sean Sylvestre, licensed optician and CEO of the Mobile Vision Care Clinic. Sylvestre notes that while some students’ parents have eye glass coverage through employment income assistance program, non-insured health benefits for First Nations and Inuit (NIHB) or third-party insurance, about 45 percent of students have no coverage.

“During the 2017/2018 school year, the Mobile Vision Care Clinic donated 740 pairs of prescription eye glasses,” said Sylvestre. “We aren’t willing to see any student who needs vision correction go without.”

The Mobile Vision Care Clinic is in WSD schools again this year. The cost of the eye examinations is billed directly to Manitoba Health, ensuring the testing is provided at zero cost to the school or the student.

During the pilot run in 2017/2018, 20 WSD schools participated and 4,161 comprehensive eye exams were performed. Forty percent of students tested required glasses and 1,662 pairs of prescription glasses were provided through insurance or donation.

Winnipeg School Division Chief Superintendent and CEO, Pauline Clarke, said the division identified a tremendous need for accessible vision care for many students within the division – which is what the Mobile Vision Care Clinic program is providing, coordinated through WSD Volunteer Services.

“By eliminating this barrier to learning, student data is showing gains in student literacy scores, attendance and engagement in school,” said Ms. Clarke.

WSD was established in 1871 and currently has 78 schools, 33,000 students and 6,000 employees. Its purpose is to provide a learning environment that fosters the growth of each student’s potential and provide equitable opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary for meaningful participation in a global and diverse society.

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