



## SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2023.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Chesterfield

Program Title: Conexus, Vision for Children-VisioCheck and Mobile Clinic Program

Program Category: Health & Human Services

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Heather Snyder or Lindsey Poore

Title: Student Health Services Coordinator; Nurse Supervisor & Vision Screening Coordinator

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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Joseph P. Casey, Ph.D.

Title: County Administrator

Signature: Joseph P. Casey, Ph.D.

Digitally signed by Joseph P. Casey, Ph.D.  
DN: cn=Joseph P. Casey, Ph.D., o=Chesterfield County, ou=County Administration,  
email=caseyjoe@chesterfield.gov, c=US  
Date: 2023.06.27 12:10:30 -04'00'

Conexus – Vision for Children  
(Health & Human Services Category)

**Abstract of the Program:**

School based vision screening is required per Code of Virginia for students in grades K, 3, 7 and 10. One in four children has a vision problem that affects their ability to learn. Children with uncorrected visual acuity of less than 20/20 are three times more likely to fail a grade in school. Chesterfield County Public Schools has partnered with Conexus Vision to remove poor vision as a barrier to a child's success in the classroom. Conexus is a local non-profit organization that provides access to eye screenings and glasses at no charge to students. Initially servicing Title I and Communities in Schools (CIS) school sites, the program has been expanded to provide vision screenings at every school site in Chesterfield County. In addition to vision screening, Mobile Clinics are offered at all Title I and CIS sites. Mobile Vision Clinics provide on-site eye exams and glasses in schools where access to care or other barriers broadly prevent follow up on vision screening referrals. In the 20/21-22 school year, CCPS Title I schools had over a 33% referral rate. Of the students referred to the mobile clinics, 77% received glasses. Identifying vision problems, and providing direct vision care resources, removes vision as a barrier for all students' success in the classroom.

**Problem or need addressed by the program:**

One in four children has a vision problem that affects their ability to learn. Children with uncorrected visual acuity of less than 20/20 are three times more likely to fail a grade in school. The American Optometric Association estimates that as many as 1/3 of children with potential vision problems are being missed in the traditional school-based vision screenings. Code of Virginia § 22.1-273 mandates school-based vision screenings for all new students as well as those in grades K,3, 7 and 10 The collaborative partnership between CCPS and Conexus has been essential to remove poor vision as a barrier to a child's success in the classroom through vision screening and mobile clinic vision care services.

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**Program Description:**

Conexus Vision is a local non-profit organization that provides access to eye screenings and glasses at no charge to students in Chesterfield County Public Schools (CCPS). One in four children has a vision problem that affects their ability to learn. Children with uncorrected visual acuity of less than 20/20 are three times more likely to fail a grade in school. The American Optometric Association estimates that as many as 1/3 of children with potential vision problems are being missed in the traditional school-based vision screenings. Code of Virginia § 22.1-273 mandates school-based vision screenings for all new students as well as those in grades K, 3, 7 and 10. CCPS has partnered with Conexus to remove poor vision as a barrier to a child's success in the classroom through vision screening and mobile clinic vision care services.

The collaborative partnership between CCPS and Conexus has been essential to eliminate poor vision as a barrier to a student's academic success. The cost of the program, including the cost of screenings and mobile clinics, is fully covered by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) grant funding for Vision Screening Services. The cost per screening is \$7/student and \$150/mobile clinic visit.

The school nurse serves a key role in the communication of the screening and referral process. Screening is scheduled and conducted at the individual school sites. Screenings are scheduled centrally within the first sixty days of school and confirmed at the school level to avoid testing dates, scheduling conflicts and to minimize disruptions to classroom learning. A school nurse supervisor serves as a liaison to coordinate screenings, provide screening communication to school nurses, and collaborate with CCPS technology services to facilitate the exchange and collection of data for documentation and referral communication. Community in Schools (CIS) site coordinators also assist with the logistics of the screening and refer those students that are not in mandated grade levels for Conexus screening and mobile clinic services.

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Screenings are done using a handheld digital screening device called a VisioCheck. This device is non-invasive and does not require the student to provide a response like using a traditional eye chart. The typical screening is completed in about thirty seconds. The use of this technology minimizes classroom disruption and time away from instruction.

At the conclusion of the screening, results are shared via an electronic data transfer and uploaded to the student's electronic record. The data exchange supports efficient and accurate records and decreases the time it takes to complete a screening, resulting in less missed instructional time. The exchange of data also increases the efficiency and accuracy to report screening data, required by the VDOE for the annual Vision and Hearing Survey. Those students who are referred, receive a letter home that includes a referral result report. Students that receive a referral result and are enrolled in Title I/CIS school site, are eligible for Conexus Mobile Clinic services. The partnership also provides those students not enrolled in a Title I/CIS school site with additional community vision care resources as needed. The school nurse collaborates with Conexus for those students in need, that are not receiving mobile clinic services at school, to make sure all students receive access to vision care resources through voucher programs

Conexus Mobile is a service that brings onsite eye exams and glasses directly into schools as a means to address access to vision care in some of the Commonwealth's most challenged schools and divisions. In the mobile clinic, the student receives a full eye exam by a local optometrist in school. If prescribed, students choose their glasses' frames and prescription lenses are made and distributed to the school within 2-3 weeks. The large selection of frames allow students to pick glasses they are comfortable and confident to wear, increasing their compliance with their vision care. The glasses are dispensed on site

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and fitted by a Conexus technician. Conexus also provides ongoing vision care services for students serviced in mobile clinics and have replaced glasses as needed with a current prescription.

In Chesterfield County Public Schools vision screenings and mobile clinic services begin at the start of the school year in August and continue through March. Individual elementary school site vision screenings are completed in less than one day and individual secondary school sites are completed in two days. Mobile clinic service days are scheduled based on the number of referrals. The referral rate for the 21/22 school year was 33 percent. The scheduling of the vision screening program is a collaborative process between Conexus, Chesterfield County Public Schools Student Health Services and Community in Schools. Ongoing communication occurs to adjust screening and mobile services throughout the school year. Conexus also provides vision care education materials, free of charge, that can be shared by the school nurse and schools with students, families and teachers.

The partnership between Conexus and Chesterfield County Public Schools is invaluable to eliminate vision as a barrier to academic achievement. Vision problems are identified earlier and more efficiently as opposed to traditional vision screening. Students in all Title I/CIS receive direct access to vision care services to eliminate barriers that could impact a diagnosis and treatment plan for a vision concern. Conexus and CCPS are committed to eliminating vision as a barrier to academic achievement.

**Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion:**

1 in 4 school aged children has a vision problem significant enough to impact learning; in economically challenged communities in Central Virginia, 1 in 3 school aged children has a vision problem. Vision screenings are done using a handheld digital screening device called a VisioCheck. This device is non-

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invasive and does not require the student to provide a response, as is required when using a traditional eye chart. This technology removes barriers to screening students with disabilities and those with language barriers. In addition to vision screening, Conexus Mobile Vision Clinics are provided at all Title I and CIS school sites. Conexus Mobile is a service that brings onsite eye exams and glasses directly into schools as a means to address access to care in some of the Commonwealth's most challenged schools and divisions. Mobile Vision Clinics provide on-site eye exams in schools where access to care or other barriers broadly prevent follow up on vision screening referrals. The clinic is a portable full-service vision lane that is set up in a classroom or other area of the school. Glasses and replacement glasses are delivered directly to the school and are provided free of charge. Conexus also provides resources for students in non-Title I schools that need financial assistance with eye exams, glasses, or replacement glasses, ensuring that all students receive the services they need to reach their full potential.

**Program Cost:**

The cost of the program, including the cost of screenings and mobile clinics, is fully covered by VDOE grant funding for Vision Screening Services. The cost per screening is \$7/student and \$150/mobile clinic visit.

**Program Results/Success:**

The collaborative partnership between CCPS and Conexus has been essential to eliminate poor vision as a barrier to a student's academic success. Since initiation of the Conexus partnership, the program has grown and strengthened. Continuous improvements in communication and technology advancements of electronic data exchanges, have contributed to the logistical efficiency and accuracy of the vision screening and referral process. Program improvements have significantly supported the decrease in the

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amount of missed learning time for vision screening. The data directly correlates the efforts and effectiveness to eliminate vision as a barrier to academic achievement. The success of the program and partnership is evidenced below.

Screening Data for the 2021-2022 School Year:

(For the 2021-2022 School Year, all mandated grade levels were screened plus make-up grade levels impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic during the 2020-2021 school year.)

- Total Number of Students screened: 32,204
- Total Number of Students Referred: 10,376
- % of Students Referred: 32.22% (National rate is 25%)
- Total Number of Glasses dispensed: 3,079

Mobile Clinic Data for the 2021-2022 School Year:

- 4,024 students referred to the services of the mobile vision clinic
- 3,979 exams provided
- 33.32% refer rate for Title 1 schools
- 98% program utilization rate
- 77% of students received glasses
- 13% referred for vision conditions beyond the scope of the clinic
- 16% exam confirmed no need for RX
- 56 pairs of glasses issued from an existing prescription -- no cost to program user
- 104 pairs of replacement glasses issued -- no cost to program user

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Current data for the 2022-2023 School Year (as of 2/15/23):

- Screenings: 15,059
- Referrals: 4,595
- Mobile clinic exams: 1,334
- Glasses prescribed: 1,026
- Glasses Dispensed so far: 591

Data for the 2022-2023 school year thus far shows a greater than thirty percent referral rate, with 77% of the students referred to mobile clinics being prescribed glasses. 80% of what children learn is through vision. Identifying vision problems and providing access to vision care in schools, directly impacts the elimination of vision as a barrier to learning.

**Worthiness of award:**

The CCPS and Conexus partnership is worthy of a 2023 Achievement award because of the positive impact the program has on student success and removing barriers to access to care by bringing healthy vision to schools. 80% of what young children learn is through vision. Conexus aims to remove poor vision as a barrier to a student's success in the classroom. Establishing an organized and efficient process between Conexus and CCPS Student Health leadership has been instrumental in meeting the needs of our diverse student population. Ensuring that students are safe, healthy, and ready to learn is a priority for Chesterfield County Public Schools. There is nothing more rewarding than the moment you witness a child putting on their glasses and seeing clearly for the first time! This program changes lives and provides students a better opportunity to be successful throughout their academic career.

**Supplemental Materials:**

Links, videos, and pictures (attached)

Chesterfield County, VA

Conexus – Vision for Children

**Supplemental Materials:**

Website: <https://conexusvision.org/>

Videos:

["Conexus is one of the most important partnerships we have for our children" - Dr. Daugherty CCPS](#)

[I Can Read!](#)

[This is awesome!](#)







