The Essilor Vision Foundation Program (EVFP) is a Dallas-based non-profit foundation that was created by Essilor of America, the U.S. leader in optical lens manufacturing. The mission and purpose of the foundation is to achieve better life through better sight by creating and supporting activities that advance good vision and its benefits, and offering special help to those who need it most.

The Essilor Vision Foundation recognizes that students with seeing difficulties are less likely to do well in school, and subsequently in life. Students with vision problems fail to achieve academically, and that often leads to emotional and social problems, sometimes leading to incarceration when combined with other social and economic elements associated with at-risk and anti-social behaviors. The Foundation seeks to mediate the contribution of vision problems to this ultimately costly issue, costly in both economic and human terms.

**Evaluation Methodology**

Dallas ISD Health Services Department collected data from participating elementary campuses that were recorded by on-site school nurses. District databases provided information on the participating students; the timeframe for the student participation snapshot was the Fall 2008 semester, with data being extracted from the district databases at the end of the semester. Characteristics examined included program participant (student) demographics such as ethnicity, gender, Limited English Proficiency, and socioeconomic status. Additionally, campus, grade-level and test performance data were also examined.

**Essilor Vision Foundation Context and Goals**

In 2008-2009 the Essilor Vision Foundation launched its community-based Kids Vision for Life-Dallas Coalition which is a collaboration between the Essilor Foundation, Dallas ISD, and Lions Club Sight and Tissue Foundation. The program has been piloted in 23 Dallas ISD elementary campuses. Appropriate data was available on 267 students who participated in and were served by the program. EVFP outlined the following goals:

- Improving the quality of school vision screenings so fewer children slip through the cracks.
- Providing eye exams and eyeglasses to children who could not get them otherwise.
- Educating parents and communities about the importance of children’s vision care and the role it plays in literacy, society and the economy.

**Program Activities**

To further its goal of increasing the quality of school vision screenings and providing eye exams and eyeglasses to children, EVFP arranged for mobile eye clinics to travel to participating Dallas ISD campuses. On the Dallas ISD elementary campuses, school nurses identified eligible children that failed an initial vision screening test and obtained written consent from their parents for eye care services. The school then hosted mobile eye clinics on a regular schedule. Children who met eligibility criteria and needed glasses received free prescription eyeglasses, including arrangements to have the eyeglasses fitted correctly when they were delivered.

The Essilor Foundation also provided education to parents and educators to build community awareness regarding how vision problems and impairments can negatively affect student achievement and success. The education program included ways to successfully combat these issues.

**Program Participants**

The students who participated in the Essilor Vision Foundation program attended many of the district’s elementary schools; they were not concentrated in a small number of Dallas ISD campuses. The schools with the largest numbers of program participants included Hotchkiss, Brashear, Cueller, Martinez, Henderson and Mills elementary schools. Together, these six schools had 61.9% of the program’s participants. Several of these schools also had significant numbers of students who received further vision testing and eyeglasses. These schools included Henderson, Hotchkiss, Brashear, Mills and Cuellar elementary schools. Together, these five schools had 65.4% of the program’s eyeglass recipients. These results indicate that when additional vision screening was made available through the EVFP to the participants that were identified by their school nurses, there were significant percentages of students at these
campuses that also received and benefited from the additional services.

By ethnicity, Hispanic students were the predominant ethnic group, representing 71.9% of all participating students, African American students accounted for 25.8% of the participants followed by Anglo students who composed 2.2% of the participants.

Over half of the EVFP participants were from economically disadvantaged families at 61.0% (defined by eligibility for the federal school lunch program). A majority of the students participating in the program have limited proficiency in English at 72.2%. Elementary grades prekindergarten through sixth grade participated in the program. The grade levels with the largest representation were fifth grade 38.2%, followed by third grade 23.2%, and first and fourth grades at nearly 13% each. Female students accounted for 53.6% of program participants, while male students accounted for 46.4%.

**Program Outcomes**

Appropriate data was available on 267 students that participated in the EVFP across various campuses; of these 267 students 205 or 76.8% were found to need further vision testing and were prescribed and received eyeglasses.

The tables below display the passing rates in reading and mathematics on the *Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills* (TAKS) tests for EVFP students in third through sixth grades and also the *Iowa Test of Basic Skills* (ITBS) / Logramos Reading tests for students in first through second grades that received eyeglasses.

Table 1 displays passing rates on the TAKS reading/language arts and mathematics test for EVFP participants. The table divides the students into four grade groupings: third, fourth, fifth and sixth grade. Overall third and fifth grades performed at high percentages on both the reading and mathematics TAKS test, with fifth (93.1%) and sixth (90.9%) grade performing at the highest rates in mathematics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>TAKS Passing Rates for EVFP Participants Who Received Eyeglasses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading/Lang. Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N Tested</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 5</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The program participants attended many different elementary campuses across grades prekindergarten through sixth grade and took different assessments in each grade level. Further analysis was completed focusing on the elementary campuses with the highest number of EVFP participants and eyeglass recipients which included: Henderson, Hotchkiss, Brashear, Mills, Weiss and Cuellar elementary schools. Each of these campuses had groups of 15 students or greater who participated in and received eyeglasses through the
Essilor Vision Foundation. The academic achievement characteristics on the TAKS reading and mathematics components were compared between participants in the EVFP who received eyeglasses and non-participants at each of their campuses.

Overall, the EVFP participants at these specific campuses performed similarly, and in some instances higher than the non-participants on the TAKS reading and mathematics sections. In general, EVFP participants who received eyeglasses at Henderson and Brashear elementary schools had passing rates on the TAKS that were slightly higher than non-participants. At Henderson elementary, 100% of EVFP eyeglass recipients in third, fifth and sixth grades passed both components of the TAKS test. Additionally, at Brasher elementary, 100% of EVFP eyeglass recipients in fourth and fifth grades passed both components of their TAKS test; in third and sixth grade, 100% EVFP eyeglass recipients passed the mathematics portion of the TAKS test.

Summary
The Essilor Vision Foundation is scheduled to continue its collaboration between Dallas ISD and the Lions Club Sight and Tissue Foundation for the 2009-2010 school year and increase the number of students served.

The EVFP stated that it wished to improve the quality of school vision screenings and to provide eye exams and eyeglasses to children who could not get them otherwise. Results indicate that the EVFP has provided vision tests and eyeglasses to 205 (76.8%) students who were referred out of the 267 participants, of whom 61.0% were economically disadvantaged.

The initial findings emerging from the EVFP for the 2008-2009 school year indicate that the program has been successful in serving many students and families who may not have been able to attain further vision testing and eyeglasses.

Recommendation
The EVFP is providing valuable services to students in the Dallas ISD. Many students are receiving improved and additional vision tests and eyeglass prescriptions and frames who may not have been able to attain them otherwise. The following recommendation is offered for program improvement to address the question of whether or not students are wearing their glasses during class and in turn benefiting academically from eyeglass usage once they are received. EVFP program staff should implement procedures to monitor eyeglass use during the school day and on test administration days.

For more information, see EA09-206-4, available at www.dallasisd.org/inside_disd/depts/evalacct/.