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**\* FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE \***

TO: Area Media Outlets  
FROM: Tracy Metcalfe  
DATE: August 19, 2015  
RE: Bay County Health Department Gears Up For 2015-2016 Hearing & Vision Screenings

Bay County Health Department staff is gearing up for another school year to provide FREE hearing and vision screening to students in all Bay County schools. Thousands of students will again receive the services of certified technicians at their schools.

Last year over 6500 students had their vision screened in 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> grades and Special Education Classes. Approximately 10% of those screened were referred to an eye doctor for further evaluation. Over 4,000 students were also screened in the hearing program with about 5% referred for medical attention from grades Kindergarten, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and Special Education.

Free hearing clinics are also sponsored by the Bay County Health Department with area Otologists participating in the program. In the spring, technicians will begin pre-school and pre-kindergarten screening programs at district roundups, schools and preschools. Schedules will be available in early spring. Approximately 2,000 children will participate in this program. Home schooled children can contact the Health Department at (989) 895-2045 to schedule the FREE hearing and vision screening. Also check our website for the Vision and Hearing Schedule.

**PARENTS WHO DO NOT WISH TO HAVE THEIR CHILD PARTICIPATE IN THESE SCREENINGS SHOULD NOTIFY THE SCHOOL.**

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