



Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC)
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MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 28, 2023

TO: The Honorable Members of the Delaware General Assembly

FROM: Ann C. Fisher, Chairperson
GACEC

RE: **House Bill No. 83 Kindergarten Oral Health Screening**

The Governor's Advisory Council for Exceptional Citizens (GACEC) has reviewed House Bill No. 83, which modifies Chapter 41, Title 14 of the Delaware Code. This modification will require an oral health screening for every kindergarten student "who did not indicate during enrollment that they were seen by a dentist by the last student attendance day of each school year." §4123 (b). Council **supports** this proposed amendment.

According to a 2013 report from the Delaware Health and Social Services Bureau of Oral Health and Dental Services, approximately 50% of children in Delaware have experienced tooth decay and equity issues continue to be evident in the rates of preventative dental care received. While this report exhibited the substantial need for children's dental care, it also highlighted notable improvements in child dental health across Delaware following state interventions, including interventions promoting age-one dental visits and elementary age referrals.

The proposed amendments provide procedures for notifying parents and Individualized Education Program (IEP) teams of failed oral health screenings and connecting families with dental referrals. Council encourages Delaware leadership to continue the successful work of prior interventions and to promote and improve equitable dental healthcare access for all children in Delaware.

Thank you for your time and consideration of our support of the proposed legislation. Please feel free to contact me or Pam Weir at the GACEC office should you have any questions.