

# The Miami Herald

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Opinion

SUNDAY JANUARY 25 2026

#### Healthy eyes

Miami Herald reporter Milena Malaver's Jan. 13 story, "Need a doctor? Miami-Dade students to get free health services at their schools," highlights an extraordinary step forward for children's health in our community. At Miami Lighthouse for the Blind, we see firsthand how critical vision care is to a child's success.

Our Florida Heiken Children's Vision Program, with partial funding from the Florida Department of Health and The Children's Trust, provides comprehensive eye exams and prescription glasses at no cost to underserved children statewide. Since 1992, the program has provided more than 234,000 comprehensive eye exams. In the 2024-25 school year alone, 16,494 students received exams and 10,829 received glasses.

This is more than screening vision; these exams detect serious medical conditions that can lead to permanent blindness if untreated.

We applaud The Children's Trust for expanding its HealthConnect initiative. According to the American Optometric Association, one in four children has vision problems that impact academic performance. For many, a pair of glasses is the key to unlocking their potential.

We urge policymakers and educators to continue prioritizing comprehensive eye care in schools. Early detection and intervention changes lives — and every child deserves the chance to see their future clearly.

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