

HSHS St. Anthony's Memorial Hospital stepped in to provide hearing and vision screenings to Effingham County schools when state budget cuts left the Effingham County Health Department without the staff to do so.

Beginning with the 2015-16 school year, St. Anthony's brought in all needed equipment and staffing to administer the screenings at no cost to schools. The hospital also handled reporting requirements to the State—as schools are required to screen students for vision and hearing.

In the 2016-2017 school year, the hospital provided:

- 2,680 hearing screenings; and
- 2,958 vision screenings.

St. Anthony's efforts help improve access to healthcare services and reduce the burden on local schools. The hospital's president and CEO, Theresa Rutherford, explained why it was important to support local schools by providing the screenings for their students.

"When we heard of the difficulty schools were facing with the screenings, we felt offering to provide the screenings aligned well with our mission and presented another way we could expand the services we provide to the community," Rutherford said. "We are proud to partner with our area school districts in ensuring we can catch hearing or vision problems early so that they can be corrected as soon as possible and not hinder their learning capacity."

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