



Date

Student First and Last Name Student's Grade/Teacher Name

Medical Background and Procedures

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Dear <insert teacher name>(and other staff as needed - e.g. school nurse),

We are so excited for <insert student name> to start <insert grade level> grade at <insert school name>! As you may know, <insert name> has special eyes. We wanted to provide you with background information on <insert name>'s condition and vision. Please know we always welcome questions, suggestions and feedback from you.

<insert name> has a congenital genetic condition called **Aniridia**. **Aniridia is a partial or complete absence of the iris (the 'color' portion of the eye)** and an underdevelopment of the other parts of the anatomy of the eye.

The iris regulates the amount of light the back of the eye receives. If you ever had your eyes dilated at the optometrist then you know this can be uncomfortable, causing issues with glare and light. <insert name> does not have irises and is extremely photophobic. Bright lights, sunshine and glare are all issues that need to be considered throughout the day. Aniridia is also associated with glaucoma, cataracts, foveal hypoplasia, and corneal surface abnormalities which all lead to decreased vision.

<Insert name> has nystagmus (back and forth involuntary movement of the eyes) and foveal hypoplasia (underdevelopment of the portion of the retina responsible for detailed vision). We are monitoring some increased risk factors that lead to glaucoma. His/Her visual acuity is regularly subject to change due to his/her day-to-day environment and risks associated with his/her condition that can weaken his/her vision. <Insert name> currently has acuity of about <insert number over 20>. While <insert name> shows very positive use of vision, at his/her age, we are still learning how much or how little he/she sees with his eyes.

**It is imperative that <insert name> wear his/her glasses at all times.**

He/She has indoor glasses that he/she wears inside and his/her sunglasses outside. Both have a prescription. In addition to providing some correction, he/she uses these glasses as a way to protect his eyes. <insert name> likes to be outside, but bright sunshine and UV rays can be extremely uncomfortable for him/her. If there will be more class time outside, he/she may want to wear a baseball cap to help with glare. Also, if his/her eyes get injured, they do not heal like a normal eye, which can lead to blindness from corneal complications. A mild scratch on the playground requires immediate attention versus a typical student. Lack of prompt attention to major or the most minor trauma can have permanent ramifications.

With this in mind, we would like to review the following medical procedure we've developed **with (or name specific school staff)** throughout the last few years.

- For any major trauma to the eye, please call 911 and **//Parent's or Primary Contact's Name and contact number - e.g. Emily Doe (123-456-7890)//** immediately (followed by those in the contact list – we are happy to review that again).
- For any minor trauma to the eye, please call **//Parent's or Primary Contact's Name//** immediately. We will work closely with <insert name>'s eye doctor to determine the best course of action.
- ***Please do not administer any procedures outside of mild water eyewash to <insert name>s eyes.*** The long term health of his eyes may be preserved with minimal invasive activity. While a child without aniridia would not hesitate to have a standard procedure performed to correct an eye issue, those with aniridia have to weigh many options before risking issues or future scar tissue.
- If <insert name> is complaining of eye pain or shows any signs of problems (redness, oozing, swelling), please call **//Parent's or Primary Contact's Name//** immediately.
- Please notify **//Parent's or Primary Contact's Name//** if any classmates are battling pink eye or another infection that may manifest in the eyes.
- Please notify **//Parent's or Primary Contact's Name//** if you notice any 'flare ups' in his day-to-day eye behavior – more crossing, heavy nystagmus movement, excessive eye rubbing or general fatigue.

- In the case of a school drill or emergency, <insert name> will need his sunglasses to go outside. We would like to make sure they are easily accessible for him and his teachers.

Lastly, a frequent concern of all teachers is the safety of the student with a visual disability. It is definitely important to take precautions but <insert name>'s need for independence and exploration should be balanced with sound safety practices. <insert name> does show some issues when it comes to unmarked steps, dips in the playground, or all glass doors and can be slower to respond to something coming towards him (like a ball). However, we are finding that he/she can do everything and we encourage him to try. This summer he/she loved the swim team, soccer camp, bike riding and general neighborhood exploration.

We are excited about the year ahead. We want to make sure we work together as a team and if you ever notice anything that <insert name> needs or that we can do for him/her, please let us know.

Sincerely,

Parents' or Primary Contacts' Names

If interested, additional background on Aniridia can be found at <http://www.visionfortomorrow.org/aniridia-faqs/>