

ALLERGY POLICY

School-aged children are being diagnosed with allergies and food-related allergies. The most common allergens include milk, peanuts, tree nuts (walnuts, almonds, cashews, pecans, etc.), wheat, soy, fish, latex, eggs, and insect stings. Anaphylaxis (a severe allergic reaction that can potentially result in cardio-respiratory failure and can be fatal) is the most extreme presentation of these allergies.

RSU 12 strives to provide a safe learning environment for all students. In keeping with that mission, the District has created a policy regarding allergies. RSU 12 has students with severe food allergies including peanuts and derivative products. Food allergies are the most difficult to control exposure to, requiring assistance or cooperation of students, staff, parents, and community members.

The schools and the families of allergic children acknowledge that despite our best efforts, the District cannot guarantee an absolutely allergen-free environment.

- A. It is the responsibility of parents to notify the school of students with medically documented allergies and the nature of the food or other allergen. Medical documentation must be provided to the school nurse before the student is enrolled and begins attending school. If there is no medical documentation on the student, then he/she is required to have a physical before starting school. The school does not have diagnostic responsibility.
- B. Once medical documentation is provided, an emergency plan and/or 504 plan should be developed for severely allergic children. If the student requires any medication, such as an EpiPen, then this is the responsibility of the parents to provide the appropriate medication. For EpiPens, the full 2-pack supply of EpiPens should be provided to the school. Epipens should be replaced before their annual expiration. Parents will be notified before the Epipens are expired and reviewed during the annual 504 meeting. Backup Epipens are provided by the school. If multiple students with same food allergy are present, then the school's response plans will be based on the most severe allergies identified in the school.
- C. The District encourages parents to provide their severely allergic child with a medic alert bracelet or necklace.
- D. Although the District Food Service Program strives to be food allergen safe, food prepared by the schools can be a food allergen risk. To avoid contamination of foods with food allergen products in the school kitchens and cafeterias, and to reduce the risks of food allergen residue in schools, the District will implement the following depending on the student's 504 plan. This 504 plan will be at the discretion of the licensed school nurse, the Food Services Directors, the building administrator, and the parent. The school may implement the following and other measures in order to protect the student according to the student's 504 plan.
 1. RSU 12 cannot guarantee that food served will be completely free of an identified food allergen. However, when a student with a severe allergy is identified, only meal alternatives prepared without use of identified food allergens (to the best of the school's ability) will be served in the school.
 2. There will be a clearly labeled "[food allergen] aware" table in each lunchroom at the elementary level, if needed. For example if "peanut/nut" is the identified allergen, the label would read "Peanut/nut aware". The table will be washed by an adult before and after each meal with a specially designated cleaning material.

3. In elementary schools with a highly allergic student, as documented by the allergist or pediatrician in the student's school health record, all other students will be discouraged from bringing in any food products that contain food allergen. Students who eat food allergens or food allergen products for lunch must wash their hands after eating to reduce the risk of food allergen residue leaving the lunchroom.
 4. Food allergen and derivative products distribution is strongly discouraged at any time during after-school programs.
- E. Upon parental approval a notification will be sent home to families to alert them of a student in their school with a severe food allergy and, at the elementary level, students' names, pictures and their allergies will be discreetly posted in the kitchen, nurse's office and classroom. All staff (including kitchen staff) will be informed regarding high-risk food allergic students.
- F. When sending treats to school for classroom celebrations or daily snacks, parents/guardians should please check with the school nurse and/or the classroom teacher.
- G. Parents must supply the emergency EpiPens and other medications related to the allergy per the District Medication Policy. Discussion with parents on transportation of emergency medications will be documented in the IHP (Individual Health Plan).
- H. EpiPens and other medical interventions for children with severe allergies including food allergies and bee stings will be placed throughout District schools and made available for field trips. Classrooms or grades with severely allergic children may have individual needs to adopt accommodations made to promote an allergy safe learning environment. Staff, coaches, and parents/guardians will work together to develop a plan for transportation situations such as field trips and daily bus runs.

Cross Reference:

JLCD - Distribution of Medication to Students

First Reading: April 12, 2018

Second Reading: