

# **SCHOOL GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING STUDENTS WITH FOOD ALLERGIES**

Food allergies can be life threatening. The risk of accidental exposure to foods can be reduced in the school setting if schools work with students, parents, and physicians to minimize risks and provide a safe educational environment for food-allergic students.

## **Family's Responsibility**

- Notify the school nurse of the child's allergies. Indicate allergy on Annual Health Form.
- Work with the school nurse to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school including in the classroom, in the cafeteria, during school-sponsored activities, and on the school bus, as well in addition to the Allergy Action Plan.
- Provide appropriate written medical documentation, instructions, and medications as directed by a physician, using the Allergy Action Plan as a guide. Include a photo of the child on written form.
- Provide properly labeled medications and replace medications after use or upon expiration.
- Educate the child in the self-management of their food allergy including:
  - safe and unsafe foods
  - strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods
  - symptoms of allergic reactions
  - how and when to tell an adult they may be having an allergy-related problem
  - how to read food labels (age appropriate)
- Review Thrall ISD policies/procedures.
- Keep emergency contact information current.

## **School's Responsibility**

- Be knowledgeable about and follow applicable federal laws including ADA, IDEA, Section 504, and FERPA and any state laws or district policies that apply.
- Ensure cleaning protocol for classrooms, cafeteria, and other areas in the building are completed.
- Review the health records submitted by parents and physicians.
- Include food-allergic students in school activities. Students should not be excluded from school activities solely based on their food allergy.
- Identify a core team of, but not limited to, school nurse, teacher, principal, school food service and nutrition manager/director, and counselor (if available) to work with parents and the student (age appropriate) to establish a prevention plan. Changes to the prevention plan to promote food allergy management should be made with core team participation.
- Assure that all staff who interact with the student on a regular basis understands food allergy, can recognize symptoms, knows what to do in an emergency, and works with other school staff to eliminate the use of food allergens in the allergic student's meals, educational tools, arts and crafts projects, or as incentives.
- Coordinate with the school nurse to be sure medications are appropriately stored, and be sure that an emergency kit is available that contains a physician's standing order for epinephrine. The medications are kept in an easily accessible secure location. Students should be allowed to carry their own epinephrine, if age appropriate after approval from the student's physician/clinic, parent and school nurse.

- Designate school personnel who are properly trained to administer medications in accordance with the State Nursing and Good Samaritan Laws governing the administration of emergency medications.
- Work with the district transportation administrator to assure that school bus driver training includes symptom awareness and what to do if a reaction occurs.
- Recommend that all buses have communication devices in case of an emergency.
- Limit/discourage consuming food on routine school bus routes.
- Discuss field trips with the family of the food-allergic child to decide appropriate strategies for managing the food allergy.
- Limit/discourage the use of food for curriculum instruction if possible and if food is used stipulate notification of the parent/guardian and school nurse in advance.
- Follow federal/state/district laws and regulations regarding sharing medical information about the student.

### **Student's Responsibility**

- Should not trade food with others.
- Should not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen.
- Should be proactive in the care and management of their food allergies and reactions based on their developmental level.
- Should notify an adult immediately if they eat something they believe may contain the food to which they are allergic.
- Should if developmentally-appropriate obtain permission to carry and self-administer prescribed emergency medications as, in accordance with state and Thrall ISD Policy regarding self-carrying of medication.

The information in this policy was obtained from the following organizations in the development of this document:

American School Food Service Association  
 National Association of Elementary School Principals  
 National Association of School Nurses  
 National School Boards Association  
 The Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network