



FOOD ALLERGIES

The Board of Education desires to prevent students' exposure to foods to which they are allergic and to provide for prompt and appropriate treatment in the event that a severe allergic reaction occurs at school.

Definitions

Food allergies are abnormal responses of the body's immune system to certain foods or ingredients.

Anaphylaxis is a potentially life-threatening hypersensitivity to a substance and may be caused by a food allergy. Symptoms may include shortness of breath, wheezing, difficulty breathing, difficulty talking or swallowing, hives, itching, swelling, shock, or asthma. (Education Code 49414)

Notification by Parent/Guardian

The parents/guardians of any student who has a known food allergy shall notify the school administrator or school nurse, in writing, and provide written medical documentation, signed by the student's health care provider, that describes the nature of the student's condition, instructions, and necessary medications. If the student's condition requires food substitutions or modifications in school meals, the written statement shall also describe the specific foods to be restricted and the foods that should be substituted.

Health Plan

Upon receiving notice of a student's food allergy, the school nurse shall ensure that a written health plan is developed, in consultation with the student's parents/guardians and health provider, to manage the student's needs while at school or at a school-sponsored activity. The plan shall seek to minimize the student's risk of exposure to the allergen and address actions to be taken if exposure occurs.

Prevention Strategies

To minimize students' exposure to foods to which they are allergic, the school administrator and school nurse shall, at a minimum, implement the following preventive measures:

1. Notification to District Staff

When notified by the parent/guardian that a student has a food allergy, the school nurse shall inform the student's principal, teacher(s), bus driver, health clerk, coach, and/or any other personnel responsible for supervising the student.

The principal or designee shall notify substitute staff of the identity of any students with known food allergies and the school's response plan.

2. Food Services

Substitutions may be made on a case-by-case basis for students who cannot consume the regular breakfast, lunch, or after-school snack because of medical or other special dietary needs, when supported by a statement of need signed by a health care provider.

3. Class Parties/School Activities

Without identifying the student, the principal or teacher may notify parents/guardians of other students in the class that a student is allergic to a specific food and may request that certain foods not be provided at class parties or other school events.

4. Sanitation and Cleaning

To avoid spreading allergens, lunch tables and classroom surfaces may be cleaned with cleaning products known to effectively remove food proteins. Cross-contact from a sponge or cloth used to clean allergen-containing tabletops shall be avoided.

Staff shall use and promote hand-washing using soap and water before and after food handling, change of desks, returning from lunch and recess and as determined based on individual student needs. "Wet Ones" wipes are also an appropriate alternative for this process.

5. Professional Development

Schoolwide professional development shall be provided to appropriate staff on the identification and management of food allergies, including avoidance measures, typical symptoms, the proper use of epinephrine auto-injectors, documentation and storage of medication, and emergency drills.

6. Supervision of Students

When available, staff who are trained and knowledgeable about symptoms of

anaphylaxis and actions to take in an emergency shall provide supervision in the classroom and cafeteria, on the playground, and on field trips or other school activities whenever students known to have a food allergy are present.

7. Emergency Response

Epinephrine auto-injectors or other medicine provided for use in the event of an anaphylactic shock reaction shall be stored and used in accordance with law including undesignated Epi-pens at each school site.

In addition, staff shall call 911 and seek immediate medical attention for a student experiencing an anaphylactic shock reaction.

As soon as possible, school staff shall contact the student's parents/guardian or other person identified as an emergency contact.

Policy Adopted:

Board Policy