



Dear District 49 Parents/Guardians:

Our district has a growing number of students with LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES. Allergies to peanuts/tree nuts are among the most common severe food allergies. There is no medicine to prevent food allergies, so strict avoidance of the allergy-causing food is the only way to prevent a reaction.

If students with severe food allergies are exposed to the allergens, anaphylaxis may occur. This is a severe, potentially fatal, allergic reaction. Due to this risk, we encourage all of our students to refrain from sharing snacks with other students. We are also asking parents to be aware of ingredients when providing snacks. Please read labels and avoid products containing or processed in a plant containing peanuts or tree nuts when you provide snacks for your student(s). It is best to provide foods which are store bought so the ingredients label can be checked by school staff.

- If your student has a severe allergy condition, please be sure to contact your school nurse as soon as possible. With input from your child's medical provider and you, the nurse will develop a Severe Allergy and Anaphylaxis Plan. To access the Severe Allergy Action Plan, go to "District 49/Student Services/Nursing Services".
- Teachers are notified by the school nurse when they have a student with severe allergies in their classroom. Please be sure to communicate with your student's teacher about planning ahead for school parties and school field trips to address your student's individual needs.

In addition to our efforts to restrict allergens from our school, we encourage all students to wash their hands after eating to reduce cross contamination of tables, desks, doors, etc. Even trace amounts of peanuts/tree nuts can cause an allergic reaction. Washing hands with soap and water or using hand wipes is best to remove the allergen protein contained in nuts/peanuts. Hand sanitizer is NOT effective in removing this protein.

We appreciate your cooperation and ask for your support in meeting these important steps to address student safety in our schools. It is our mission to provide a healthy and safe environment for all of our students.

Respectfully,

District 49 School Nurses

¹ Administration of Epinephrine for Life-Threatening Allergic Reactions in School Settings. CL McIntyre, AH Sheetz, CR Carroll, MC Young. *Pediatrics*. Vol. 116, No. 5. Nov. 2005