

LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES

Increasing numbers of school-aged children are being diagnosed with food-related allergies. The most common allergens include milk, peanuts, tree nuts (walnuts, almonds, cashews, pecans, etc.), wheat, soy, fish and eggs. Anaphylaxis (an allergic reaction that can culminate in cardio-respiratory failure and can be fatal) is the most extreme presentation of these allergies.

The Wells-Ogunquit Community School District strives to provide a safe learning environment for all students. In keeping with that mission, the District has created a policy regarding allergies. Although peanuts and derivative products may be the allergens most often identified with potential anaphylactic events in the school setting, the current procedure will apply to all allergens.

The District acknowledges that despite our best efforts, schools cannot guarantee an absolutely allergen-free environment. The goal of this policy is to create an *allergy aware* district and provide guidance with procedures in the event of an anaphylactic reaction.

Definitions:

IHP – Individualized Health Plan

Healthcare Provider – licensed MD, DO, NP, or PA

504 Plan – plan under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

- A. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the school when the student has a medically documented allergy. The school does not have diagnostic responsibility. Parents/guardians are encouraged to sign a release which allows the school nurse to discuss the allergy with the healthcare provider.
- B. Once medical documentation is provided, an emergency plan and/or 504 plan should be developed for severe food allergic children. Parents/guardians/students will be notified of their rights under Section 504 by guidance, administration and/or the school nurse. The parent/guardian/student may choose to proceed with or forgo a Section 504 team meeting.
- C. The District encourages parents to provide their severely allergic child with a medic alert bracelet or necklace.
- D. Although the District Nutrition Services program strives to be *allergy aware*, food prepared by the schools may be a food allergy risk. To avoid contamination of foods in the school kitchens and cafeterias, and to reduce the risks of allergen residue in schools, the District will implement the following:
 1. Each individual school in the District will develop a plan for a meal alternative. This plan will be at the discretion of the Certified School Nurse, the Nutrition Services Director, building administrator, and the parent/guardian. The WOCSD cannot guarantee that food served will be completely free of allergens due to shared processing equipment.
 2. There will be a clearly labeled “ALLERGY AWARE” table in each lunchroom at the elementary level, if needed.
 3. The peanut/nut aware table will be washed before and/or after each meal with a specially designated cleaning material.

4. In elementary school classes with a highly allergic student, (as documented by the healthcare provider in the student's school health record), students who eat peanut butter or nut products for lunch, must wash their hands after eating to reduce the risk of peanut butter/nut residue leaving the lunchroom.
- E. Peanut butter, nuts and derivative product distribution is strongly discouraged at any time during the after-school program.
 - F. When sending treats to school for classroom celebrations or daily snacks, parents/guardians must first check with the school nurse and/or the classroom teacher.
 - G. Upon parent/guardian approval, at the elementary level, students' names, pictures and their allergies will be discreetly posted in the kitchen, nurse's office and classroom. At the middle and high school, all staff (including kitchen staff) will be alerted of high-risk food allergic students.
 - H. School nurses will have stock Epi-pens for undiagnosed/unexpected reactions but, otherwise, parents must supply the emergency epi-pens and other medications related to the allergy per the District Medication Policy (*JLCD*). Discussion with parents on transportation of emergency medications will be documented on the IHP and/or 504 Plan.
 - I. Classrooms or grades with severely allergic children may have individual needs to adopt accommodations made to promote a food allergy safe learning environment. Procedures to meet these needs will be included in the individual 504 Plan.

Cross Reference: **JLCCB-R- Administrative Procedure for Students with Allergies**
JLCD – Administering Medications to Students in School