

**Iowa City Community School District**  
**Food Allergies: Protocol for Managing Risks for Students**

**Purpose of protocol:**

The purpose of this protocol is to provide guidelines to parents/guardians and staff on how to provide a safe educational environment for food-allergic students that exposure to food allergens is minimized for affected students. Food allergies can be life threatening - this protocol has been developed to KEEP STUDENTS SAFE. The risk of accidental exposure to foods can be reduced in the school setting if schools work with students, parents, and health care providers to minimize risks and provide a safe educational environment for food-allergic students.

**Family's Responsibilities:**

- Notify the School Office, School Nurse, School Nutrition Services' office, Before/After School Program, Bus Company, and others of the child's allergies.
- Work with the school team to develop a health plan that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school including the classroom, the cafeteria, the before/ after school programs, during school-sponsored activities, and on the school bus, as well as a Food Allergy Action Plan that would be followed in the event of an allergic reaction.
- Provide to the school, the Diet Modification Request Form, instructions, and medications as directed by a physician and signed by the physician, using the Food Allergy Action Plan as a guide.
- Provide properly labeled medications and replace medications after use or upon expiration.
- Provide extra classroom snacks in case unsafe foods are brought to school.
- 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 protocols/ procedures with the school staff, the child's healthcare provider, and the child (if age appropriate) after a reaction has occurred.
- Provide current emergency contact information.
- Contact the district Coordinator of Health Services with any concerns about how your child's school staff are following this protocol.

**School's Responsibilities:**

**In General:**

- Be knowledgeable about and follow applicable federal laws including ADA, IDEA, Section 504, and FERPA and any state laws or district policies/ protocols that apply.
- Review the health records submitted by parents and physicians.
- Identify a core team of, but not limited to, school nurse, teacher, principal, school Nutrition Services Director, and counselor to work with parents and the student (age appropriate) to ensure that strategies will be taken to reduce the risk of an exposure in the school environment.
- School Nurse will develop an individual health plan and emergency plan for staff to follow. The individual health plan will also include the prevention plan. Any changes to the plans should be reviewed with the core team. Use the Food Allergy Action Plan as a guide.
- School Nurse will provide appropriate training for school personnel in preventing and responding to an allergic reaction.
- Be prepared to handle a reaction and ensure that there is a staff member available who is properly trained to administer medications during the school day regardless of time or location.
- Include food-allergic students in school activities. Students should not be excluded from school activities solely based on their food allergy.

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- Coordinate with the school nurse to be sure that all allergy medications, including emergency medications, are appropriately stored, allowing for easy and quick access in the event of an allergic reaction. Students should be allowed to carry their own epinephrine, if age appropriate after approval from the student's health care provider, parent and school nurse.
- Take threats or harassment against an allergic child seriously.
- Review protocols/ procedures with the school staff, the child's healthcare provider, and the child (if age appropriate) after a reaction has occurred.

### **In the Cafeteria:**

- Provide area in cafeteria that is an "allergy-caution zone" as indicated. For example, have a "Peanut-Free/Aware" table for the student with a peanut allergy to sit. This area should be properly cleaned and sanitized.
- Provide needed information including menus and nutritional analysis with allergen information to parents through the district website and building offices.
- Menu items for students in pre-school through 6<sup>th</sup> grade will not contain peanut butter or peanut products and all attempts will be made to not purchase items which have been manufactured in a plant that processes other peanut/nut items. Junior and senior high students will have the ability to purchase individually packaged peanut butter and jelly sandwiches and senior high students will also be able to purchase monster bars which contain peanut butter and are labeled as such.
- Cashiers are the final step for students as they go through the cafeteria line. Cashiers use software that identifies student's allergies **IF** families have provided this information to the school. When this information is available, cashiers check student food items on their tray to ensure that they have not taken items to which they are allergic.
- Field Trips: Nutrition staff will work with the building administrator and/ or teachers to identify students who will be participating in field trips and who need sack lunches. Nutrition staff will utilize our software which lists information from the Diet Modification Form to identify those students with allergens who will be participating and need alternates in sack lunches.

### **In the Classroom:**

- School nurse, building administrator and parents will coordinate with the teacher ways to implement an "allergy-caution zone" in the classroom, including:
  - eliminate any food products served to children or used in classroom activities that may potentially cause an allergic reaction
  - send letters home to parents asking them to not send foods that may potentially cause an allergic reaction; provide list of "safe foods" to parents
  - arrange for special cleaning schedules and protocols as warranted, i.e. clean tables with fresh water and soap, wipe down doorknobs, computer keyboards, etc.
  - determine a procedure for sharing information with other students
- Assure that all staff who interact with the student on a regular basis understands the 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 incentives.

### **On the School Bus:**

- Work with the district transportation administrator to assure that school bus driver training includes symptom awareness and what to do if a reaction occurs.
- Enforce a "no eating" policy on school buses with exceptions made only to accommodate special needs under federal or similar laws, or school district policy.

**School Field Trips:**

- Discuss field trips with the family of the food-allergic child to decide appropriate strategies for managing the food allergy.
- Do not allow any food products on the field trip bus/vehicle that may potentially cause an allergic reaction
- Field Trips: Nutrition staff will work with the building administrator and/ or teachers to identify students who will be participating in field trips and who need sack lunches. Nutrition staff will utilize our software which lists information from the Diet Modification Form to identify those students with allergens who will be participating and need alternates in sack lunches.

**School extra-curricular activities**

- Work with parent and student groups to eliminate serving and selling foods at school-sponsored events and through fundraising activities that may potentially cause an allergic reaction for any student participating.
- Do not allow any food products on the activity bus/vehicle that may potentially cause an allergic reaction

**Student's Responsibilities:**

- Do not trade food with others.
- Do not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen.
- Be proactive in the care and management of their food allergies and reactions based on their developmental level.
- Notify an adult immediately if they eat something they believe may contain the food to which they are allergic.