



MCDONELL AREA CATHOLIC SCHOOLS GUIDELINES FOR MANAGING STUDENT FOOD ALLERGIES AND INTOLERANCES

McDonell Area Catholic Schools (MACS) has established a plan for managing student food allergies and intolerances so that students may participate in all aspects of the educational process in a safe learning environment. According to the Voluntary Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies in Schools and Early Care and Education Programs, food allergies affect approximately 4%-6% of children, many of whom are school-age. One-third of children with food allergies also have asthma which increases their risk of experiencing a severe, fatal reaction. Up to 18% of children with food allergies have had a reaction while accidentally eating food allergens while at school.

Children with food allergies or intolerance face many day-to-day challenges which, in the school environment, may cause concern for their safety, their ability to learn, and their social and emotional well-being. While the risk of an adverse student reaction cannot be eliminated, MACS is committed to creating a safe environment to reasonably protect the health of students with food allergies or intolerance. The risk of exposure to allergens for a student is reduced when the health care provider, school staff and parent/guardian communicate openly and understand each other's responsibilities to protect the student.

Responsibilities of the Parent/Guardian:

- a. Inform the administrative assistant and classroom teacher of your child's allergies prior to the start of each school year or as soon as possible after diagnosis is made.
- b. Allergies must be verified by documentation from your child's health care provider. Provide the school with a written management plan including medical documentation, instructions, and medications as directed by a healthcare provider
- c. Provide all prescribed emergency medications, including epinephrine auto-injectors, on or before the first day of school or start of co-curricular activity (or as soon as possible after diagnosis is made during the school year). Medications must comply with the medication policy of proper documentation, labeling and expiration.
- d. Provide and maintain emergency contact information, including updated home phone numbers, cell phone numbers, etc.

- e. Work with the school team to develop a plan that accommodates your child's needs throughout the school, including in the classroom, cafeteria, and during school-sponsored activities and field trips.
- f. Provide information about your child's allergies and emergency plan to bus drivers and any before or after school program that is not staffed by school district employees.
- g. Teach your child age-appropriate self-management of their allergy:
- Safe and unsafe foods and activities
 - Not to eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen
 - Not to trade or share snacks, lunches, drinks or utensils
 - How to recognize the first symptoms of an allergic reaction o How and when to tell an adult they may be having an allergic reaction
 - To understand the importance of hand washing before and after eating
 - To report teasing and/or bullying
 - To carry his/her own epinephrine auto-injector (age appropriate)
 - Self-advocacy of the seriousness of the allergy to peers and adults (age appropriate)
 - Education on label reading and ingredient safety (age appropriate)
 - How to administer his/her own epinephrine auto-injector (age appropriate)
 - Develop awareness of their environments, including allergy-controlled zones and to practice age-appropriate behavior for their health and safety
- h. Consider providing a medical alert bracelet for your child.
- i. Review policies/procedures as necessary with the school staff, the child's health care provider, and the child (if age appropriate) after a reaction has occurred.
- j. Inform the school administrative assistant and classroom teacher of any changes in your child's allergy status.

Responsibilities of School Administrators and Staff:

- a. Review and keep copies of parent-provided management plans, medical documentation, and instructions pertaining to student allergies. Document student allergies in Infinite Campus.
- b. Utilize strategies that reduce the risk of exposure to identified allergens throughout the school day, which might include classroom and curriculum modification strategies.
- Peanut-free Policy: Breakfasts and lunches provided by MACS as part of its food service program will be peanut-free. However, they may contain other allergens and student-provided meals will not be monitored for allergens.
 - Classroom teachers must notify parents/guardians of identified classroom food allergies and intolerance and advise parents/guardians NOT to send snacks or treats containing

identified allergens. This notice should be included on back-to-school orientation materials and all snack lists/calendars.

- No home-baked foods are permitted in the classroom and all prepackaged foods must include food labels. Read all food labels and recheck with each purchase for potential food allergens.
- Encourage children to wash hands before and after handling or consuming food.
- Include information about children with special needs, including those with known food allergies, in instructions to substitute teachers.

c. Include students with allergies in school activities. Students should not be excluded from school activities solely based on their allergy.

- Support parents of children with food allergies who wish to provide safe snack items for their child in the event of unexpected circumstances. Make substitutions for students with food allergies or intolerance.
- Avoid the use of identified allergens in class projects, parties, holidays and celebrations, arts, crafts, science experiments, cooking, snacks, or rewards. Modify class materials as needed.

d. Assure that all staff who interact with the student on a regular basis understands allergies, can recognize symptoms, knows what to do in an emergency, and works with other school staff to eliminate the use of allergens in the allergic student's meals, educational tools, arts and crafts projects, or incentives.

e. Oversee that medications are appropriately stored, and that an emergency kit is available that contains a physician's standing order for epinephrine. Emergency medications are kept in an easily accessible secure location central to designated school staff, not in locked cupboards or drawers.

f. Allow students to carry their own epinephrine, if age appropriate, after approval from the student's health care provider, parent and school administrator.