

# RED CLAY SCHOOL DISTRICT STUDENT FOOD ALLERGY INFORMATION AND PROCEDURES FOR PARENT/GUARDIANS

## NUTRITION SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Food allergy is a serious medical condition affecting up to 15 million people in the United States, including 1 in 13 children. A food allergy results when the immune system mistakenly targets a harmless food protein – an allergen – as a threat and attacks it. Food allergies can be life threatening. The risk of accidental exposure to foods can be reduced in the school setting if schools work with students, parents, and physicians to minimize risks and provide a safe educational environment for food-allergic students. The Red Clay Nutrition Department works closely with parents, school-staff and nurses to provide allergen-free meals to students with a documented medical need. The following procedures are detailed step-by-step instructions on how to make sure your child is safe when he or she eats at school.

1. **FILL OUT STUDENT DATA CARD COMPLETELY** - Please indicate on the student data card sent home in the beginning of the year if there is a food allergy present for your child and return the completed student data card to the school nurse as soon as possible.

- a. If your child has severe, life threatening food allergies and will be purchasing school meals in the cafeteria, please check the appropriate box on The Student Data card (see below example) to indicate this.

3. Does your child have a food allergy?  Yes  No

To What?: \_\_\_\_\_ What Happens?: \_\_\_\_\_

Treatment: \_\_\_\_\_

A Food Allergy Action Plan completed by a licensed healthcare provider is required for all students with a food allergy

4. Will your child require an individualized, allergen-free menu designed by a Red Clay Registered Dietitian?

Note: Meals provided from home provide the safest food options at school for food-allergic students.

No. I will take full responsibility of providing my child with allergen-free school meals.

Yes. I will provide the school nurse with a Food Allergy Action Plan completed by a licensed healthcare provider.

- b. If your student has a severe, life threatening food allergy a special menu may be required, **please plan to pack until notified by the Nutrition Department that all necessary documentation has been collected and a special menu is in place for your student.** Special menus are needed ONLY IF a special diet is required (i.e. multiple allergies, milk, egg, wheat/gluten, soy allergies. No special diet required for peanut, tree nuts, fish, seafood, fruits, lactose intolerance and other foods that are easily avoided with the precautions and policies already in place in the cafeteria).

2. Student allergy information will be entered into the school's system as Student Data Cards are returned and processed. Once processed this information will be made available to the cafeteria so that cashiers can identify allergic students as they go through the school meals line. \*Note: it is your responsibility to update your child's information when changes occur with his/her food allergies. The most current note on file will be what the district follows.
3. The school nurse will send the parent/guardian a *Prevention & Emergency Response Plan for Students with Allergies* form if you have indicated that your student has an allergy and needs a special diet on the Student Data Card OR you may download it at [www.redclaycafe.com](http://www.redclaycafe.com) under the allergies tab to expedite the process and send the form directly to your doctor to complete and return to the school nurse. Once the student data card is completed and returned it will be sent to the Nutrition Department if a special menu plan is needed. Only forms with a doctor's signature will be valid documentation to issue a special menu.
4. If you wish to have a copy of your student's allergy menu, please contact [Jessica.rombach@redclay.k12.de.us](mailto:Jessica.rombach@redclay.k12.de.us)



# ALLERGY FAQ

*Below are some frequently asked questions regarding the Red Clay Administrative Memorandum: **Guidelines for Managing Students with Food Allergies**. This memo can be viewed at [www.redclaycafe.com](http://www.redclaycafe.com)*

## **1. Can I bring in fruit and/or vegetables into my child's classroom for special occasions?**

Yes! Fruit and vegetables are delicious and healthy snacks that are a wonderful alternative to traditional celebratory snacks. In order to ensure no possible cross contamination with major allergens, fruits and vegetables must be purchased from either a grocery store or a food service company that has standardized food safety measures in place. These items should **NOT** be pre-cut or altered at all in your private home prior to being served in the classroom. This is imperative to ensure no cross contamination.

## **2. Do all foods brought into the classroom for students need a food label containing an allergen statement?**

No. While it is encouraged to find healthy, nutritious foods that are packaged with an allergen statement, foods that are in their fresh/whole form are also allowed in the classroom so long as they have not been processed or prepped in the home (this includes cutting, chopping, or repackaging) and are purchased from one of the above mentioned establishments. Examples include whole fruit/vegetables. It is always prudent to ask your school nurse for a class listing of allergies before bringing foods into the classroom.

## **4. Can my student eat the school breakfast and school lunches if they have an allergy?**

Yes. Students with allergies are permitted to buy school lunch, however, the safest practice for the prevention of allergic reactions and cross contamination is to pack an allergen free lunch from home. If you wish to have your child participate in school meals, an allergen free meal and/or proper substitutions will be made **IF** proper medical physician documentation is on file as part of the Food Allergy Action Plan submitted for each student with a life-threatening allergy. Special menus are not needed for peanut/tree nut allergies amongst other easily avoidable allergens due to procedures in place in district cafeterias.

## **5. What happens if my student grows out of a food allergy?**

In the event that your student grows out of a food allergy currently listed on their Food Allergy Action Plan by a physician, as a parent/guardian you will need to provide documentation from a medical physician indicating that the allergy is no longer present. Only then will your student be allowed to have allergen-containing foods at school meals.

## **6. Can I send my student to school with a lunch containing one of the common eight allergens?**

Yes. A student may bring in lunch items that do not contain an ingredient label. Students who do have life-threatening food allergies have a designated "safe zone" in the cafeteria to sit at to prevent exposure to other students' lunches containing allergens.

