

Plymouth-Canton Community Schools
Department of School Health

**Recommendations for the PCCS District:
Addressing the Needs of the Student with Food Allergies**

In an attempt to provide a “free and appropriate public education” for students with food allergies, specifically peanut and nut allergies, the PCCS School nurses have outlined some basic recommendations for the school district at large. Food allergies affect approximately 5-8% of students. Eight foods cause 90% of all food allergic reactions. These foods include peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, wheat, soy, fish, and shellfish. Allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, fish and shellfish are considered life-long. Exposure to the particular food the student is allergic to may cause anaphylaxis, a medical emergency. Avoidance of the food allergen is our most effective tool of prevention of severe allergic reactions.

1. Avoidance of food allergen in classroom.

Elementary schools. *Recommendation:* Peanut and tree nuts products should be eliminated from classrooms where there is a student with a food allergy to peanuts or tree nuts. If a student has an identified anaphylaxis to any other food item, that food item should be eliminated from the classroom.

Middle schools and high schools. *Recommendation:* Peanut and tree nut products should be eliminated from all classrooms. Particular attention should be made in classrooms with student(s) with food allergies. If a student has an identified anaphylaxis to any other food item, that food item should be eliminated from the classroom.

2. Avoidance of food allergen in school stores and vending machines.

Recommendation: School buildings should not sell peanut or nut products in the vending machines or school stores that are used by the entire school population.

3. Cafeteria

Recommendation: Students and staff will be allowed to eat peanut and nut products in the cafeteria and staff lounge. Areas designated as “peanut-free” or “nut-free” zones will be established in the cafeteria. Students with peanut-free and nut-free lunches will be allowed to eat in these designated areas. Additionally, if a student has an identified allergy to dairy and requires café seating in a “dairy-free (milk-free)” zone, this area will also be established within the cafeteria.

4. Staff education

Recommendation: Staff will be provided educational information regarding food allergies, allergic reactions, anaphylaxis and EpiPen (emergency medication) annually. The PCCS School nursing staff is available for additional training, if needed.

5. Student education.

Recommendation: Videos will be made available for all schools for the purpose of student education in an effort to educate students regarding food allergies and how to help a fellow student who has food allergies.

6. Parent and student responsibilities.

Recommendation: The parents/guardians of student with food allergies will be responsible for:

- Providing appropriate medical documentation regarding the specific food allergy
- Providing medical updates regarding the food allergy
- Providing emergency medication for use in the school setting
- Providing completed and signed medication administration forms to the school office.
- Instructing the student to avoid any situation where he/she may come in contact with allergen.
- Instructing student to never share food.