

The Black River Local Schools Food Allergy Policy



DISTRICT-WIDE PLAN

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The Black River Local Schools Food Allergy Policy and Regulations

Black River Board of Education recognizes the increasing prevalence of potentially life-threatening food allergies among children. By working together, school personnel, students, parents and physicians can effectively reduce the risk of accidental exposure to foods in the school setting, thus providing a safe educational environment for students with food allergies.

Identification

Identifying students with severe allergies is the first step in the process of developing a plan. Students need to be identified through school registration by providing a doctor's note, listing on the student's emergency medical form, and communication from families. Identification can aid in proper planning for the school year and allow the school personnel to be educated, trained and prepared for the entrance of the student on the first day of school.

Individualized Health Care Plans

After the school has identified (by a doctor) the students with life-threatening allergies, an Allergy Action Plan needs to be written. The school nurse and other key personnel will meet with the parents and develop a plan that is unique to the child and his/her specific allergies. The plan includes the student's name, photograph, specific allergies, warning signs of reactions and treatment. Location of medication and epinephrine injectors (EpiPen) should also be included. Access to these life saving devices should be considered at all times. The Allergy Action Plan needs to be considered for all situations in the school setting. This would include the cafeteria, recess, field trips and bus rides. All staff that has responsibility for the student with life-threatening allergies, during the student day, should have a copy of the Allergy Action Plan.

Prevention and Implementation

One of the key elements in a district is prevention. Preventing exposure to the deadly allergen is very difficult in some cases but very important. After identifying the student's allergy (by a doctor) and writing an Allergy Action Plan, prevention measures should be evaluated and implemented. The most important prevention is to strive for an allergen free classroom. Other allergen free zones may be needed in the cafeteria, bus, libraries, art room, etc. Promoting hand washing is another good preventative measure. Children in elementary can be taught to wash their hands before and after eating in order to promote healthy choices and keep the child with allergies safe. Other preventative measures include:

- Effective sanitation measures. Proper washing of cafeteria tables, food preparation areas and classroom areas.
- Provide an identified allergen-free table in the school cafeteria which is thoroughly washed prior to the first lunch shift and in between lunch shifts.
- Promoting safe practice among students should include no swapping or sharing of food and no eating on buses, in libraries and other common areas.
- Educating classmates to avoid endangering, isolating, stigmatizing or harassing students with food allergies.
- Identify eating pals before class goes to lunch.
- Alerting parents whose children are in the same class with the food allergic student. Instructing them about contamination and allergen free classrooms.
- Advance notice will be given to parents of upcoming classroom celebrations, field trips, class trips, or any other events where food will be present, giving parents the opportunity to provide food or verify the safety of food being served to the food allergic student/s.
- Students and staff who have been in contact with an allergen student to wash thoroughly before resuming contact with the allergic student.

Family Responsibility

Parents of students with life threatening allergies must provide a doctor's note with diagnosis, the completed Allergy Action Plan along with current student photo to Black River Local School District. All Allergy Action Plans must be completed and returned to the school within 14 days of the student start date. A new Allergy Action Plan must be submitted annually, and should be updated if any major changes occur to the food-allergic student. In all schools in Black River, the principal/school administrator, and school nurse shall ensure that all school employees and other adults – including but not limited to, classroom teachers, encore teachers, aides, student teachers, food service director, transportation director, athletic director, custodial staff, community education director - who may be involved in the care of a student diagnosed with severe food allergies are provided with copies of the child's Allergy Action Plan.

Provide School Nurse (419-736-2161 ext 403) with all necessary documentation from the student's health care provider.

Provide the Director of Food Services (419-736-3300 ext 109) with a medical prescription from a medical provider to include the child's diagnosis and diet restrictions if a food substitution is necessary.

In the event Black River Local Schools cannot accommodate the severe food allergic student's allergy issue, the parent is there fore responsible for providing all foods for their children on campus.

Medications must be provided in the original container and clearly marked with the student name. Parents will replace medications upon expiration or after use. Multiple current contact numbers should be kept on file and updated as necessary, in case of emergency.

Notify coaches, volunteers, and supervisors in charge of before and after school activities including extra-curricular activities involving the food allergic student(s) and providing access to the proper medications.

Parents should accompany students with severe food allergies, multiple food allergies, or chronic diseases on field trips or out of district events. If parent not available, provide an alternate family member to oversee medical needs.

Parents should educate their child in self-management of their food allergy including safe and unsafe foods, strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods, symptoms of an allergic reactions, how and when to tell an adult that they may be having an allergy related problem and how to read food labels. If the parent of a student(s) is concerned about food allergies in the classroom, the parent may provide their child's teacher with a supply of safe snacks for food related class celebrations, or other food related events, to reduce the likelihood of accidental exposure.

Parents of students with severe food allergies or multiple food allergies may be required to provide meals or snacks for their children. If parents are uncertain about possible exposure allergy-causing foods, they should provide meals or treats for their children.

Parents may provide appropriate, alternative supplies for science projects, arts and craft materials, or other supplies as necessary.

School Responsibility

Schools are public buildings and cannot be “allergen free”. The following guidelines are to be followed to provide a safe learning environment for students with severe food allergies. Black River cannot monitor products sold at athletic events or special student sales, products brought for potlucks or celebrations, or served on off-campus trips. Therefore, persons with severe food allergies must carefully monitor their food in these situations.

Black River Local Schools will strive to instruct staff and faculty to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction and to respond as necessary. The school district will provide anaphylaxis training prior to the beginning of school, to all faculty, staff, coaches, and substitute staff. The administrator of each department is responsible for coordinating and executing annual training of their department staff.

A written action plan will be established by the school nurse in conjunction with the parent, student, the student’s healthcare provider who has documented the food allergy, and school personnel to be followed in the event that an allergic student ingests, or believes he/she has ingested an offending food. The school nurse shall instruct appropriate school personnel regarding action plan. The plan will be reviewed annually and revised if changes occur.

Coordinate with the school nurse to be sure medications are appropriately stored, and be sure that an emergency kit is available that contains a physician’s standing order for epinephrine. In states where regulations permit, medications are kept in a easily accessible secure location central to designated school personnel, not locked in cupboards or drawers. Students will be allowed to carry their own epinephrine, after approval from the student’s physician/clinic, parent and school nurse, and in accordance with ORC 3313.718 Possession and use of epinephrine auto injector to treat anaphylaxis.

Be knowledgeable about and follow applicable federal laws including American Disabilities Act (ADA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and any state laws or district policies.

School personnel will follow federal/state/district laws and regulations regarding sharing medical information about the student.

All substitute staff (teachers, bus drivers, cooks, volunteers, and all other necessary personnel) will be provided with substitute folders that are clearly marked identifying the food allergic student, the food allergy, along with a copy of the Allergy Action Plan needed for those students. They will sign a form acknowledging receipt of information.

Advance notice will be given to parents of upcoming classroom celebrations, field trips, or any other events where (should assume) food will be present, giving parents the opportunity to provide food or verify the safety of food being served to the food allergic student(s). Parents will be permitted to attend any school function to monitor their child.

Include food-allergic students in school activities. Students should not be excluded from school activities solely based on their allergy.

All staff will take threats or harassment against an allergic student seriously; and must be reported to an administrator immediately, so that appropriate disciplinary action may be taken.

Cafeteria/Food Service Responsibilities

Provide appropriate food substitutions to comply with the Allergy Action Plan that was agreed upon by the physician, parent and food services.

Participate in the school's anaphylaxis training on how to recognize the symptoms of an anaphylactic attack, how to respond to life threatening allergic reactions and how to administer emergency medications.

Provide a food allergy avoidance list for egg, milk, soy, wheat, tree nut, peanut allergies, and any other known food allergens. Train staff to identify possible food allergens on food labels.

To provide procedures for handling food products with food allergens to reduce opportunity for cross contamination.

Transportation Responsibilities

Attend training for all school bus drivers on recognizing symptoms of and responding to life-threatening allergies.

Be knowledgeable about the child's Allergy Action Plan, including medication location for the allergic student and review regularly.

Maintain and enforce current law regarding no eating on school buses, with exceptions only to accommodate students with special medical needs.

Have means of communications in an emergency.

Inform substitutes of the allergy and the location of the Allergy Action Plan.

Student Responsibilities

- Black River has a food allergy/health and wellness plan. Students should follow these recommended guidelines.
- Should not trade food with others.
- Should not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen.
- Proper hand washing before and after eating.
- Should notify an adult immediately if they eat something they believe may contain the food to which they are allergic.