

ALLERGY AWARENESS AND FOOD POLICY

The Diocese of Sacramento Catholic School Department recognizes that food allergies can in some instances be life-threatening, and therefore encourages all parish schools to take steps to identify and implement reasonable safeguards to protect students who may experience serious allergic reactions during regular school hours. Our Lady of the Assumption School is therefore committed to working with students and parents to implement practices and policies aimed at providing a safe environment for students who are at risk of having serious reactions to certain types of allergens.

Nut allergies pose a particular concern, because of the severe, sudden, and potentially life-threatening nature of nut allergy reactions in children. It is the policy of Our Lady of the Assumption School, therefore, to take reasonable steps to be a nut-free school. In particular, this means that peanuts and all tree nuts (including, but not limited to, pistachios, macadamia, walnuts, almonds, and cashews), as well as food items on which the label indicates that the item “may contain peanuts or tree nuts,” will not be served by the school, nor will students or parents be permitted to bring such food items on campus. Food items that are made in a facility that processes nuts or peanuts may be consumed by students at their parent’s discretion, but are not to be shared with other students and may not be chosen as a treat for class parties. This policy applies to snacks, lunches, birthday celebrations, and all food brought in for school events, and extends to off-campus, school-sponsored events during school hours such as field trips and outings.

This policy is intended as a preventative strategy to decrease the likelihood of exposing those with severe allergies to nuts and nut products. In addition to the nut-free policy, Our Lady of the Assumption School also has emergency procedures and protocols in place in the event of unforeseen exposure and/or inadvertent contact with nuts or other allergens. Our goal is to protect both children who have known allergies as well as children who have latent, unknown, or undiagnosed allergies. ***Parents must always be aware, however, that while the school will do what it reasonably can implement and educate the school community on this policy, we cannot guarantee that students will never be exposed to nuts or nut products on school grounds or during school activities.***

Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan

- By the first day of school, parents are to provide written notification to the school of an at-risk student’s allergies that pose a serious threat to the student. Parents of students who have any kind of life-threatening allergy (e.g., peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish, bee stings, etc.) must fill out and complete a Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan (*available through your primary care provider or allergy specialist*), and have it signed by a physician or health care professional. The plan will be reviewed by designated school staff, and copies will be kept in the office and with classroom teachers.
- At the beginning of the school year, parents of students with diagnosed food allergies or other pertinent medical conditions should initiate a meeting with their child’s teachers to determine how the student’s allergies might affect his or her classroom participation, and to review care plans in the event of an emergency.
- At the beginning of each school year, the school will provide allergy education training to all staff to (a) understand food allergies, (b) recognize symptoms of a reaction, and (c) know what actions to take in an anaphylactic emergency, including administering an Epi Pen injection and calling appropriate emergency medical assistance.
- It is recommended that all students with life-threatening allergies or other life threatening issues (e.g., asthma, diabetes) should wear a medical alert bracelet (available for purchase at www.medicalert.org).
- Every child with a life threatening allergy is required to have an Epinephrine Auto Injector (Epi Pen) at school, which will be stored in the child’s classroom (it is recommended that the family also provide a second Epi Pen, for storage at the school office). Please be aware of the expiration dates on your Epi Pens so they can be replaced when necessary. Our Lady of the Assumption School will also stock

undesigned Epi Pens and Epi Jr. Pens in the event of a life threatening allergic reaction requiring epinephrine.

- The school will ensure that there is a staff member available on school grounds, during each school day, who is properly trained to administer medications in the event of an allergic reaction by a student.

Partnership Between School and Families

Critical to the success of this food allergy policy is the ongoing cooperation between the school, parents, and students in taking steps to ensure food safety.

Education at Home

Parents are asked to talk with their children about food allergies and the need for awareness of how something as seemingly harmless as a peanut can cause serious harm to someone with a food allergy. Parents of children with such allergies should take steps to educate the child on self-management of his/her food allergy, including:

- Awareness of safe and unsafe foods;
- Strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods;
- Knowing symptoms of allergic reactions;
- How and when to tell an adult they may have an allergy related problem;
- How to read food labels (if age-appropriate)

Responsibility of Students With Allergies

Students that have food allergies:

- Shall not exchange, share, or trade food. (This applies to all students.)
- Shall not consume any food, drink, or other substance containing ingredients unknown to the student, or known by the student, to contain any allergen that is a threat to the student.
- Shall be proactive in the care and management of his or her food allergies and reactions based on his/her maturity, experience or training.
- If allowed to carry his or her own medication, that student will do so in a safe and responsible manner.
- Shall notify an adult school representative immediately if he or she consumes or comes in contact with, in any way, any item that may contain a substance to which he or she may have a serious allergic reaction.

Lunch and Snack Policy:

For reasons of safety and/or cleanliness, students are not allowed to have the following on school grounds:

- ***NO foods containing peanuts or tree nuts of any kind are allowed. If the food label says, "May contain peanuts or tree nuts," that item is not allowed. This includes, without limitations peanut butter, granola bars, trail mix, Nutella, Almond butter etc. Alternatives like Soybean or Sunflower butter can be sent to school, but must be clearly labeled.***
- Glass containers; and
- Gum
- Caffeine/Energy Drink

Lunch Procedures

Late lunches may be dropped on the lunch cart in the office. No parent is permitted to deliver a lunch to the classroom directly. If needed, the office will walk a late lunch to the student.

To ensure safety of our children, students must wash their hands upon arrival to school and before/after lunch or snack.

Students may NOT share lunch. Students who are in need of food can get an alternate from our lunch provider.

Lunch surfaces will be sanitized before, between, and after lunch groups.

Delivering Food

Do not bring any fast food or take-out items to school for your child.

Hot Lunch Program

There is a hot lunch program offered by Darling Catering; lunch can be purchased on a monthly system. It must be pre-ordered. Lunch order forms will be online on the OLA School Web site and also sent to families by e-mail each month. Milk may be purchased through the front office for the entire year.

Birthday/Holiday Celebrations – Classroom Treats

We allow a simple celebration in the classroom for students' birthdays. If a family wishes to bring food to share with the class, **it is required to** email or speak with the teacher in advance. Approval must be obtained, and the food must adhere to the OLA Food Policy. Please note that home-baked foods are NOT allowed. **In addition to foods being nut free for shared events, the food must also NOT be labeled as having been processed in a facility with nuts. Due to dangers of cross-contamination, home baked goods are not allowed. Food from stores and bakeries that use nuts and/or are not able to guarantee a nut free product are also not allowed. Nut free food items that are baked in the school gym kitchen or Kinder-rich/extension are acceptable.**

Liability of overnight field trips-Sly Park, Marin Headlands, Washington DC

Teachers will review their class party policy at Back to School Night.

On and off campus events involving students during school hours must adhere to this policy as stated above. This includes, but is not limited to, field trips and end of the year class parties held at parks and school families' homes. School families or room reps planning parties are asked to review the OLA school approved food list.

On Campus School Events Including Adults and Student During School Hours

This includes, but is not limited to, the HOLA coffee, 2nd grade Christmas Around the World, 3rd grade Mother's Day Tea, 7th Grade Mass and Luncheon, and 8th Grade Graduation Breakfast. These events must adhere to the class party guidelines.

On Campus School Events Including Adults And Students During Non-School Hours

This category includes, but is not limited to, the annual Country Fair, 8th Grade Crab Feed, Movie Night, and Santa's Breakfast. Every effort will be made to keep the campus nut-free during the event. We will ask all vendors and volunteers to abide by the Our Lady of the Assumption Allergy awareness and Food Policy. However, though all of the foods brought in will be peanut free and tree nut free, some may be homemade. Therefore, all parents are asked to exercise the appropriate level of supervision and discretion as they would for any public event.

Adult Only on Campus Events

This includes, but is not limited to, Back-to-School Night, the Auction, Spring Gathering, and faculty luncheons. Nut free home baked goods are allowed for adult consumption. Nut free catered foods may be served, and all efforts will be made with vendors to ensure no cross contamination with nuts. Adults are asked not to bring food into the classroom at these events. Proper cleaning techniques of the school surfaces will be done after an adult only event, prior to children arriving on campus.

At this point the only events that allow nut free home baked goods are the Santa Breakfast and the 8th grade crab feed fundraiser. The sale of home baked goods at these events must be done between 2 adults. For the purpose of the Country Fair Cake Walk, baked goods will be baked by a volunteer staff in the gym or extension kitchen. Faculty lunches are nut free, and nut free baked goods are allowed. For restaurant information please see the OLA School Approved Food List.

Fundraising Food Sale Guidelines

Fundraising food sales will be addressed on a case-by-case basis. As an allergy aware, peanut free, tree nut free school zone, this policy is meant as a preventative strategy to decrease the likelihood of exposure to an allergen that may result in a life-threatening reaction. This will protect both children who have known allergies as well as children who have latent, unknown or undiagnosed allergies. Emergency procedures and protocols are in place in the event of unforeseen exposure.