

## Food Allergy Information

A significant number of students in our schools have life threatening food allergies. Their allergens include peanuts, tree nuts (e.g.: walnut, almond, hazelnut, cashew, pistachio, etc), soy, milk, wheat (gluten), fish, shellfish, various fruits, etc. Reactions to allergens can cause anaphylaxis, a sudden, severe reaction that is potentially fatal.

In order to create a safe school environment for all students, Shrewsbury Public School buildings and classrooms are designated as “Allergy Aware”. This indicates an effort on the part of the school to make the community (students, staff, families, etc) aware that there are students with food allergies in the classroom or building, and for that reason to ask that they be respectful of those around them who might have allergies by refraining from bringing foods that contain allergens into school as much as possible, and that they never share food of any kind while at school or on the bus.

Per the district’s Wellness Policy, staff are not permitted to bring food in to school to share with students. Any food used in classrooms for curriculum related activities must be approved by the principal after consult with the school nurse, and should be wrapped, store-bought foods, with ingredients listed on the labels whenever possible. The staff person leading the activity should check labels to ensure that no allergens are present.

Families of students with food allergies are asked to partner with our schools by teaching their child about their specific allergen(s), what foods should be avoided, how to read food labels, how to recognize symptoms of a reaction, how to self advocate in regards to their allergy, and what to do if a reaction occurs. Students should be reminded that food of any kind should not be shared at school or on the bus. Parents/guardians should inform the school nurse of any known allergies and provide a doctor’s order, allergy management plan, and any required medications to the nurse at the beginning of each school year.

Our food service department works hard to provide nutritious meal choices in our school cafeterias. If a student with food allergies chooses to buy food at school, parents/guardians should review menu choices at home and help to decide what is safe for their individual child. Some menu items may contain allergens. School and cafeteria staff will not monitor lunch choices made by students. If parents/guardians have questions about possible allergens, they should contact the cafeteria manager at their child’s school. Menus are available on the Food Service page of the Shrewsbury Public Schools website (<http://schools.shrewsburyma.gov/foodsvc/lunch-menus.cfm>).

Allergy Aware tables will be available in the cafeterias at elementary schools and

middle schools. Students with allergies can choose to sit at these tables along with non-allergic students whose lunch does not include allergens. Again, sharing/trading of food is not permitted.