

Dear Parents and Guardians,

For student safety, Bellevue School District has changed its procedure regarding food in the classroom and during instructional times which includes lunch and recess. This letter outlines the specific changes along with the rationale for the change. Please take a few minutes to read this letter for the safety of each and every student.

There have been a number of emergencies related to food allergies around the district raising significant concerns about food in the classroom and at school events. In our district we have students who are allergic to peanuts, kiwi, celery, watermelon, soy, dairy, and eggs as well as other foods. To ensure that each and every student remains safe at school, important changes have been made to our Anaphylaxis Prevention and Response procedure (3420P). **These changes are effective immediately.**

The items highlighted in this letter and the attached FAQ are not exhaustive. We encourage you to read the entire procedure, [3420P Anaphylaxis Prevention and Response](http://www.bsd405.org/about-us/policies-procedures/3000-students.aspx), which can be found on the district website: <http://www.bsd405.org/about-us/policies-procedures/3000-students.aspx>

The most significant change made by this procedure is the **prohibition of using food items (homemade and/or store bought) for rewards, incentives, cultural events, celebrations and events during instructional time including lunch and recess.** Teachers may allow mid-morning and/or mid-afternoon snacks. If your student's teacher allows snacks, you may provide your child with an individual snack. Your teacher or school nurse can provide you with a list of food items not to send, as an individual snack, due to food allergies in your child's classroom or school.

If food items are brought to school to share with other students, please anticipate those items being returned home with your student.

According to FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education), 1 in 13 students has a food allergy. This is roughly two students per classroom. Nearly 40% of these students have already experienced a severe or life-threatening allergic reaction. As a school community, we must be diligent in our attempts to prevent this from happening to any of our students.

Thank you for your attention and compliance with the revised procedure and for your assistance in keeping each and every student safe at school.

Sincerely,

Tara Gray

Somerset Principal

FAQs

- 1. Can my student bring a snack from home to eat in class?** Please check with your student's teacher first to confirm that snacks are allowed in their classroom. If snacks are allowed, please be mindful of what you send with your student as an individual snack item. Your teacher or school nurse can provide you with a list of foods not to send, due to food allergies in your student's classroom or school.
- 2. My student is in a classroom with classmates that have food allergies. Can my student bring anything s/he wants to eat for lunch?** Please check with your student's school nurse or office to confirm that there is a separate table at lunch for students with allergies or if there is a specific school-wide prohibition on specific food items.
- 3. Can I send in cupcakes or cookies for my child's birthday?**
No, the updated Anaphylaxis Prevention and Response procedure 'prohibits the use of food items for rewards and incentives to students and for celebrations and events.' A birthday party is considered a celebration. Please consider non-food items, such as stickers or party favors, as a way to celebrate your student's birthday with classmates.
- 4. The Fall Party is this week. Can I bring in candy for the Fall Party on October 31st?**
No, the updated Anaphylaxis Prevention and Response procedure 'prohibits the use of food items for rewards and incentives to students and for celebrations and events.' This procedure went into effect immediately and food items are no longer permitted for celebrations including holiday parties. Please use non-food items to celebrate.
- 5. My student's class earned a pizza party. Can I send in pizza to be eaten during lunch time?**
No, the updated Anaphylaxis Prevention and Response procedure 'prohibits the use of food items for rewards and incentives to students and for celebrations and events' during instructional activities. Food items are not permitted during instructional activities including lunch and recess.
- 6. Can I bring in treats and share them with my student's class during lunch?**
No, food items are not permitted during instructional activities including lunch and recess.
- 7. What will happen if I do send my student to school with food items as treats to share with their class or for an event?** All schools have been directed to return any treats that are food items home with the student.