



**NYC DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**

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Commissioner

**NYC DEPARTMENT OF
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**OFFICE OF
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TO: ALL
FROM: Roger Platt, M.D.
SUBJECT: New York City Department of Education
Allergy Policy Statement

September 8, 2016

The NYC Department of Education (DOE) prioritizes the health and well-being of its over 1.1 million public school students. To support their academic success, Office of Food & Nutrition Services provides students with nutritious meals, while principals, nurses, teachers, kitchen staff and other school administrators work collaboratively to ensure that all students remain healthy and safe while at school.

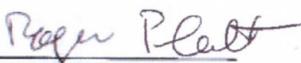
The DOE cannot provide a nut, milk or allergen-free school environment or allergen-free food service, because the risk of accidental exposure is always present whether in food other students bring from home, food packaged in factories where allergens are present, or in art materials and cleaning products used in schools. Instead, the DOE has an “allergy aware” policy throughout its 1,800 public schools. Being “allergy aware” builds community sensitivity and empowers everyone! Children with allergies become aware of what they can and cannot eat, and other adults and students become more conscientious about the allergies of others.

For parents and guardians of children with allergies, a child’s accidental exposure to allergens is a constant worry. The specially trained staff of Office of Food & Nutrition Services and the Office of School Health work together to provide school principals with the support and guidance they need to increase the safety of students with allergies. DOE employees are trained to identify allergic reactions and to take the steps needed to increase the student’s safety. These employees include the school nurse, food service staff, teachers, maintenance workers, transportation staff, and administrators, all of whom play an important role in serving NYC parents and their children with allergies in our public schools. The DOE provides annual allergy awareness information to the educational community through our website and periodic training material handouts.

Parents and guardians of a child with allergies are asked to complete the requisite medical forms in order for their children to receive the proper care for their allergies. Forms are available at the school nurse’s office. School principals work with their school’s nurse and Food Service-Manager to devise student-specific “allergy response plans” that address any allergy concerns parents or guardians may have concerning their children.

For more information about the DOE food allergy policy, visit www.nyc.gov/health or www.schoolfoodnyc.org

Thank you.



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