

Dear Parent/Guardian:

We are being notified more frequently of students with allergies, and many of which are VERY severe. Even the residue left on the seats from food items and packaging can cause severe reactions. This is the reason for this letter. Peanut and latex allergies are the big ones right now. You would be SHOCKED by what all has latex in it.

For the protection of ALL students, we will not be allowing eating on our buses. As for athletics and eating on the bus, we will allow athletes to eat approved foods on the bus; however, the coach or students will be responsible for wiping down the seats and surrounding areas with a disinfecting wipe. These wipes will be placed in both HS and MS travel training bags. This needs to be done anytime anyone on the bus eats food. Floors need to be cleaned of all food and packaging, as well as the trash being emptied off of the buses at the end of the trip.

In regards to cleaning--The Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis website states:

The good news is that allergens can be readily cleaned from hands and body parts, cookware and utensils, and environmental surfaces. Following are helpful tips to prevent environmental contamination:

- When cleaning surfaces (such as desks, counters, tables, airline seats or tray tables, etc.), use a wipe that contains a commercial detergent (e.g., Clorox®, Lysol®, etc), or apply a spray-on detergent (e.g. Formula 409®, Fantastic®, Windex® Multi-Surface, etc.) and vigorously wipe the area that has come into contact with the allergen. In a 2004 study, dish soap did not remove peanut allergen.
- Run contaminated pots, pans, and utensils through a normal dishwasher cycle or wash them by hand with hot, soapy water and scrub the surfaces thoroughly. Use a sponge, scouring pad, or dish rag that has not come into contact with the allergen. Rinse and dry thoroughly with a clean towel. Avoid just wiping down a knife or common utensil with a rag after touching an allergen (a common practice at sandwich shops).
- For washing hands or face, use warm/hot, soapy water or a commercial “tidy” wipe. Hand sanitizing gel is not sufficient to remove allergens. This is important in the healthcare setting, as most healthcare facilities have moved to near-exclusive use of hand sanitizing gels for infectious purposes.

Please be aware that many of the buses used for activity trips are also used for bus routes -- so we all need to be very careful that we are doing our part in helping the students who ride these buses on a daily basis.

Again, we know this is going to be a HUGE change for everyone. Tyler Hotz, the school nurses, and I have been working very carefully on what the best option is for our kids and school. We feel that this is our best option. Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns.

Teresa Hartley

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