

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Public Schools
MCGINN SCHOOL
SCOTCH PLAINS, NEW JERSEY

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As food allergies are a growing concern in schools across America and pose health risks to many of our students, we want to ensure the safest possible experience at McGinn. Students can be allergic to practically any food, but 90% of the foods they are allergic to fall under the 8 most common allergens: **peanut, tree nut, milk, egg, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish.**

Therefore, we are putting the following safety guidelines into effect:

- Please do not send any peanuts/tree nuts, peanut butter, Nutella or foods containing these ingredients to be eaten as **snacks** in the classroom. It is fine to send these products for lunch, which is eaten in the cafeteria. We have special and individualized procedures within the cafeteria to ensure the safety of each child with a food allergy.
- **Birthday Celebrations** are special times for children, but can be a difficult time for the food-allergic child; therefore we recommend that you refer to our **McGinn School Birthday Celebrations** letter for a suggestion for celebrating with a favorite book and special person.
- **Holiday Celebrations - Halloween and Valentine's Day.** We must be extremely careful about the ingredients and preparation of all food items. Homemade treats, although delicious, make this process difficult. If you are preparing for one of our two holiday parties - Halloween and Valentine's Day - please choose from the list on the "Nut-Free Snack Alternatives" page of store bought snack foods that most of our children can enjoy safely. **If your treat has not been prearranged with your classroom teacher and approved by the school nurse, it may need to be sent home.**

We trust that you understand how deeply important it is to respect and adhere to these guidelines. If throughout the course of the year you have any questions or concerns about food allergy related issues, please do not hesitate to contact either one of us.

Wishing you and your family a safe and healthy school year.

Sasha Slocum, Principal

Cheryl Hottenstein-Ward, RN, School Nurse