



For the future of every student

Wellness Policy and Food in the Classroom for Substitute Teachers

VUSD Wellness Policy BP5030

Federal law requires every school district to have a local wellness policy. These policies must address nutrition education, physical activity, school meals, and all other foods and beverages available at school.

Healthy students are successful students! According to the VUSD Wellness Policy, “the Superintendent or designee strongly encourages parents/guardians or other volunteers to use healthy options for occasional class parties. Class parties or celebrations shall be held after the lunch period when possible. Teachers are encouraged to find alternatives to the use of foods as a reward or incentive for students.”

A strong policy about offering healthy foods that provides options for all students also helps to ensure the safety of children with food allergies. Schools can protect food allergic children by providing non-food celebrations or, if food is served, obtaining it from sources such as the school food service program. Allergic reactions to foods vary among students and can range from mild to severe life threatening anaphylactic reactions. Some students, who are very sensitive, may react to just touching or inhaling the allergen. For other students, consumption of as little as one five-thousandth of a teaspoon of an allergic food can cause death. The severity of a reaction is not predictable. Because there is a cumulative effect from past exposures to an allergen, the severity of a future exposure cannot be predicted. Eight foods (peanut, tree nut, milk, egg, soy, wheat, fish, and shellfish) account for 90% of total food allergies.

When parents send in food, it is difficult to ensure the safety of children with food allergies. We often don't know what is in the foods they bring and whether or not there are children or others with food allergies that might be affected by this.

For this reason, PLEASE DO NOT allow any food items not prepared by food services to be given to children while you are acting as the substitute teacher. If you have any concerns, please contact the school office manager or principal and direct the parent/guardian to that person.

For more information:

Ann Marie Bidlingmaier, Coordinator, Health Services
ann.bidlingmaier@venturausd.org
805-641-5000 ext. 1135

Kara Muniz, Director, Food and Nutrition Services
kara.muniz@venturausd.org
805-641-5000 ext. 1301