

# GRCES Policies Regarding Life Threatening Allergies

rev. 2010-08-25

GRCES relies heavily on parental cooperation to implement the following policy. PLEASE READ CAREFULLY.

## **Applies to All GRCES Students & Families:**

1. No food clearly identifiable as or clearly labeled as containing peanuts is permitted.
2. Foods labeled as “processed with peanuts” or “processed in a facility that also processes peanuts” **are permitted** unless your child’s classroom is specifically designated as a “Peanut-Free Zone”.
3. To avoid accidental exposure to allergens through residual contact, all students will be expected to wash their hands after meals.
4. Any activities involving food in common areas must be allergen-free and proper cleaning of tables and common areas must occur after any events in common areas.
5. Threats to students with life-threatening allergies will be considered bullying and will be addressed by GRCES’s student discipline process.
6. Information about peanut allergies, how to read labels, peanut-free lunch alternatives, or birthday treat ideas will be available at the GRCES school office.

## **Applies to All GRCES Students & Families in classrooms with a peanut-allergic student:**

1. Children in classrooms who bring peanut products in their lunch will have these products removed and will be provided with a reasonable alternative if available.
2. GRCES maintains the right to declare a classroom a “Peanut-Free Zone” depending on the age of the allergic child and the severity of the allergy. If your child is in a “Peanut-Free Zone” classroom, you will be notified directly.

(**Peanut-Free Zone:** Area where no products containing, processed with, or processed in a facility with peanuts is allowed due to risks of cross-contamination and accidental exposure)

## **Applies to Families of Students with life-threatening allergies:**

1. Parents must understand and agree that they send their child to school at their own risk – the school cannot and will not guarantee against accidental exposures and cannot accept liability.
2. Students with life-threatening allergies are responsible for providing specific care instructions in the event of an allergic reaction. Allergy Action Plans must be available in the child’s classroom, the school office, and readily available to playground monitors.
3. Students should carry epi-pens with them at all times while at the school.

## **Applies to Staff at GRCES:**

1. The school (in partnership with parents, health officials, and other agencies) will participate in ongoing school community education programs.
2. The school will train staff on allergies, sources of allergens, avoidance techniques, identification of an allergic reaction in progress, and emergency response procedures.
3. Teachers in classrooms where life-threatening allergies are present may confiscate food that poses a danger to another student and may provide a safe alternative if one is available.
4. Peanuts or peanut-contaminated materials will not be utilized in any teacher-initiated activities (i.e. art projects, baking projects, games, etc.)

# Life Threatening Allergy Information

## Background:

Grand Rapids Christian Elementary School (GRCES) is called, as a covenant community, to embrace all families that are committed to a Christian education for their children. Additionally, we are called to care for the needs of each individual student as a community. These callings necessitate policies and practices that foster a welcoming environment for all members of our community.

The consolidation of Creston, Evergreen, Millbrook, and Oakdale Christian Schools into GRCES necessitates a review of practices and policies regarding students with life-threatening allergies. An ad-hoc committee including teachers and parents from each of the elementary schools met during the spring of 2010 to develop life-threatening allergen practices and policies for GRCES. A wide range of opinions and experiences were represented and the committee is to be commended for its work. Considerations the committee took into account in making a recommendation include:

### GRCES practices and policies must . . .

1. be age appropriate to assure young children are protected by parents and teachers.
2. reflect our commitment to being an inclusive, non-discriminatory environment.
3. reflect our commitment to accommodate the needs of all students.
4. model our commitment to serving others.
5. assure parents that the school will be a safe place for and a good steward of their child(ren).
6. protect all children in the school. A reasonable level and comfort and inclusion must be established.
7. promote an environment of cooperation and understanding, not coercion. The application of any life-threatening allergen policy will rest primarily on the cooperation of the entire community.

### GRCES is committed to . . .

1. being an allergen safe school for children with life-threatening allergies. Written policies cannot ensure that the school will be allergen free. Our written policy is intended to detail the practices we expect from GRCES families that will result in an allergen safe school.
2. having students eat lunch in their classrooms at GRCES.
3. providing a nutritious allergen free hot lunch option every day.

The following life-threatening allergen policy applies specifically to peanuts, but may apply to other foods and/or products (such as latex) known to produce life-threatening allergic reactions if these allergies are present in the classroom. This policy is in affect whenever a student with the life-threatening allergies attends the school. Parents of children with life-threatening allergies must present verification from a doctor that the student has a life-threatening allergy. There are several students with life-threatening peanut allergies that will attend Grand Rapids Christian School this year.