



Panther Run Elementary School



Edilia De La Vega
Principal

Risa Suarez
Assistant Principal

Panther Run Elementary is a Nut Free School

Dear Parents,

At Panther Run Elementary we have several of the children with severe food allergies. Some of our children are allergic to all nuts and nut products. This allergy is becoming more common and each year we find ourselves with a small number of children (who are perfectly healthy, otherwise) with this concern. These children cannot eat nuts, nut butter, nut oil, peanut flour, products cooked in a nut's oil, or products that might have nuts in them (many chocolate candies, even plain M&M's, have ground peanuts in their chocolate formula).

Reactions may be swift and severe, even deadly. **Reactions can occur from accidentally ingesting or even unknowingly touching peanut butter. It may be as simple as a child, who just ate a peanut butter sandwich touching the arm of an allergic child with a hand that might have some peanut butter or residual oil on it.** The reactions that occur can begin as itchy rashes, hives, a stomach ache, or a scratchy throat and very quickly progress to breathing trouble, throat closing, and anaphylaxis. **When the response to these symptoms is not quick enough, children can die.**

In an elementary classroom situation, parents of these children must recruit teachers and school personnel to share in their vigilance. We have medication on hand that will help control severe reactions and our nurse, the teacher, and key staff members are trained in its proper use. The food service manager is always available to parents of allergic children for advice and concerns. **Our cafeteria, for the past several years, no longer serves products that contain nuts.**

We are writing you this letter to go one step further and hopefully recruit your help with this matter. Fully understanding the popularity of nut products (peanut butter sandwiches or cookies or granola bars, for instance), we are asking parents to voluntarily avoid the use of nuts and nut products in their children's lunches. According to Administrative Directive 7.18(B)(3), **"Foods may be sold or served on campus only if prepared in the school kitchen under the supervision of the school cafeteria or if prepared in commercial conditions approved by the Health Department."** Your willingness to cooperate with this request will help make the school environment a safer place. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Edilia De La Vega, Principal

Tram Tran, RN, School Nurse