

## ST. GILES SCHOOL-WIDE NUT FREE POLICY

### 1. Why does St. Giles have a Peanut/Tree Nut Policy?

We have children with severe peanut and/or tree nut allergies in every grade. We understand that students can be exposed to food allergens without their knowledge, and that some students are still learning how to protect themselves from inadvertent exposure to food allergens. While we make efforts to clean and wipe down eating surfaces, playing surfaces, toys, desks, and chairs, there are now many children within our school who could have a life-threatening allergic reaction from contact with even a microscopic amount of the offending foods.

### 2. What is the Policy? Does it affect what I send my child for lunch?

The only food items that may be served to St. Giles students, including in the classroom or at school events (including, but not limited to PTO-sponsored events, classroom parties, field trips, and athletic events) are pre-packaged or single packaged (e.g. fresh fruit) food items with complete ingredient lists so that potential food allergens can be screened at the event. On occasion and with prior approval, school sanctioned groups may use the kitchen in McDonough Hall to prepare foods for students. This sole exception is explained in Section 3 below.

Parents or caregivers should carefully check all foods sent in for an individual student's snack or lunch to make sure they are peanut/tree nut-free. Families can help keep peanuts and tree nuts out of our school by reading packaging labels and only sending in foods that are peanut-free and tree-nut free. Also parents should remind children not to share food with other children at school as we have students who are allergic to a wide variety of foods, other than peanuts and tree nuts. We need to make sure that there is little opportunity for any child to be exposed to foods that could harm him/her.

### 3. How do I know what foods are safe to send to school with my child?

#### Food for Groups

Snacks sent to be served to a group of students must be pre-packaged with intact, visible, original manufacturing labels verifying that the food does not contain peanuts or tree nuts and was not made in facility that processes peanuts or tree nuts. You can visit the website [www.snacksafely.com](http://www.snacksafely.com) to consult the Snack Safe Guide, which works with manufacturers to provide a guide of snacks that do not contain particular food allergens. However, you should always verify the labels on the food you purchase as manufacturers change their ingredients and processes from time to time.

On occasion school-sanctioned groups, including PTO and the Wellness Committee, provide food for school events. When committee volunteers bake or prepare foods, they do not use ingredients containing peanuts or tree-nuts and use the McDonough Hall kitchen, where they wipe down counters and wash their hands and cooking utensils prior to preparing the foods. Still, McDonough Hall is a parish space and we cannot enforce our school nut policy with non-school groups who use the space. If your child has a food allergy, and you have concerns about food preparation in McDonough Hall, please advise your child's teacher and discuss your concerns. Options include, but are not limited to, your child declining the food, bringing his or her own food, or you participating in the food preparation so that you can decide if your child should consume the food.

### **Food for Individual Children**

For your individual children, the food you send in their lunches or for their snacks must be peanut-free and tree nut-free. Foods that have been made in a facility that processes peanuts or tree nuts may be sent in your child's lunch provided the foods do not contain peanuts or tree nuts as an ingredient. If you send such items, please remind your child not to share any food with other children at school.

If you have any questions about peanut or tree nut allergies, or whether certain foods are considered tree nuts, please refer to the American College of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology.

### **4. Lunch**

The Fun Lunch Program is a PTO sponsored fundraiser, and participation is always voluntary. None of the food choices available through the Fun Lunch Program contain peanuts or tree nuts as ingredients, however St. Giles School has no control over the practices within the Fun Lunch vendors' kitchens and cannot guarantee that their kitchens are peanut and tree nut free. Children are served only the Fun Lunch items which their parent or caretaker has pre-ordered for them. Any child is welcome to bring his/her own lunch on days when Fun Lunch is served.

Marla's Lunch is an outside vendor contracted by Saint Giles School for the convenience of our families. The vendor indicates their lunches are 100% nut free, however Saint Giles School has no control over their product.

### **5. Faculty & Staff Spaces**

The following areas, where students are not permitted, are exempt from this policy: the private offices of school administrators and all faculty lunchrooms.