

TESD Allergy and Wellness Policies FAQ

The purpose of the T/E School District allergy and wellness policies is to ensure children enrolled in TESD schools will be provided with nutritious meals and those with severe, life threatening allergies can safely attend school.

Food Prepared at Home for Lunch

1. Can I continue to pack my child's lunch with foods that I prepare at home?

Yes, students may bring in home-prepared foods to eat for lunch in the cafeteria. Students may not share their lunch with other students due to allergy concerns.

2. If my child has a peanut/nut allergy, will he/she be able to sit at a peanut-free location in the cafeteria?

Yes, each school cafeteria has a peanut/nut-free seating area in accordance with the District's allergy policy.

Food Brought into the Classroom by Parents

3. How can I celebrate my child's birthday at school?

The District encourages students to celebrate birthdays in school with non-food items. Due to allergy concerns, parents may no longer send in foods prepared at home to celebrate their child's birthday at school. For example, foods such as homemade cupcakes or fruit that is cut and prepared in the home are no longer permitted. The District will continue to encourage healthy food choices for children and supports the recognition of birthdays in a safe and fun manner that is meaningful to the child.

4. What can I bring into school for a classroom celebration such as holiday parties?

Any food that is brought into school by parents to be shared with students must be commercially prepackaged and the package must list the ingredients. Prepackaged fruits and vegetables from a supermarket may be brought into school to be shared with students as long as the ingredients are listed on the original packaging or commercial label. Restaurant food and homemade food may not be distributed to students. Food from a commercial bakery is permitted if the box contains a bakery label that lists the ingredients.

Food for School-Sponsored Curriculum Events and Parties

5. What types of food may I bring in for an event connected with a special classroom event?

All foods for special events such as Immigration Day and the Chinese Festival must be prepackaged with the ingredients displayed on the package. In addition, food prepared in the school cafeteria by the cafeteria staff may be distributed at special events. Homemade food may not be distributed at special events sponsored by the school.

PTO After School Events

6. Can the PTO serve homemade items at PTO-sponsored special events in the evening or on the weekend? (Spring Fair, Ice Cream Social, Father/Daughter Dance)

PTO Events held outside of the school day are not governed by the District's allergy policy.

Wellness Policy & Regulation Highlights

Food Sold for Profit by the PTO

7. Can the PTOs sell food as a fundraiser during the school day?

According to the federal "Smart Snack" guidelines for "competitive foods", schools may not sell food to students that do not meet specific nutrition requirements. Foods are considered "competitive foods" because they are sold during the school day. The "School Day" is defined as the period from midnight before to 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. A "competitive" food is a food that is sold during the school day and must be a:

- Fruit,
- Vegetable,
- Dairy Product,
- Protein-rich food (meats, beans, poultry, seafood, eggs, nuts, seeds),
- Whole-grain rich food (first ingredient is a whole grain or product is >50% whole grains by weight), or
- Combo food that has at least ¼ cup fruit and/or ¼ cup vegetable

All competitive foods, or food served during the school day, must be prepackaged and labeled with ingredients.

According to the federal Competitive Foods Act, each elementary school and middle school is allowed five events which may be exceptions to the wellness policy. The PTO must have written permission from the principal for these events. Homemade foods may not be sold at the five exempt events.

8. Can the PTO hold an event in the evening where food is sold?

Yes, because the evening occurs 30 minutes after the end of the official school day. Events held outside of the school day are not governed by the District's wellness policy.

