

Dear Licensed Medical Provider,

In recent years, we've seen an increasing emphasis on the importance of ensuring children with disabilities have the same opportunities as other children to receive an education and education-related benefits, such as school meals. Subsequently, Congress has passed several comprehensive Acts or laws, which broaden and extend civil rights protections for Americans with disabilities. One result of these laws is an increase in the number of children with disabilities who are being educated in regular school programs. In some cases, the disability may prevent the child from eating meals prepared for the general school population.

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Amendments Act of 2008 made important changes to the term disability to include any person with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, including major bodily functions.

- Major life activities include, but are not limited to: caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, and concentrating.
- Major bodily functions include but are not limited to: functions of the immune system, digestive, bowel, bladder, neurological, brain, respiratory, circulatory, endocrine, and reproductive functions.

USDA regulations (7 CFR 15b) require substitutions or modifications in school meals for children whose disabilities restrict their diets. A child with a disability that restricts his or her diet must receive food substitutions when a statement signed by a licensed medical physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse (e.g. certified nurse practitioner) supports that need (USDA 7 CFR 210.10). The medical provider's statement must identify information about the child's physical or mental disability that is sufficient to allow the Nutrition Services department to understand how it restricts or alters the child's diet, including:

- ✓ The allergen(s) or food(s) to be avoided
- ✓ Explanation of how exposure to the allergen(s)/food(s) affects the child
- ✓ The food(s) to be omitted from the child's diet and the food or choice of foods that must be substituted
- ✓ Explanation of additional accommodations that must be done to meet the child's dietary needs

Please contact the Nutrition Services Coordinator if you have any questions.

Nutrition Services
Owatonna Public Schools ISD 761