ALLERGENS-INTOLERANCE AND SPECIAL NEEDS DIETS

It is important that CVUSD Child Nutrition Department continues to accommodate children with special dietary needs. Section 504, the ADA, and 7 CFR, Section 15b, define a person with a disability as any person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, has a record of such impairment, or is regarded as having such impairment. Major life activities are broadly defined and include, but are not limited to, caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, seeing, hearing, eating, sleeping, walking, standing, lifting, bending, speaking, breathing, learning, reading, concentrating, thinking, communicating, and working.

A physical or mental impairment does not need to result in a severe, life-threatening reaction to be considered a disability. It is sufficient that the impairment limits a major life activity. A physical or mental impairment that constitutes a disability must be on a case-by-case basis.

In many cases, reasonable dietary modifications for a child with a disability are managed within the meal pattern requirements as we have a variety of nutritious foods available on our menus. We are happy to arrange accommodation when supported by a written medical statement from a state licensed healthcare professional. **The California Department of Education only permits the following state licensed healthcare professionals to complete and sign a written medical statement for a disability: licensed physicians, physician assistants, or nurse practitioners.** California does not recognize other medical authorities as authorized to sign a written medical statement to determine a child's diet. Physician assistants and nurse practitioners both work under the direction of a licensed physician. This will safeguard program integrity while allowing appropriate flexibility for those families who do not have access to a licensed physician.

California allows electronic signatures. A written medical statement that is e-signed by the designated state licensed healthcare professional can also be considered an acceptable signature.

<u>Individualized Education Program</u>

Students who have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) may require special accommodation for school meals. Some IEPs for children who have a disability may include information regarding the need for specialized services. An IEP does not supersede a state licensed healthcare professional's written medical statement. It supports the medical statement to reiterate a child's nutritional needs. A written and signed medical statement must support the child's IEP.

The best approach to preventing accidental consumption of unintended foods is awareness and communication. Please encourage your child(ren) to ask questions about the food they are eating and if there are any ingredients they need to be aware of. Our staff is happy to answer any questions related to the food they are serving.

If your child(ren) require special attention with their diet, please complete the Medical Statement to Request Special Meals and/or Accommodations form.

If your child(ren) require a fluid milk substitution, please complete the Parental Request for a Fluid Milk Substitution form.

Completed forms may be submitted to the Child Nutrition Department office located at 750 Mitchell Road, Newbury Park, California 91320.