

## **Food Allergies in Schools**

- WHEREAS,** Tennessee PTA seeks to promote and support public policy and actions that protect the health and safety of all children; and
- WHEREAS,** In 2013 the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that food allergies among children under the age of 18 increased approximately 50% between 1997 and 2011, and that food allergies result in more than 300,000 ambulatory-care visits a year among children under the age of 18; and
- WHEREAS,** Nationally four in every 100 children has a food allergy; and
- WHEREAS,** Just eight types of food account for over 90% of allergic reactions in affected children: milk, eggs, peanuts, tree nuts, fish, shellfish, soy, and wheat; and
- WHEREAS,** Accidental ingestion or exposure may occur most often at school or at day care, where children potentially eat two meals, with a possible additional snack, and students with food allergies may suffer allergic reactions ranging from a tickling throat, to hives, to an asthma attack, and to anaphylaxis, which could result in death; and
- WHEREAS,** The importance of managing food-allergic students has been recognized by the National Association of School Nurses; the National Association of Elementary School Principals; the National School Boards Association; the American Medical Association; the American Academy of Pediatrics; and the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma & Immunology; and
- WHEREAS,** The use of effective policies on the management of food allergies in schools addressing information and awareness, avoidance, and emergency response, is likely to save the lives of children with allergies; therefore be it
- RESOLVED** That Tennessee PTA urge its units and councils to inform students, parents, school personnel and the community about the prevalence of food allergies and ways in which danger to students with food allergies can be minimized; and be it further
- RESOLVED** That Tennessee PTA urge its units and councils to work with local school districts to encourage consideration of the risks of food allergies when planning PTA and school-sponsored events; and be it further
- RESOLVED** That Tennessee PTA urge its units and councils to support legislation aimed at improving the lives of all individuals affected by food allergies and anaphylaxis.

**Adopted by the 2017 Annual Convention**