WHEREAS, Food allergies and anaphylactic reactions among children are an increasing school health issue, and approximately 2.2 million school-age children are at risk in the U.S., including more than 40,000 children in Missouri, and reactions account for 30,000 emergency room visits and 150-200 deaths, many in schools, each year in the U.S.; and

WHEREAS, The prevalence of food allergies among children in the U.S. has increased substantially with the incidence of peanut allergies doubling over a recent five-year period, and

WHEREAS, Just eight foods account for 85-90 percent of all food allergic reactions, namely milk, egg, wheat, peanut, soy, tree nuts, fish and shellfish; and

WHEREAS, Accidental ingestion or exposure, by children, may occur most often at schools and daycares where children often consume two meals and a snack during the day, and in some cases a reaction may be the first sign of an allergy; 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, Because there is no cure for food allergies, strict avoidance is the only way to prevent a reaction; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers (Missouri PTA), its units and councils, inform students, parents, school personnel and the community about the prevalence of food allergies, allergen avoidance, emergency responses and ways in which safety for children with food allergies can be increased in the school, the child care setting, and the home; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Missouri PTA, its units and councils, 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 Missouri PTA, its units and councils, support legislation aimed at improving the lives of all individuals affected by food allergies and anaphylaxis; and be it further

RESOLVED, That Missouri PTA, its units and councils, encourage parents and guardians to take personal responsibility for the safety of their children by informing their school, child care providers, and group activity leaders of existing food allergies.

Submitted by Missouri PTA Resolutions Committee
Recommended for Consideration by Missouri PTA Board of Managers