



Dear Teacher,

A student in your class has been diagnosed with an autoimmune disorder called celiac disease. While this will affect some aspects of school management, patience and understanding can bring about the necessary changes that will quickly become a natural part of the school experience for all involved.

### **What is celiac disease?**

Celiac disease (CD) is an autoimmune disease that mainly affects the gastrointestinal tract. Individuals who have CD are permanently intolerant to gluten, a group of proteins found in wheat, rye, barley and contaminated oats. Gluten is toxic to those with CD. In a person with undiagnosed or untreated CD, the finger-like ridges that line the walls of the small intestine known as villi become flattened and unable to absorb nutrients properly. CD may also affect other organ systems.

### **How will this affect your classroom?**

Even the tiniest amount of wheat, rye, barley or contaminated oats is toxic to a person with CD. Therefore, we are relying on your help to keep our child safe while at school.

### **Here are some steps that will help:**

- If there will be shared food (for example, for celebrations or rewards) in the classroom, please notify us in advance so that we can provide a safe alternative for our child.
- We may wish to keep a supply of GF snacks at school for our child.
- Please help keep our child safe from cross-contamination by encouraging hand washing before and after students eat.
- Please do not allow gluten-containing items such as play dough or flour for art or baking projects to be on a surface from where my child might eat.
- Please let me know if there will be play dough or if you are planning to do any flour-based art or baking projects so that I can provide a gluten-free version.
- Please allow my child to wipe off his/her desk with Clorox-type wipes to prevent accidental cross-contamination.

Thank you in advance for your sensitivity and for helping us to keep our child safe this school year. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,