



## **Food Allergies and Schools: Keeping Students Safe and Ready to Learn**

November 9, 2010  
2:00 – 3:30 p.m. EST

### **Agenda and Speaker Bios**

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#### Welcome and Introductions

**Brent Ghan**, *Missouri School Boards Association*

#### Panel 1--Setting the Stage

**Pete Hunt**, *Lead Health Scientist, Research Application Branch, Division of Adolescent and School Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

**Stefano Luccioli**, *Senior Medical Advisor, Office of Food Additive Safety, Food and Drug Administration*

#### Panel 2--Parents and Teens with Food Allergies: Personal Perspectives

**Gina Ganahl and son Denny Ganahl**, *Missouri*

**Mary Lenahan and daughter Alex Simko**, *Illinois*

**Chris Weiss**, *Vice President, Advocacy and Government Relations, Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network*

#### Panel 3--Policy, Procedure and Practice Issues

**Lori Danella**, *Nutrition Coordinator, Lee's Summit School District R-7, Missouri*

**Kathy Ellermeier**, *Health Services Director, Liberty Public School District 53, Missouri*

**Raymond E. Lechner**, *Superintendent, Wilmette Public School District 39, Illinois*

**Kristin Redmond**, *School nurse, Liberty Public School District 53, Missouri*

**Lisa Soronen**, *Senior Staff Attorney, NSBA*

**Russ Wiesley**, *Board member, Waukee Public Schools, Iowa*

#### Useful Resources

**Amanda K. Martinez**, *Project Associate, Coordinated School Health, NSBA*

#### Wrap Up, Closing Remarks, Next Steps

**Brent Ghan**, *Missouri School Boards Association*

# Speaker Bios

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## Panel 1



**Pete Hunt, MEd, MPH**

*Lead Health Scientist, Division of Adolescent and School Health, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*

Pete Hunt has worked at the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Division of Adolescent and School Health (DASH), since 1991. During his tenure, Pete has served as a CDC project officer to DASH-funded state and local education agencies, DASH's lead for school health programs, and as a health scientist leading the development of a number of resources to strengthen health priorities in schools, including the current development of CDC guidance to strengthen schools' management of students with food allergies. Prior to coming to CDC, Pete served as a school health consultant for the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, a school health coordinator for Onslow County Schools in North Carolina, and a health and physical education teacher in Idaho. Pete received his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Education from the University of Idaho and his Master's in Public Health from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.



**Stefano Luccioli, MD**

*Senior Medical Advisor, Office of Food Additive Safety, Food and Drug Administration*

Dr. Stefano Luccioli is the Senior Medical Advisor in the Office of Food Additive Safety in the Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). He is also a volunteer faculty member in the Department of Medicine at Georgetown University Medical Center. Stefano completed his medical school and internal medicine training at Georgetown University and a fellowship in allergy and immunology at the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases of the National Institutes of Health. He is a scientific advisor for FDA activities related to food allergy and hypersensitivity disorders, including health hazard assessments and policies related to labeling of food allergens and gluten, and performs research on issues involving consumer adverse events to food allergens.

## Panel 2



**Dennis “Denny” Ganahl, Jr.**

Denny Ganahl is 18 years old and a senior in high school in the Rockwood School District located in Chesterfield, Missouri, a suburb of St. Louis. He plans to attend the University of Missouri in Columbia next fall. Denny has life-threatening food allergies to peanuts and tree nuts, and he has asthma. He was diagnosed with allergies to peanuts, tree nuts, soy, sesame seeds, and eggs after having had his first anaphylactic reaction to peanuts at one year old, but outgrew the soy, sesame, and egg allergies.



**Gina V. Ganahl, PhD**

Dr. Gina Ganahl, Denny’s mother, serves as the associate dean for the Division of Continuing Education at the University of Missouri-St. Louis. She received her Doctorate and Master’s degree in Education from the University of Missouri and her Bachelor’s degree at the University of Illinois in Urbana.



**Mary Lenahan**

Mary Lenahan, Alex Simko’s mother, is the Food Allergy Support Group Leader for MOCHA Fox Valley and the Co-Chair for the 2010 Chicago FAAN Walk for Food Allergy “Moving Toward a Cure.” Mary has been an advocate for children with life-threatening food allergies for the past 13 years, since her daughter Alex was diagnosed with life-threatening food allergies. She works to raise awareness about food allergies, meeting with legislators on the local, state and national level, and was most recently honored by FAAN for her advocacy work in helping to get legislation passed in the State of Illinois.



**Alex Simko**

Alex Simko is 15 years old and a sophomore in high school. She was diagnosed with life-threatening food allergies at the age of two and experienced a severe anaphylactic reaction at age four. As an advocate for children with food allergies, Alex has presented at the National School Boards Association Annual Conference about her experience as a student with food allergies, given multiple presentations at school to help educate teachers and other students about food allergies, and testified before the Illinois House of Representatives Primary and Secondary Education Committee. She also participated in FAAN’s Kids Congress on Capitol Hill last year and was most recently honored by FAAN for the advocacy work she has done on behalf of children with food allergies in the State of Illinois.



**Chris Weiss, PhD**

*Vice President, Advocacy and Government Relations, Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network*

Dr. Christopher Weiss is Vice President of Advocacy and Government Relations at the Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network (FAAN). Chris joined FAAN in 2001 and spent numerous years as Director of Legislative and Regulatory Research. He has been influential in passing state laws making epinephrine more available from emergency medical personnel; allowing students to carry their prescribed epinephrine at school; creating statewide food allergy management guidelines for schools; and educating restaurant personnel on food allergy issues. Chris also helped pass The Food Allergen Labeling and Consumer Protection Act (FALCPA) in 2004, and drafted the initial version of The Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Management Act (FAAMA), federal legislation calling for the creation of national food allergy management guidelines for schools. Prior to joining FAAN, Chris taught English as a Second Language, and holds a PhD in that field from Florida State University.

**Panel 3**



**Lori L. Danella, SNS**

*Nutrition Coordinator, Lee's Summit School District R-7, Missouri*

Lori Danella is the Nutrition Coordinator of the Lee's Summit School District R-7 and works with over 400 families with special diet needs and allergies. She has a Bachelor's degree in Nutrition from DePaul University and has been in the foodservice profession for over 20 years. Lori is credentialed and certified through the School Nutrition Association and is a member of the National and Missouri School Nutrition Associations, the National Society of Collegiate Scholars and the Brain Injury Association of Missouri. She has served as President of the Kansas School Nutrition Association and is the current Secretary of the Jackson County School Nutrition Association.



**Kathy Ellermeier, MSN, RN**

*Health Services Director, Liberty Public School District 53, Missouri*

Kathy Ellermeier is the Director of Health Services for the Liberty Public School District, which is located in a suburb of Kansas City. She has a Master's degree in Nursing, a Bachelor's degree in Nursing and a Bachelor's degree in Exercise Physiology. Prior to her work with the Liberty Public School District, Kathy was a faculty member at Research College of Nursing in Kansas City, and she has 18 years of experience in the nursing profession.



**Raymond E. Lechner, PhD**

*Superintendent, Wilmette Public School District 39, Illinois*

Dr. Raymond E. Lechner has served in the Wilmette Public Schools system for 12 years, the last four as its Superintendent. His background includes special education and student services; he was a district administrator of these programs for 14 years. Prior to becoming a school administrator, Ray served as a school psychologist.



**Kristin M. Redmond, RN, BSN**

*School nurse, Liberty Public School District 53, Missouri*

Kristin M. Redmond has been a school nurse in the Liberty Public School District for five years. She received her Bachelor's degree in Nursing from DePauw University, and has 15 years of hospital and ambulatory care nursing experience.



**Lisa Soronen, JD**

*Senior Staff Attorney, National School Boards Association*

Lisa Soronen is a senior staff attorney for the National School Boards Association (NSBA), and her work includes *amicus curiae* advocacy on appellate cases affecting public schools and providing legal resources and support to state school boards associations, local school boards, and the NSBA Council of School Attorneys, the national professional association for attorneys who represent school districts. Prior to joining NSBA, Lisa was staff counsel with the Wisconsin Association of School Boards and served as a state appellate court clerk in that state. She earned her JD at the University of Wisconsin Law School and is a graduate of Central Michigan University.



**Russ Wiesley**

*Board member, Waukee Public Schools, Iowa*

Russ Wiesley is a member of the Waukee School District School Board in Waukee, Iowa and has served in this capacity for 14 years. He also is the current President of the Board of Directors of the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB), having been a member of IASB's Board of Directors since 2004. Russ is employed as a pharmacist for Dahl's Foods in West Des Moines.



**Amanda K. Martínez, MPH, MSN, RN**

*Project Associate, Coordinated School Health, National School Boards Association*

Amanda K. Martínez is the project director for a CDC/DASH-funded project at the National School Boards Association to support leadership and governance for coordinated school health programs, which includes focused work on food allergy and anaphylaxis policy and practice. Amanda works in a limited capacity as a medical-surgical nurse at a community hospital, and she has worked in the field of adolescent and school health for more than 12 years, including management of youth and family programs and direct social services. She received her Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Biology and Public Health from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill and her Master's degree in Nursing from the University of Virginia.