

**UNION #28 SCHOOLS:  
LIFE THREATENING ALLERGY POLICY**

The Union #28 Schools is dedicated to providing a safe and healthy environment for its students during the school day and at school sponsored events. Students identified with life threatening allergies (i.e. food, bees) will be provided for as medically necessary in the school environment. The Union #28 Schools policy will support protocols to (a) reduce exposure to allergens to the best of our ability, knowing that we can only be allergen-safe, not allergen free and (b) follow established procedures to treat allergic reactions.

A student identified as having a life-threatening allergy must have a written statement clearly documenting the allergy from his/her health care provider along with a prescription for an EpiPen from the doctor and parental consent authorizing use if/when needed. The Union #28 Schools will provide adequate training to educate staff in the management of life threatening allergies.

As mandated by federal laws, including ADA, IDEA, and Section 504, no student shall be discriminated against or excluded from school activities based on their life-threatening allergy. The student who has an allergy and who is making effective educational progress in the regular educational program does not need a special education evaluation, an IEP, or special education services. However, he/she has the right to have reasonable accommodations for his/her disability under section 504.

The school will implement the following protocols to provide a safe environment for the student. These protocols pertain to school sponsored events only and not to fundraisers, non-school sponsored extra curricular activities, or after school events.

**LIFE THREATENING ALLERGY PROTOCOLS**

**Parent/Guardian Responsibility**

- Provide documentation regarding your child’s allergy prior to the opening of school or as soon as possible after diagnosis. In the case of a food allergy, provide a list of foods/ingredients your child must avoid.
- Provide the school with up-to-date EpiPens, medication orders from a licensed provider, and consent forms from the school.
- Provide the school with a way to reach you or an available emergency contact.
- Participate in the development of your child’s Allergy Action Plan or Individual Health Care Plan with the school nurse annually. Participate in the review and update of the Plan semi-annually or as needed.
- Provide the school nurse with any changes in your child’s allergy status as soon as they occur and annually.
- Educate your child about her/his allergy: importance of avoiding allergens, symptoms of a reaction, and how to communicate to an adult if they think a reaction is starting.
- Attend your child’s field trips if possible and/or if requested.
- Consider providing a medical alert bracelet for your child.
- Be willing to provide safe foods for your child as well as the class for special occasions (i.e.: birthday celebrations, etc.).
- Leave a bag of “safe snacks” in your child’s classroom so there is always something your child can choose from during an unplanned special event.
- Provide the school nurse with a signed statement from your child’s health care provider stating they no longer have life threatening allergies.
- If child takes alternative bus, parent/guardian must place in the note to driver that his/her child has a life threatening allergy and is in need of an EpiPen and state the location of the EpiPen.

**Student's Responsibility**

- Be proactive in the care and management of their allergies and reactions based on their developmental level.
- Wash hands before and after eating.
- Learn to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction.

- Promptly inform adult as soon as exposure occurs or symptoms appear.
- Do not trade or share foods.
- Do not eat anything with unknown ingredients or known to contain any allergen.
- Develop a relationship with the school nurse and another trusted adult in the school to help identify issues related to managing the allergy in school.

### **School's Responsibility**

- A nurse will be available in every school when a student has a life-threatening allergy. A back-up plan will be in place when there isn't a school nurse available.
- The school staff will be familiar with federal and state laws that may apply, including FERPA, Section 504, ADA, IDEA.
- Communication devices (i.e.: walkie-talkies, cell phones, classroom telephones, intercom system) will be provided for staff use during school activities to maintain contact with the nurse and/or administrator in case of a medical emergency.
- Latex-free gloves will be used wherever the possibility of student contact may occur (classroom, nurse's office, cafeteria, field trip, play ground, etc.).
- The school's emergency response plan will include a written plan that outlines the management of life-threatening allergic reactions.
- In the event of an allergen exposure, policies and procedures will be reviewed with team members, parents, student, and physician when needed.
- New personnel will receive appropriate training in allergic response recognition and response as needed.
- The parents/guardians will be notified if a student experiences an allergic response for the first time in school.

### **Nurse's Responsibility**

- After reviewing the health records obtained from the parents and physicians, the school nurse will develop an Allergy Action Plan or Individual Health Care Plan. The details/changes of the plan will be discussed with the parents along with the physician, principal, secretary, and other team members as needed (food service personnel, psychologist, bus driver, superintendent, etc.). Plans will be reviewed and updated semi-annually or as needed, based on parent/guardian input and any changes in the student's allergy status.
- The school nurse will train and educate all staff members in accordance with the Massachusetts state nursing laws in recognizing allergy symptoms due to food, insect, medication, or latex exposure; emergency procedures; exposure risk reduction; and EpiPen administration.
- The nurse will coordinate with teachers to educate the class about allergies, safety, and emergency responses. Parent/guardian permission will be obtained if needed.
- The nurse will provide staff with student's EpiPen, physician's order, and a review of instructions for use on field trips.
- Emergency medications will be stored in safe and appropriate locations known to staff.
- The nurse will keep a current confidential list of all students with life threatening allergies and share it with appropriate staff after parent/guardian consent.

### **Teacher's Responsibility**

- Have a current list of all students with life-threatening food allergies and the location of EpiPens available for substitutes.
- Participate in nurse training regarding: allergy exposures and symptoms (food, insects, medications, latex), emergency procedures, exposure risk reduction, and EpiPen administration.
- The teacher will coordinate with nurse to educate the class about allergies, safety, and emergency responses. Parent/guardian permission will be obtained if needed.
- Communicate with all class parents/guardians regarding special occasions and parties in the classroom and the need for appropriate allergen-free foods.

- Communicate with the school nurse at earliest decision of class field trip so appropriate safety measures can be made.
- Attend team meetings as necessary when scheduled by the nurse to assist planning and implementation of Allergy Action Plan or Individual Health Care Plan.

### **Food Service Personnel's Responsibility**

- Food service managers will be responsible for reviewing all ingredient labels to ensure that the allergen is not present in food bought and prepared by the school and served to a child with a food allergy.
- To avoid cross-contamination, all work surfaces, cutting boards, utensils, or pots and pans used to prepare foods with allergy-causing ingredients must be washed thoroughly with hot soapy water between uses.
- Attend team meetings as necessary when scheduled by the nurse to assist planning and implementation of Allergy Action Plan or Individual Health Care Plan.
- Maintain contact information of the distributors of food products.

### **School Bus Company's Responsibility**

- The Bus Company will direct the bus driver/s to meet with the nurse in a team meeting or individually to discuss implementation of the student's Individual Health Care Plan for the students who regularly ride this bus.
- Will direct that all school bus drivers are trained in managing life-threatening allergies and use of EpiPen (through the Bus Company or school).
- Provide functioning emergency communication device (i.e. cell phone or walkie talkie).
- Inform the bus driver who is responsible for the specified student with a life –threatening allergy where the individual student's EpiPen is located based upon the IHCP (such as in a student's back pack)

### **Food Allergy Specifics**

- Snack/lunch sharing is discouraged.
- A table in the lunchroom will be designated as a specific allergen safe table when there is a student with life-threatening allergies.
- Lunch tables will be washed after every lunch period.
- Students eating a food that is life-threatening to another student will wash their hands after eating.
- Classrooms with a student who has a life-threatening food allergy will strive to remain free of all forms of allergen food.
- Letters will be sent to parents of all students in class/school regarding presence of student/s with life-threatening food allergies and the importance of keeping offending food away from student/out of school.

First Reading: 02/15/05

Second Reading, First Vote: 03/22/05

Final Vote: 04/26/05