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## Managing Student Food Allergies

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The risk of accidental exposure to allergy-inducing foods can be reduced in the school setting if schools work with students, parents, and physicians to minimize risks and provide a safe educational environment for food-allergic students. National guidelines as well as Connecticut statute PA 05-104 encourage a cooperative relationship among students, parents, and staff to make sure that a safe environment exists for all food-allergic students.

### **Expectations for Schools' Responsibility**

The following guidelines apply to staff in the Manchester Schools. Although schools cannot guarantee an allergy-free environment, the school principal, school nurse, and all staff should:

1. Be knowledgeable about and follow applicable federal laws, including ADA, IDEA, Section 504, and FERPA and any state laws or district policies that apply;
2. Review student health records submitted by parents and physicians;
3. School will develop and implement with the family, an Individual Health Care Plan for an individual food-allergic student on the basis of need. Plan will include management during school, after school and during field trips.
4. Avoid excluding students from school activities solely based on their food allergy;
5. Identify a core team that may include school nurse, school medical advisor, teacher, principal, school food services, social worker/guidance counselor to work with parents and the student (age appropriate) to implement an Individual Health Care Plan and to communicate that plan to all involved;
6. Participate (core team) in changes made to the prevention plan to promote food allergy management;
7. Ensure that all personnel, including substitute teachers and student teachers, who interact with the student on a regular basis, understand food allergy management, can recognize symptoms, know how to respond in an emergency, and work with other school staff to eliminate the use of food allergens in the allergic student's meals, educational tools, arts and crafts projects, or incentives;

8. Review with school staff procedures for food allergy and practice the approved Food Allergy Action Plan specific to the school site at the beginning of the school year to assure the efficiency / effectiveness of the plans;
9. The school nurse will ensure that medications are kept in a safe, secure location that can be properly supervised by a nurse or other authorized and trained staff member but, readily available in the event of an anaphylactic reaction;
10. Designate school personnel who are properly trained to administer medications in accordance with the State Nursing and Good Samaritan Laws governing the administration of emergency medications and provide training on a regular basis;
11. Ensure that there is a staff member available who is properly trained to administer medications during the school day, regardless of time or location;
12. Review policies and the individual Health Care Plan with the core team members, parents / guardians, student (age appropriate), and school medical advisor after a reaction has occurred;
13. Communicate this food allergy policy, as requested to parents;
14. Teachers will provide information to parents regarding allergy issues in the classroom so that snacks and celebrations involving foods can be safe for the student;
15. Collaborate with the district transportation administrator to assure that school bus driver training includes symptom awareness and the knowledge of what to do if a reaction occurs;
16. Develop and implement an emergency plan for food-allergic students on school busses which includes the student's Individual Health Care Plan and photo to be given to EMT/first responder;
17. Enforce a "no eating" policy on school buses with exceptions made only to accommodate students involved in field trips or after school activities or special needs students under federal or similar laws, or school district policy;
18. Follow federal / state / district laws and regulations regarding sharing medical information about the student;
19. Be aware of and respond accordingly to threats or harassment against an allergic child and take proactive steps to prevent such unacceptable behavior.

## **Expectations for Family's Responsibility**

The Board of Education requires families to adhere to the following guidelines for managing food allergies in the school setting:

1. Notify the school of the child's allergies;
2. Provide information and develop a plan regarding allergies and medications with all Before and After care programs and other extra curricular activities beyond the normal school day;
3. Provide to the school nurse documentation as required confirming the basis for food allergy diagnosis, i.e., blood tests (RAST), skin tests, or history of a reaction requiring treatment by a health care provider;
4. Work with the school team to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs throughout the school including in the classroom, in the cafeteria, field trips, and on the school bus, as well as a Food Allergy Action Plan;
5. Provide written medical documentation, instructions, and medications as directed by a physician yearly and as needed;
6. Provide a photo of the child to be used on "Emergency Response Protocol" form;
7. Replace medications after use, upon expiration, or upon notification from nurse;
8. Educate the child in the self-management of his / her food allergy including safe and unsafe food, strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods, symptoms of allergic reactions, how and when to tell an adult that he / she may be having an allergy-related problem, how to read food labels (age appropriate);
9. Review policies and the Individual Health Care Plan with the core team members, parents / guardians, student (age appropriate), and school medical advisor / after a reaction has occurred;
10. Cooperate with school team, including the school medical advisor, as needed, to implement a student's individual health care plan.

## **Expectations for Student's Responsibility**

The Board of Education encourages students to adhere to the following guidelines for managing food allergies in the school setting:

1. Learn to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction;
2. Do not trade food with others;
3. Do not eat anything without a labeled ingredient statement or known to contain any allergen without parental permission;
4. No eating on school bus;
5. Carry epi auto injector at all times if approved by your parent, physician and school team. In the event the auto injector is administered, report to an adult or the nurse immediately;
6. Be proactive in the care and management of their food allergies and reactions, based on their developmental level;
7. Notify an adult immediately if they eat, contact, or become exposed to something they believe may contain the food to which they are allergic or are experiencing any symptoms;
8. Report any instances of teasing or bullying immediately.

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