

Southwick-Tolland-Granville Regional School District

Food Allergy Procedure

The Southwick-Tolland-Granville Regional School District recognizes the increasing prevalence of student allergies and the life-threatening nature of allergies for many students. The school district administration has developed and implemented a policy and established a protocol in an effort to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to students, to educate all members of the school community on management of student allergies, and to plan for the needs of students with allergies. The schools are committed to working with students with allergies and their parents to address the students' emotional and social needs, in addition to their health needs.

Food allergies can be life threatening. The risk of accidental exposure to 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 students with food allergies.

Family's responsibility

- Notify the school of the child's allergies each new school year.
- Work with the school team to develop a plan that accommodates the child's needs in the classroom, cafeteria, during school sponsored activities, and on the school bus.
- Provide the school nurse with written medical documentation, instructions, and medications as directed by a physician, using the Food Allergy Action Plan as a guide. Include a photo of your child, if available, on the written form.
- Provide the nurse with properly labeled medications and replace medications after use or when expired.
- Educate the child in the self-management of their food allergy including:
 - ❖ safe and unsafe foods
 - ❖ strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods
 - ❖ symptoms of allergic reactions
 - ❖ how and when to tell an adult they may be having an allergy-related problem
 - ❖ how to read food labels (age appropriate)
- Seek review of policies/procedures with the school staff, your child's physician, and your child after a reaction has occurred.
- Provide current and accurate emergency contact information
- Inform the bus or van driver, and any substitute driver when possible, about your child's allergy.

School's responsibility

- Be knowledgeable about and follow applicable federal and state laws as well as district policies that apply to students with allergies. This includes federal and state laws pertaining to sharing medical information about the student.
- The School Nurse will review the student health record submitted by parent and physician.

- Include students with food allergies in school activities. Students should not be excluded from school activities solely based on their food allergy.
- Assure that all staff who interacts with the student on a regular basis understand the student's food allergy, can recognize symptoms, know what to do in an emergency, and will work with other school staff to eliminate the possibility of the student's exposure to the allergen.
- All staff members will be trained on the management of student allergies. The training will address prevention efforts, information about common allergens, recognition of signs of an allergic reaction including anaphylaxis, and the medical emergency response plan. The training will be provided annually at the start of the school year.
- Appropriate staff members will be trained regarding the administration of an Epi-Pen, as outlined in the Department of Public Health regulations. All staff members will be informed of the location of the Epi-Pens.
- Work with the district transportation administrator to assure that school bus driver training includes symptom awareness and what to do if a reaction occurs.
- Enforce a "no eating" policy on school buses. Exceptions will be provided for those students with diabetes who may need a snack to treat a hypoglycemic episode or for circumstances where students are traveling for long periods of time.
- Discuss field trips with the family of student with food allergies to plan appropriate strategies for managing the food allergy.
- Take threats or harassment against allergic child seriously. Refer to district anti-bullying policy.
- Confidential information regarding students with allergies will be provided for the substitute teacher in the classroom inside the sub folder.

Student's responsibility

- Take as much responsibility as possible for avoiding allergens.
- Do not trade or share foods.
- Wash hands before and after eating.
- Learn to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- Promptly inform an adult as soon as accidental exposure occurs or symptoms appear.
- Take more responsibility for your allergies as you get older (refer to parent responsibilities outline).
- Develop a relationship with the school nurse and/or another trusted adult in the school to assist in identifying issues related to the management of the allergy in school.

Classroom management procedures

- Appropriate accommodations will be made in the classroom.
- Procedures will address education of parents and student in planning for special events and projects and will be in alignment with the District's Wellness Policy. The protocol will allow for age-appropriate classroom rules.

Kitchen and cafeteria procedures

- All kitchen staff will only use latex-free gloves
- The school kitchen will prepare all products in a manner that will minimize the risk of cross contamination of foods. The preparation area and all utensils will be washed in hot, soapy water immediately after the completion of the task.

- Provide a clearly labeled allergen safe table for students if required by an Individualized Health Care Plan (IHP)
- The staff on lunch duty will ensure that the allergy tables(s) and chairs will be washed before lunches begin and after each group finishes. The same tables and chairs will be labeled and used each day.
- Staff on lunch duty shall monitor the student's compliance with the food allergy protocol. They should also be aware of any bullying or teasing behavior toward a food-allergic student and report any such incidents to the administrator as per district anti-bullying policy.
- Students will be discouraged from sharing any food or utensils throughout the cafeteria.

Procedure for handling epinephrine

- Each school must maintain a current supply of epinephrine by auto-injector (Epi-Pens) and must comply with all Department of Public Health regulations for administration, storage, and record-keeping concerning epinephrine.
- The school nurse shall register with the Department of Public Health and shall train other school personnel to administer epinephrine in accordance with 105 CMR 210.
- All staff members will be informed of the location of the Epi-Pens.

Emergency response procedures

- All staff members will be trained in the Medical Emergency Response Protocol (MERP).
- The school nurse or another school staff member trained to administer epinephrine in accordance with 105 CMR 210 must be available in each school during the school day and with the food allergic student on field trips. Parents of the allergic student will be encouraged to chaperone on field trips as appropriate.

The implementation of the District protocol and of the individualized plan for each allergic student requires a team approach and cooperation among administrators, teachers and other staff members, parents, and the student as appropriate.

It is impossible to create a peanut-free or allergen-free environment. To create the illusion that the school environment is free of allergens would be misleading and potentially harmful. Instead, this protocol has been designed to increase awareness and communication, to prevent possible exposure to identified allergens, and to create an emergency procedure for allergic reactions.

First Draft STGRSD Food Allergy Procedure
March 13, 2007

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