

LYNN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

FOOD ALLERGY POLICY AND PROTOCOLS

The following policy is intended to develop practices and guidelines to manage the risk of food allergies with the goal of preventing severe life-threatening allergic reactions.

POLICY STATEMENT ON LIFE THREATENING FOOD ALLERGIES

The Lynn Public Schools recognize the need to have protocols in place which reduce the risk of exposure to allergens for students who have life-threatening food allergies, while protecting their right to participate in all school activities. These protocols may be adapted to non-food allergens such as insects, latex, fragrances and other materials. In the event of exposure, comprehensive district emergency response protocols will be enacted which will include procedures for the administration of epinephrine to manage a life threatening allergic reaction.

Goals for the policy include:

- Individually manage food allergies by a) Identifying children with food allergies b) Developing individual health care plans, medication plans and allergy action plans. c) Helping students move towards self- managing their own food allergies.
- Prepare for food allergy emergencies by a) Establishing communication systems specific to each setting and identified in the (MERP) Medical Emergency Response Plan for each building. b) Making sure staff can get to epinephrine auto-injectors quickly and easily. c) Making sure that epinephrine is used when needed and someone immediately contacts emergency medical services. d) Identifying the role of each staff member in an emergency. e) Preparing for food allergy reactions in children without a prior history of food allergies. f) Documenting the response to a food allergy emergency.
- Provide professional development on food allergies for staff by a) Providing general training on food allergies for all staff. b) Providing in-depth training for staff that have frequent contact with children with food allergies. c) Providing specialized training for staff that are responsible for managing the health of children with food allergies on a daily basis.
- Educate children and family members about food allergies by a) Teaching all children about food allergies. b) Teaching all parents and families about food allergies.
- Create and maintain a healthy and safe educational environment by a) Creating an environment that is as safe as possible from exposure to food allergens. b) Developing food handling policies and procedures to prevent food allergen contact. c) Making outside groups aware of food allergy policies and rules when they use school program facilities before or after hours. d) Creating a positive, supportive and respectful climate.
- Ongoing monitoring, evaluating and updating of protocols.

PROTOCOLS FOR LIFE THREATENING FOOD ALLERGIES

A. IDENTIFICATION OF STUDENTS WITH FOOD ALLERGIES

- School nurse will obtain information about food allergies from physicals, emergency sheets, parents or other sources.
- School nurse will obtain medical verification of allergies.
- School nurse will enter food allergy information as an unrestricted medical alert on ESchool Plus.

B. INDIVIDUAL HEALTH CARE PLANS

- School nurse will develop a written individual health care plan, emergency care plan and/or allergy action plan in collaboration with the student's parent/guardian and in accordance with the health care provider's orders.
- 504's and IEP's will be instituted if appropriate.
- A description of the student's past reactions, including triggers and warning signs should be included.

C. MEDICATION PROTOCOLS, STORAGE, ACCESS AND ADMINISTRATION

- Medication orders must comply with the medication policies already in place for the Lynn Public Schools
- School nurses will obtain a licensed provider's order for administration of emergency medications.
- Medications must be renewed at least annually.
- Parent/guardian's consent must be obtained to administer all medications
- If developmentally appropriate and approved by licensed care provider, parent, and school nurse, student may carry emergency medication on person and self-administer in the event of a life - threatening reaction.
- All Epipens must be stored in a safe and secure location, accessible by authorized personnel at all times.
- Location of the student's Epipen should be identified in the individual health care plan and may be in classroom or other location.
- A second Epipen should always be available in the nurse's office.
- A plan for monitoring expiration dates should be in place for all locations.
- The LPS will continue to register with the Department of Public Health to train non-licensed personnel to administer epinephrine by auto injector to students with diagnosed life threatening allergic conditions.
- The LPS will continue to stock Epipens in all schools to be administered (by school nurses only) to students/staff in the event of an undiagnosed life threatening reaction per standing orders.

D. SCHOOL EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

- Coordinate Epipen administration into building MERP plan.
- All students using Epipen must have 9-1-1 call placed and be transported to the hospital to monitor for a bi-phasic reaction (secondary reaction when epi wears off)
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E. STAFF TRAINING

- General training-All staff who may interact with students with food allergies should have general training by the school nurse on the first in-service day. Outreach to building personnel who may not be in attendance on that day will be the responsibility of the school nurse.
- In-depth training for staff that have frequent contact with children with food allergies such as teachers, coaches, bus drivers and food service staff should be provided by the school nurse including how to respond to a food allergy emergency, how to administer epinephrine for those delegated to do so, and specific strategies to reduce exposure.
- Specialized training for nurses shall include medication management, creating individual health care plans, programs for training staff, and methods of documentation.

F. STUDENT TRAINING

- Students should be trained on the importance of hand washing, not sharing food, allergy safe zones.
- Students should have a basic understanding of food allergies, when to notify an adult, and the importance of not teasing or food bullying.
- Whenever possible, lessons regarding food allergies can be built into general or science curriculum if health is not taught.

G. PARENT/GUARDIAN/FAMILY TRAINING

- Policies and guidelines will be communicated to parents through website and school handbooks.
- Letters to parents regarding need for food safe zones, restrictions, substitutions will be distributed whenever necessary.

H. CLASSROOM

- Substitute teachers will be informed of allergy guidelines should there be a child in their class that has severe allergies.
- If students eat snack and/or lunch in the classroom request in a letter to parents that they voluntarily refrain from sending food items containing the allergen.
- Identify areas or desks that will be allergen safe.
- Avoid cross contamination by wiping down food surfaces with soap and water before and after eating.
- Reinforce handwashing before and after eating.
- Avoid use of foods for classroom activities or use only pre-packaged food items with complete ingredient lists for projects, activities and celebrations.
- Prohibit sharing of food items among students with food allergies.

I. CAFETERIA

- All school menu items will be peanut and nut free
- Develop a procedure(may be individualized for each school) to identify students with life threatening food allergies (eg-photo behind lunch counter, flagging or sticker on meal card.)
- Work with custodial services to assure that tables are properly cleaned and cross-contamination does not occur.
- Identify table(s) that will be allergen safe; encourage non-food allergic students with safe lunches to join their food allergic peers

J. BUSES

- Enforce no eating policies (except for diabetics)
- Require bus drivers to have CPR/First Aid training which includes EpiPen training
- Identify, (but protect confidentiality) students with life threatening allergic disorders and inform bus driver if student carrying own EpiPen.

K. FIELD TRIPS/BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES/COMMUNITY USE OF FACILITIES

- Notify nurse as soon as possible of any planned field trip to allow time to prepare for field trip
- Delegate administration of EpiPen to trained school staff, review EpiPen procedures, obtain and sign appropriate paperwork, give a copy of the student's health care plan

with emergency contacts to the staff member.

-Assure that staff can communicate with EMS from any field trip location.

-Restrict use of foods that are known allergens in classrooms during after school or community events.

L. EVALUATION AND MONITORING

-Report use of Epipens to MADPH on required on-line form.

-Review any allergen exposure and modify policy or practices necessary to prevent future exposures

-Review and revise policy at least every two years.

References:

FDA Food Safety Modernization Act. Public L No. 111-353

***Managing Life Threatening Food Allergies in Schools.* Malden, MA: Massachusetts Department of Education; 2002**

***Safe at School and Ready to Learn: A Comprehensive Policy Guide for Protecting Students with Life Threatening Food Allergies.* Alexandria, VA: National School Boards Association; 2011**

***Voluntary Guidelines for Managing Food Allergies in Schools and Early Care and Education Programs.* US Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2013**

**ADOPTED BY SCHOOL COMMITTEE ON
JANUARY 15, 2015**