Students

Students with Special Health Care Needs

The West Haven Board of Education believes all children have the right to learn in an environment that is safe. In order for students with special health care needs to access education, the following is required:

- Assessment and monitoring of the health status of the student.
- Determining the ability of each student to manage his/her individual needs in order to successfully participate in school and extracurricular activities.
- Procedures which balance individual, school, and community needs through interdisciplinary collaboration that includes administration, school personnel, service providers, food service personnel, and parent organizations.
- Safe professional practice and consistency across all schools in the district.
- Services, program modifications, or accommodations based on individual needs.
- Instructional programs that strike a balance between education, health, growth and development, social normalcy, and safety needs.
- Education of school personnel.
- Interventions and individual health care plans for students with special health care needs based on medically accurate information and evidence based practices.

Recognizing the above, the Board of Education will develop procedures based on the State of Connecticut Department of Education and Department of Public Health Guidelines for Students with Special Health Care Needs. As it was intended that these guidelines are designed to develop, enhance, and promote safe and appropriate educational opportunities for students with special health care needs, amendments to these guidelines will be made, as necessary, by the school nurses and the school Medical Advisor.

Categories (with examples) of students with special health care needs are (list is not inclusive):

- **Chronic Disease**: asthma, cancer, cystic fibrosis, diabetes, food or environmental allergies, sickle cell anemia
- **Chronic Infectious Disease**: hepatitis B infection, HP infection, mononucleosis
- **Physical Conditions**: congenital heart defect, spina bifida, seizure disorder
- **Psychological Condition**: chronic depression, conduct disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, attention deficit disorders, mental health disorders
- **Acquired Disability**: traumatic brain injury, lead poisoning, substance abuse
- **Acute Illness**: (which may require medical care over weeks or months) nephritis (kidney infection), osteomyelitis (bone infection), pneumonia (lung infection)
- **Temporary Conditions**: fractures, surgery
Students

Students with Special Health Care Needs (continued)

School Nurse Responsibility

All students with special health care needs entering or reentering West Haven Public Schools will be assessed by the school nurse prior to entering or returning to school. The school nurse will collaborate with appropriate personnel to develop an individualized plan of care for safe transition of the student into school. The plan of care will be designed to meet health care needs while in school and during school sponsored functions.
Students

Managing Students with Life Threatening Food Allergies in School

Responsibilities of the Student

The role that students with life-threatening food allergies play in staying safe at school will increase as they become older. Younger children cannot be expected to assume the same responsibility for their safety as older children can.

- Learn to recognize symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- Promptly inform an adult as soon as accidental exposure occurs or symptoms appear. Ask a friend to help you if you cannot get to an adult.
- Follow safety measures established by your parent/guardian and school team at all times.
- Do not trade or share foods with anyone.
- Do not eat any food item that has not come from home or been approved by your parent or guardian.
- Wash hands before and after eating.
- Develop a rapport with the school nurse and other staff to assist you in the management of the allergy in school.
- If approved by your health care provider, nurse, your parent/guardian and school, carry your epinephrine auto-injector at all times.
- Report any instances of teasing or bullying to an adult immediately.

Responsibilities of the Parent/Guardian

- Inform the school nurse of your child’s allergies prior to the opening of school (or as soon as possible after a diagnosis). Include a list of foods child is allergic to and a description of previous reactions.
- Provide the school nurse with written instructions for management and directions for treatment of anaphylaxis from your health care provider.
- Provide the school nurse with completed medication forms, with medication, and the proper authorization required for school from the healthcare provider.
- Participate in developing an Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP) with the school nurse and school team.
- Provide the school nurse with at least annual updates on the status of your child’s allergy.
- Provide the school with up-to-date epinephrine auto-injectors.
- Provide the school with current emergency contact information and update any changes.
Students

Managing Students with Life Threatening Food Allergies in School

Responsibilities of the Parent/Guardian (continued)

- Consider providing a medical alert bracelet for your child.
- Consider accompanying your child on field trips if possible.
- Review school menus, snacks and party foods to determine if they are appropriate for your child.
- Review the list of student responsibilities with your child and be sure he/she understands his/her role.
- Provide the school nurse with the healthcare provider’s statement, if student no longer has allergies.

It is important that children take on more responsibility for their food allergies as they grow older and are developmentally ready. Consider teaching them to:

- Carry own epinephrine auto-injector.
- Communicate the seriousness of the allergy to peers and other individuals they interact with.
- Communicate symptoms as they appear.
- Read labels.
- Not share snacks, lunches, or drinks.
- Recognize potentially dangerous situations and make good safety decisions.
- Administer own epinephrine auto-injector and be able to train others in its use.
- Report teasing or threats to adults in authority.

NOTE: The ultimate goal is that children eventually learn to keep themselves safe by making good choices and advocating for themselves.
Students

Managing Students with Life Threatening Food Allergies in School (continued)

Responsibilities of the School Administrator

- Support faculty, staff and parent/guardian in implementing the allergy management plan. Support training and education for faculty and staff regarding:
  - Anaphylaxis and anaphylactic reactions to foods, insect stings, medications, latex and environmental allergens.
  - Risk reduction procedures
  - Emergency procedures
  - How to administer an epinephrine auto-injector in an emergency.
- Provide emergency communication devices (e.g., two-way radio, intercom, walkie-talkie, cell phone) for all school activities that involve a student with life-threatening allergies.
- Have a plan in place when there is no school nurse available, including at least three staff members trained in the recognition of early symptoms of anaphylaxis and in medication administration.
- Make sure that plans include notification and training of substitute teachers, food service personnel and other substitute staff.
- Collaborate with school nurse regarding classroom assignment for students with life-threatening food allergies.
- Collaborate with school nurse regarding risk reduction in classrooms and common areas.

Responsibilities of the Lunch Aide

- For allergen free tables, thoroughly clean tables after each meal using disposable paper towels and an appropriate cleaner.

Responsibilities of the School Nurse

- Prior to entry into school (or, for a student who is already in school, immediately after the diagnosis of a life-threatening allergic condition is made), meet with the student’s parent/guardian to develop an Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP).
- Review health records submitted by parent/guardian and health care provider.
- Assure that the IHCP includes the student’s name, photo, allergen, symptoms of allergic reactions, risk reduction procedures, and emergency procedures. Distribute the IHCP to appropriate staff.
- Arrange and convene a team meeting, if necessary, to develop the IHCP.
Students

Managing Students with Life Threatening Food Allergies in School

Responsibilities of the School Nurse (continued)

- Familiarize teachers with the IHCPs and emergency plans of their students. Other staff members who have contact with students with life-threatening allergies should be familiar with their IHCPs and emergency plans on a need-to-know basis (Principal, school Medical Advisor, specialist, food service personnel, physical education teacher, art and music teacher, paraprofessional, custodian, bus driver, emergency medical providers).

- Provide information about students with life-threatening allergies (with consent) to all staff on a need-to-know basis (including bus drivers, substitute teachers, new staff members, classmates, etc.).

- Conduct education for appropriate staff regarding a student’s life-threatening allergens, symptoms, risk reduction procedures, emergency procedures, and how to administer an epinephrine auto-injector.

- Medication administration for students must follow district policy and procedures. Medication administration in school and on any school sponsored functions must be in compliance with CGS, section 10-212a and sections 10-212a-1 through 10-212a-7.

- Introduce yourself to the student and show him/her how to get to the nurse’s office.

- Review with the child his/her knowledge of food allergies, symptoms of a reaction, and appropriate interventions.

- Review use of the epinephrine auto-injector.

- Post individualized plans, with consent, and have available all IHCP’s and emergency plans in an accessible place in the nurse’s office.

- Post locations of epinephrine auto-injector.

- Periodically check medications for expiration date.

- Make sure that substitute school nurses are fully oriented to students with life-threatening food allergies and their care plans.

- Address environmental concerns with considerations for allergen-free zones such as the classroom, lunch tables or cafeteria to decrease exposure.

- With parent consent, send a letter to the class advising that there is a child with a life-threatening allergy.

- Communicate with families on a regular basis.

- Arrange periodic review of the IHCP, at least annually, or as often as necessary to address changes in the student’s care plan, self-monitoring, and self-care abilities and whenever an adjustment plan is appropriate.

- Assist children with life-threatening food allergies to assume more responsibility as they advance through primary grades to secondary school.
Students

Managing Students with Life Threatening Food Allergies in School (continued)

Responsibilities of the Teacher

- Participate in the development of the student’s IHCP and emergency plan.
- Review and follow the IHCP and emergency plan of any student(s) in your classroom with life-threatening allergies.
- Keep accessible the student’s IHCP and emergency plan with photo (with consent) in classroom or with plan book.
- Act immediately and follow the emergency plan if a student reports signs of an allergic reaction.
- Send student to nurse with a companion or summon school nurse.
- Request that the classroom has a method of communication with the school nurse or main office.
- Be sure staff, including volunteers, student teachers, paraprofessionals and substitute teachers, are informed of the student’s food allergies and established plans.
- Leave information in an organized, prominent and accessible format for substitute teachers.
- In collaboration with the school nurse, consider a classroom lesson about food allergies and anaphylaxis for the class.
- Educate classmates to avoid endangering, isolating, stigmatizing or harassing students with food allergies. Be aware of how the student with food allergies is being treated; use this opportunity to teach community caring; enforce school rules/policies about bullying and threats.
- Work with the school nurse to educate families and others about the child with life-threatening allergies in the classroom. Enlist their help in keeping allergic foods out of the classroom.
- Inform families of children with life-threatening food allergies in advance of any school events or parties where food will be served.
- Prepare for student’s re-entry to school after an anaphylactic reaction.

A. Snacks/Lunchtime

- Prohibit students from sharing or trading snacks.
- Avoid cross-contamination of foods.
- Desks and surfaces should be washed with disposable paper towels and an appropriate cleaner after eating or after a school event.
- Students should have access to hand-washing before and after eating.
Students

Managing Students with Life Threatening Food Allergies in School

Responsibilities of the Teacher (continued)

B. Classroom Activities

- Avoid use of foods for classroom activities (e.g., arts and crafts, counting, science, parties, holidays and celebrations and other projects). If food is used, consult with school nurse to safely plan activity.
- Consider non-food treats for rewards and incentives and for classroom celebrations.

C. Field Trips

Prior to planning a field trip:
- Notify the school nurse. Provide destination, date, time and names of students attending.
- Avoid field trips that may pose greater risk or exposure to food or allergens.
- Avoid risk during transportation to and from the destination.
- Invite parent/guardian of a student at risk for anaphylaxis to accompany their child on field trips.
- In the case that a parent/guardian is unable to attend, develop an alternate plan in consultation with the school nurse.
- Ensure the epinephrine auto-injectors and instructions are taken on field trips. Remain with the student or place the student in the care of trained school staff during the field trip.
- Medications for students with life threatening allergies must be immediately accessible to student.
- Ensure that a two-way radio, walkie-talkie, cell phone or other communication device is taken on the field trip and that there are school staff who are trained in the administration of an epinephrine auto-injector.
- Ensure that the child with life-threatening food allergies is assigned to staff who are trained in recognizing symptoms of life-threatening allergic reactions, trained to use an epinephrine auto-injector, and trained in emergency procedures.
- Details of field trip should be reviewed with school nurse to plan for prevention of exposure to life threatening food allergies.
- Consider ways to wash hands before and after eating.
- Know 911 procedures and where the closest medical facilities are located.
Students

Managing Students with Life Threatening Food Allergies in School (continued)

Responsibilities of School Food Service

- Participate in team meetings for students with life threatening food allergies entering school, as appropriate.
- Post the student’s ECP with consent of parent/guardian.
- Establish procedures to ensure that students with life-threatening food allergies select only those foods identified and approved by their parent(s).
- Ensure that all food service staff, their substitutes and lunch aides are trained annually on food allergies, how to recognize the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction and what to do in the event of a reaction.
- Maintain contact information for manufacturers of food products (e.g., Consumer Hotline) and make it available to parent/guardian on request.
- Provide parent/guardian with food labels, as requested.
- Provide advance copies of the menu to parent/guardian and notification if menu is changed.
- Review and follow sound food handling and food preparation practices to avoid cross-contact with potential food allergens.
- Establish policies in collaboration with school administration and school health for the cafeteria regarding students with life-threatening food allergies.
- Create specific areas that will be allergen safe, as needed.
- Follow strict cleaning and sanitation protocols to avoid cross-contact.
- Make required food substitutions with documentation from a health care provider (HCP) and in consultation with school nurse. In order to make appropriate substitutions or modifications for meals served to students with life-threatening food allergies, the health care provider’s statement must identify the student’s disability (as defined under USDA guidelines), why the disability restricts their diet, the food or foods to be omitted, and the food or foods to be substituted.
- Plan ahead to have safe meals for field trips.
- Avoid the use of latex gloves by food service personnel. Use non-latex gloves instead.
- Know how to access epinephrine auto-injector(s) or summon school nurse immediately.
- Have a functioning intercom, walkie-talkie or other communication device to support emergencies.
- Take all complaints seriously from any student with a life-threatening allergy.
- Be prepared to take emergency action and follow student’s ECP.
Students

Managing Students with Life Threatening Food Allergies in School (continued)

Responsibilities of the School Bus Company

- Provide education for all school bus drivers regarding life-threatening allergies (provide own training or contract with school) and what to do if they suspect a student is having a reaction.
- Provide education for school bus drivers on specific children, when appropriate.
- Provide functioning emergency communication device (e.g., cell phone, two-way radio, walkie-talkie or similar).
- Know local Emergency Medical Services procedures.
- Maintain policy of not allowing food or beverage consumption on school buses.
- Provide school bus dispatcher with list of students with life-threatening food allergies by bus/van number and instructions for activating the EMS system.
- Plan ahead for informing substitute bus drivers of students with life-threatening food allergies.

Responsibilities of the School Medical Advisor

- Provide consultation to and collaborate with school nurse(s) on clinical issues and protocols which may include:
  - Standing orders for emergency medication including epinephrine; and
  - Policy recommendations for emergency interventions (for known and unknown reactors) in case of anaphylaxis.
- Guide the district in the development of procedures for prevention of anaphylaxis and emergency planning to ensure safety without undue interference with a child’s normal development or the rights of others.
- Participate in staff training regarding life-threatening food allergies.
- Attend IHP planning meetings when requested by school staff.
- Assist in the development of educational programs for students to promote wellness.
- Facilitate community involvement by encouraging development of and participation in school health advisory committee or healthy school policy team.
- Communicate with other community health care providers regarding school district policy, procedures and clinical protocols for managing food allergies.
- Act as a liaison, if necessary, with the media should controversies or opportunities for education occur.
Students

Managing Students with Life Threatening Food Allergies in School (continued)

Responsibilities of Coaches and Other On-Site Persons In Charge of Conducting After-School Activities

- Participate in team meetings to determine how to implement Individualized Health Care Plans.
- Conduct sports and after school activities in accordance with all school policies and procedures regarding life threatening allergies.
- With parent/guardian consent, keep a copy of the Emergency Care Plan and photo (with consent) of students with life-threatening allergies.
- Make certain that emergency communication device (e.g., walkie-talkie, intercom, cell phone, etc.) is always present.
- Ensure that at least one person (ideally two people) is present during activity who has been trained to administer an epinephrine auto-injector.
- Clearly identify who is responsible for maintaining the first aid kit and keep such kit stocked.
- Know EMS procedures and how to access the EMS system from the site of the after school activity or event.

Responsibilities of the School

- Follow applicable federal laws including ADA, IDEA, Section 504, FERPA and any state laws or district policies that apply.
- Include food-allergic students in school activities. Students should not be excluded from school activities solely based on their food allergy.
- Identify a core team of, but not limited to, school nurse, teacher, Principal, school food service director, and counselor (if available) to work with the parent/guardian and the student (age appropriate) to establish a prevention plan. Changes to the prevention plan to promote food allergy management should be made with core team participation.
- Provide education and training related to allergies, symptoms and emergency response.
- Provide education and training to prevent exposure to allergens.
- Practice the food allergy action plans before an allergic reaction occurs to assure the efficiency/effectiveness of the plans.
- Students should be allowed to carry their own epinephrine, according to district policy.
Students

Managing Students with Life Threatening Food Allergies in School

Responsibilities of the School (continued)

- Designate school personnel to administer medications during the school day or during school sponsored functions, according to state laws governing the administration of emergency medications.

- Review policies/prevention plan with the core team members, parent/guardian, student (age appropriate), and health care provider after a reaction has occurred.

- Work with the district transportation administrator to assure that school bus driver training includes information about allergies, symptoms and emergency response.

- Recommend that all buses have communication devices in the event of an emergency.

- Enforce a “no eating” policy on school buses with exceptions made only to accommodate special needs under federal or state laws or school district policy.

- Discuss field trips with the family of the food-allergic child to determine appropriate strategies for managing the food allergy.

- Follow federal/state/district laws and regulations regarding sharing medical information about the student.

- Take threats or harassment against an allergic child seriously.

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WEST HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
West Haven, Connecticut