

## **Students**

### **Students with Special Health Care Needs**

#### **Accommodating Students with Special Dietary Needs (Food Allergy Management)**

The focus of a Districtwide Food Allergy Management Plan shall be prevention, education, awareness, communication and emergency response. The management plan shall strike a balance between the health, social normalcy and safety needs of the individual student with life threatening food allergies and the education, health and safety needs of all students. The District Food Allergy Management Plan shall be the basis for the development of the procedural guidelines that will be implemented at the school level and provide for consistency across all schools within the district.

The goals for the Districtwide Plan include:

1. To maintain the health and protect the safety of children who have life-threatening food allergies in ways that are developmentally appropriate, promote self-advocacy and competence in self-care and provide appropriate educational opportunities.
2. To ensure that interventions and individual health care plans for students with life-threatening food allergies are based on medically accurate information and evidence-based practices.
3. To define a formal process for identifying, managing, and ensuring continuity of care for students with life-threatening food allergies across all transitions. (Pre-K-Grade 12)

It is the policy of the Board of Education to follow the guidelines developed and promulgated by the Connecticut Department of Public Health and Department of Education for students within the District with life-threatening food allergies. Such guidelines include (1) education and training for school personnel on the management of students with life-threatening food allergies, including training related to the administration of medication with a cartridge injector, (2) procedures for responding to life threatening allergic reactions to food, (3) a process for the development of individualized health care and food allergy action plans for every student with a life-threatening food allergy, and (4) protocols to prevent exposure to food allergens.

It is the Board's expectation that specific building-based guidelines/actions will take into account the health needs and well-being of all children without discrimination or isolation of any child. It is the Board's belief that education and open and informative communication are vital for the creation of an environment with reduced risks for all students and their families. In order to assist children with life-threatening allergies to assume more individual responsibility for maintaining their safety as they grow, it is the policy of the Board that guidelines shift as children advance through the primary grades and through secondary school.

## **Students**

### **Students with Special Health Care Needs**

#### **Accommodating Students with Special Dietary Needs (Food Allergy Management) (continued)**

(cf. 5141 - Student Health Services)  
(cf. 5141.21 - Administering Medication)  
(cf. 5141.23 - Students with Special Health Care Needs)  
(cf. 5141.3 - Health Assessments)  
(cf. 5145.4 - Nondiscrimination)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes  
10-15b Access of parent or guardian to student's records.  
10-154a Professional communications between teacher or nurse and student.  
10-207 Duties of medical advisors.  
10-212a Administrations of medications in schools  
10-212a(d) Administration of medications in schools by a paraprofessional  
10-220i Transportation of students carrying cartridge injectors  
52-557b Good Samaritan Law. Immunity from liability for emergency medical assistance, first aid or medication by injection  
PA 05-104 An Act Concerning Food Allergies and the Prevention of Life-Threatening Incidents in Schools  
PA 05-144 and 05-272 An Act Concerning the Emergency Use of Cartridge Injectors  
The Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies section 10-212a through 10-212a-7  
Federal Legislation  
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794 § 504; 34 C.F.R. § 104 et seq.)  
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (42 U.S.C. §12101 et seq.; 29C.F.R. §1630 et seq.)  
The Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)  
The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1976 (IDEA) (20 U.S.C. § 1400 et seq.); 34 C.F.R. § 300 et seq.  
FCS Instruction 783-2, Revision 2, Meal substitution for medical or other special dietary reasons.

Policy adopted: February 12, 2018

THOMASTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Thomaston, Connecticut

## **Thomaston School District Food Allergy Protocol**

The Thomaston School District strives to provide a safe learning environment for all students. As such, the following food allergy guidelines have been devised.

Students with food allergies have a potentially life-threatening medical condition. For these children accidental exposure could result in a serious allergic reaction, which could prove to be fatal. Eight foods (peanut, tree nut, milk, egg, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish) account for 90% of total food allergies, although any food has the potential to cause an allergic reaction. Those affected may be allergic to more than one food. For some, reactions can occur simply by touching or inhaling an allergen; others will react after ingesting the allergen.

The school and families of allergic children acknowledge that despite our best efforts, we cannot guarantee an absolutely allergen-free environment. The goal of these guidelines is to create food allergy awareness that will serve to reduce the risks to students with life threatening allergies. We encourage families of students with any life-threatening food allergies to work with staff to develop an individualized safety protocol to meet their child's needs.

1. It is the responsibility of parents to notify the school of students with medically documented food allergies prior to school entry.
2. In collaboration with parents, school nurse and health care provider(s), an individualized health care plan will be developed to ensure the child's safety and continuity of care. This plan, in turn, will be shared with all those individuals directly involved in the child's school day and extracurricular school sponsored activities.
3. Food allergy training will be provided for staff that interacts directly with students diagnosed with food allergies so that they understand food allergy basics, can recognize the signs and symptoms of an allergic reaction, and are prepared to take emergency action in the event of an accidental exposure.
4. It is the family's responsibility to educate the student in the self-management of their food allergy to include: safe and unsafe foods, strategies for avoiding exposure to unsafe foods, symptoms of allergic reactions, and how and when to tell an adult that they may be having a reaction. It is the school nurses' responsibility to reinforce the family's teaching and strengthen the student's understanding in the self-management of his/her allergy.
5. The use of food allergens as educational tools, in arts and crafts projects, or as incentives is prohibited. It is the teachers' responsibility to check product labels prior to introducing them into the classroom. If ingredients are unknown, use of such products will be avoided.

6. Emergency medications will be stored in a secure location that is easily accessible. All those who may administer medications in accordance with State laws shall have access to these medications. In the absence of the school nurse, a teacher, principal, OT or PT who has been properly trained may administer an epinephrine auto-injector to a specific student diagnosed with life threatening allergies. A paraprofessional who is approved by the school nurse may administer the epinephrine auto-injector to a specific student with life threatening food allergies. (CGS, Section 10-212a and Sections 10-212a-1 through 10-212-7).
7. The Thomaston School District does not have district-wide food bans. However, special accommodations may be made for students who have food allergies in coordination with teacher, parents, health care providers and school nurse. Written documentation from health care provider is essential in the planning and implementation of appropriate individualized strategies (i.e. peanut/nut-free table or classroom food restrictions).
8. Food restrictions may be put in place to insure the safety of students with food allergies in the classroom setting. No foods should be offered to students with life-threatening allergies without the approval of the parent. If food is brought into an allergen-free classroom unexpectedly and it is unclear as to the ingredients, the food should not be distributed. If the classroom is not designated allergen free, the snack may be distributed in the classroom. However, a safe snack must be given to the student with the severe food allergy. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide safe snacks for use in the classroom.
9. Hand washing will be promoted following lunch to reduce the presence of food residue on their hands.
10. Students should not share or trade foods during lunch.
11. Eating on buses to and from schools is prohibited. With consent from the parents, school nurses will notify the appropriate bus drivers of students who have life threatening food allergies.
12. Students with food allergies should not be excluded from school activities solely based on their food allergy. Appropriate strategies for managing the child's food allergy on field trips must be devised. Parents of that student should be encouraged to participate in field trips as chaperone.
13. Evaluation of policies following a reaction should be conducted with school staff, parent, medical advisor and student's health care provider.
14. Guidelines will be reviewed and evaluated as necessary with the district nurses and medical advisor.

*Revised 5/17/06*

*Approved by:* Dr. Paul Broomhead  
Medical Advisor  
Thomaston School District