

<i>Policy</i>	<i>Title</i> LIFE THREATENING ALLERGIES	<i>Code</i> JLTA
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HOLLISTON

The Holliston Public Schools (HPS) recognizes the increasing prevalence of student allergies and the life-threatening nature of allergies for many students. The HPS administration has developed and implemented a policy and protocol 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. Further, the protocol will aim to provide age-appropriate procedures and to assist children in assuming more individual responsibility for their health and safety as they grow older. The schools are committed to working with allergic students and their parents to address the students' emotional and social needs in addition to their health needs.

Background

Allergic reactions vary among students and can range from mild to severe and life-threatening anaphylactic reactions. Anaphylaxis refers to a collection of symptoms affecting multiple systems in the body, the most dangerous of which are breathing difficulties and a drop in blood pressure or shock, which are potentially fatal. Anaphylaxis may occur in allergic individuals after exposure to a specific allergen even when prior exposure to the allergen has not resulted in symptoms. Anaphylaxis can occur immediately or several hours following allergen exposure. Some students, who are very sensitive, may react to just touching or inhaling the allergen. The most common causes of anaphylaxis in children include allergies to:

- ◆ Foods (most commonly: peanuts, tree nuts, milk, other dairy products, eggs, soy, wheat, fish and shellfish)
- ◆ Insect stings (yellow jackets, bees, wasps, hornets)
- ◆ Medications
- ◆ Latex

Policy

HPS recognizes the increasing prevalence of student allergies and the life-threatening nature of allergies for many students.

The HPS administration shall:

1. Develop and implement a protocol to minimize the risk of exposure to allergens that pose a threat to students;
2. Educate all members of the school community on management of student allergies;
3. Plan for the needs of students with allergies.

Further, the protocol will aim to provide age-appropriate procedures and to assist children in assuming more individual responsibility for their health and safety as they grow older. The schools will work with allergic students and their parents to address the students' emotional and social needs in addition to their health needs.

The protocol will include the following:

- A. Education and training: HPS will provide education and training to all appropriate personnel on management of student allergies. The training will address allergy awareness and provide

information about common allergens, recognition of signs of an allergic reaction, epinephrine injector training, and the emergency response plan.

- B. Individualized planning and accommodations: An Emergency Health Care Plan that addresses management of anaphylaxis will be developed for each student with an allergy. These plans will be student specific and may require additional procedures or protocols beyond those included in this policy. A copy of the Emergency Health Care Plan will be provided to the classroom teacher, unified arts teachers, specialists, paraprofessionals, and bus drivers for all preschool to grade 5 students and to all core subject teachers for middle and high school students. A protocol will be developed to address how information about student allergies will be provided to other personnel responsible for students with life threatening allergies, such as substitutes, cafeteria monitors, and recess monitors. The implementation of the District protocol and of the individualized plan for each allergic student requires a team approach and cooperation among administrators, nurses, teachers, food service personnel and other staff members, parents, and the student as appropriate.
- C. Classroom management procedures: Appropriate accommodations will be made in the classroom as necessary. Procedures will address education of parents/guardians and students and planning for special events involving food. The protocol will allow for age-appropriate classroom rules. For preschool to grade 5 students, the nurse, in collaboration with the classroom teacher and with input from the parents of the food-allergic child, will develop a classroom specific protocol regarding the management of food in the classroom. All school administrators will facilitate and support the accommodations when required for individual classrooms, team classrooms, specialist classrooms, and common areas.
- D. Common Use Areas: The protocol will address foods used in common areas and cleaning of those areas, including use of those areas by groups other than students.
- E. Kitchen and cafeteria procedures: The food service staff must make reasonable efforts to ensure that all food items offered to a student with life threatening allergies are free of suspected allergens. Kitchen and dining room practices will be aimed at minimizing the cross-contamination of foods. Dining room procedures must address proper oversight and cleaning of designated allergen areas.
- F. Transportation procedures: School buses and vans must have a working means of two-way communication and a plan to check the communication system periodically. Bus and van drivers and substitutes must have an emergency response plan and be trained in the proper use of an epinephrine injector. Parents of students with life threatening allergies will be encouraged to inform bus and van drivers about student allergies. The eating and sharing of food will be prohibited on transportation routes unless medically indicated for a student.
- G. Field trip procedures: Planning for field trips will include plans to implement a student's Emergency Health Care Plan, plans for carrying an epinephrine injector as needed, and plans for emergency response such as identification of the nearest medical facility. The school nurse or an epinephrine-injector trained employee designated by the school nurse will attend field trips including a student with a life-threatening allergy, in the event their parent/guardian is not attending.

- H. Emergency response procedures: All staff members supervising students with life threatening allergies must have a means of communication to call for assistance. The school nurse or another school staff member trained to administer epinephrine in accordance with Department of Public Health Regulation 105 CMR 210.000 must be available in each school facility during the school day. The protocol must provide for the management of anaphylaxis in individuals with unknown allergies, including an authorization for administration of epinephrine by the school nurse signed by the school physician.
- I. Procedures for handling epinephrine: Each school must maintain a current supply of epinephrine by auto-injector 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 Department of Public Health Regulation 105 CMR 210. All staff members will be informed of the location of the epinephrine injectors.

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Legal References:	DPH Regulation 105 CMR 210
Policy Cross Reference:	KF (Use of School Facilities), JLCD (Medications, Administration of), IJOA (Field Trips and Excursions)
Procedure Reference:	JLTA-P updated June 2023

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