Burlington Public Schools
Life Threatening Allergy Procedures and Guidelines

In accordance with the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education’s Guidelines on Managing Life Threatening Food Allergies in Schools, the Burlington School Committee has adopted a Life Threatening Food Allergy Policy and these administrative procedures and guidelines are promulgated pursuant to that policy to ensure the safety and well-being of any individual with life threatening food allergies. The purpose of these Administrative Procedures and Guidelines are to:

- Provide a safe and healthy learning environment for all students;
- Protect the rights of food allergic students to participate in all school activities;
- Reduce the likelihood of severe or potentially life-threatening allergic reactions during school; and
- Ensure a rapid and effective response in the case of a severe or potentially life threatening allergic reaction.

The Burlington Public Schools recognize the increasing prevalence of student allergies and the life-threatening nature of the allergy for many students. The Burlington Public Schools cannot guarantee to provide an allergen-free environment for all students with life threatening allergies, nor prevent any harm to students in emergencies. The goal is to minimize the risk of exposure to food allergens that pose a threat to those students, to educate the community, and to maintain and regularly update a system-wide protocol for responding to their needs.

The Burlington Public Schools will maintain a system wide procedure for addressing life threatening allergic reactions by incorporating measures to reduce the exposure to allergens and procedures to treat allergic reactions. For any student whose physician (primary care or board certified allergist) has informed the school in writing that the student has a life threatening allergy, the school nurse will oversee the development of an Allergy Action Plan (AAP) or Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) that addresses the management of anaphylaxis. Parents/guardians have the responsibility to inform the school district when a child’s medical condition might affect the child’s welfare or safety. Effective communication is vital among all parties.

The Burlington Public Schools (BPS) recognizes that an effective food allergy program depends on a cooperative effort among school staff, parents/guardians and the school nurse. Accountability and support at the district level includes, but is not limited to: BPS Superintendent or designee; Director of Finance and Operations; Director of Food Service; Director of Special Education; Director of Transportation. Clinical accountability and protocol development rests with the School Physician, Lead Nurse and Registered Nurses. Principals and department heads are responsible for ensuring that their individual staff members attend appropriate training on management of food allergies. Based on the individual student needs, the school nurse, with administrative support and authority from the school principal, shall be responsible for school based implementation and management of food allergies.
While this document focuses on food allergies, treatment of anaphylaxis (a life threatening allergic reaction) is the same whether caused by: insect sting; latex; exercise induced; environmental; or unknown.

II. Education and Training

Staff to be trained includes, but are not limited to, teachers, paraprofessionals, food service staff, cafeteria and playground monitors; bus drivers and monitors; principals, assistant principals, support staff and student interns/teachers. Education and training will include:

- review of food allergy program Administrative Procedures and Guidelines
- identifying potential food allergens and assisting children to avoid them
- role and responsibilities in prevention and reducing risks
- recognizing allergic reactions
- responding to an allergic reaction
- how to administer an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen®)

III. Roles and Responsibilities

**BPS Superintendent**
Superintendent will:
- recommend to the school committee a district wide plan on life threatening food allergy policy
- ensure implementation of policy and guidelines to all BPS principals

**BPS Principals**
Principals will:
- support training for school staff
- direct questions or concerns from current or prospective parents of food allergic students to the school nurse
- ensure Administrative Procedures and Guidelines adherence for all BPS school based personnel

**BPS Nursing Staff**
The school health nursing staff will:
- provide annual training for school staff, food service and transportation staff that will include information on food allergies, how to recognize an allergic reaction and how to respond in the event of an allergic reaction, including the use of an EpiPen®
- maintain an AAP or individual health care plan for each child with a documented food allergy, such plan to include an allergy action plan for addressing the prevention and management of anaphylaxis that contains the student’s name, photo with the written permission of the parent/guardian, allergens, allergic reaction if known, risk reduction procedures, emergency procedures and required signatures
- maintain emergency medication as ordered by the physician of each child with a food allergy
ensure EpiPens® are available and safely accessible, EpiPens and antihistamines will be stored in a secure, **unlocked** designated area.
- track medications for expiration dates and arrange for them to be current
- be authorized to administer epinephrine in order to manage anaphylaxis in individuals with unknown allergies
- with permission from the family, contact the primary care provider or allergist when indicated to clarify specific orders and/or directions to be included in the child’s allergy action plan
- students entering BPS system for the first time will be required to fill out a Life Threatening Allergy questionnaire, which will be part of student’s school medical record
- when entering the BPS system for first time or changing schools within the district, the school nurse will meet with parent/guardians of a student with a LTA to *review the* allergy action plan, (AAP)
- with parent consent, familiarize teachers and staff of any students they may have with an AAP.
- maintain updated AAP in the nurse’s office and student’s homeroom at each elementary school and in the nurse’s office at the middle and high school
- Ensure that appropriate personnel know the location of medication. School must designate an area of the building to house medication not only in the Nurse’s office but also in various places throughout the school building.
- establish a contingency plan in the case of a substitute nurse. Substitute nurse will identify self to main office of school working in or staff when attending a field trip.
- school shall maintain and make available upon request by parents or staff a dated list of those school personnel authorized and trained to administer epinephrine by auto injector in an emergency, when the school nurse is not immediately available.

**BPS Teaching Staff/Classroom Staff**
The classroom staff will:
- be trained annually to recognize symptoms of allergic reaction and to understand their role as a responder in the event of an allergic reaction; including the use of an EpiPen®
- work with the school nurse, and parent/guardian to develop and implement a plan for ensuring that their child is safe from potential allergens, including field trips, classroom festivities, arts & crafts activities and cafeteria management
- in collaboration with the school nurse, create developmentally appropriate allergy avoidance strategies (plans) – for pre K, primary, middle and high school age groups
- parents and students are informed via student handbook that birthday recognition will be food free
- work with nursing and food services to determine allergen safe snacks to keep in class if a student forgets his/her snack
- prohibit the use of food for curriculum purposes, unless provided by food services and consumed in school’s cafeteria. Parents of children with life threatening allergies will be notified in advance if food is to be used for curriculum purposes.
- remind students never to share or trade food
- ensure student hand washing with soap and water before and after eating to avoid cross contamination.

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contamination. Hand sanitizers have not been shown to be an effective means of removing allergens (Munoz-Furlong 2008)

● keep information for substitute teachers in an organized, prominent and accessible format
● notify the school nurse ahead of time of an upcoming field trip so that medication can be prepared for the field trip. It is the teacher’s duty to ensure that all emergency medications are brought on the trip as well as emergency information, and is kept with the student’s teacher at all times.
● at the beginning of each school year, parents or guardians of students with LTA will be personally invited by student’s teacher to attend field trips with their child
● if parent or guardian of a student with a LTA cannot attend a field trip, that student will be placed in group with BPS teacher

**BPS Food Services Coordinator**
The Food Services Coordinator will:

● assist with individual health care plans as appropriate in regards to food in the school environment
● coordinate the needs of individual health care plans with school kitchen staff as appropriate
● provide training for school food service staff regarding the specific food needs of allergic children according to the individual healthcare plan
● provide information to parents of food allergic children on school food service menus and ingredients as appropriate
● ensure all food service staff is able to recognize symptoms of allergic reaction and to understand their roles as a responder in the event of an allergic reaction; including the use of an EpiPen®
● receive training and use correct protocols to serve food to food allergic children according to their individual health care plan as appropriate
● ensure appropriate non-allergenic food substitutes are available according to AAP or individual healthcare plans, in consultation with school nurse
● ensure food service staff make every effort to avoid cross-contamination during handling, preparation, and serving of food
● establish allergy sensitive tables
● ensure food service staff maintain separate table-washing supplies (sponges, washcloths) for allergy sensitive table

**BPS Transportation Services**
Bus drivers and monitors will:

● be trained annually to recognize symptoms of allergic reaction and to understand their role to respond in the event of an allergic reaction; including the use of an EpiPen®;
● enforce no eating Administrative Procedures and Guidelines on the bus, unless medically indicated, i.e. for diabetes
● have radio/phone access for communicating emergencies
● know and follow protocol for emergency response on the school bus
Parents/Guardians
Parents/guardians must:
● inform the school nurse, if their child has a food allergy
● provide physician documentation regarding allergy diagnosis & treatment
● work with the school nurse, school principal and classroom teacher to develop and implement an AAP or IHCP for ensuring that their child is safe from potential allergens
● provide physician ordered emergency medications if indicated for their child’s safety
● provide medic alert-type jewelry (typically bracelet) or other emergency identification
● alert their child’s school bus driver/monitor

Student Self-Management
A student at risk for anaphylaxis shall be allowed to carry an epinephrine auto-injector with him/her at all times, if age-appropriate. If this is not appropriate, the epinephrine auto-injector shall be kept in a safe, but unlocked location in the classroom, cafeteria, physical education facility, health room and/or other areas.

IV. BPS Communication
● Parents/guardians will be informed by BPS about their rights and responsibilities regarding food allergic students
● Parents/guardians will be given clear and consistent guidance on the BPS Life Threatening Food Allergy Administrative Procedures and Guidelines at all BPS interfaces such as Family Resource Center, School Open House, etc.

V. Allergy Bullying
All threats or harassment of students with food allergies will be taken very seriously and will be dealt with in accordance with appropriate Burlington Public Schools student discipline policies, including without limitation, the Burlington Public Schools Non-Discrimination Policy and Prohibition Against Sexual Harassment and the Burlington Public Schools Anti-Bullying Policy.

VI. Medication Delegation and Restrictions

Medication Delegation
Massachusetts Department of Public Health Regulations governing the Administration of Prescription Medications in Public and Private Schools 105 C.M.R. 210.100(A)(4) and (A)(4)(c)(iv) authorize school personnel who are trained and tested for competency to administer epinephrine by auto-injector to individuals with previously diagnosed life-threatening allergies who are experiencing an anaphylactic event. School districts must be registered with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health for this purpose.

Diphenhydramine (Benadryl®)
Unlicensed staff, (as described above) according to 105 C.M.R. 210.105 may not administer Benadryl® as a first line intervention, due to the rapid and unpredictable sequence of events during an anaphylactic reaction.
VII. Administrative Procedures and Guidelines Review
Pursuant to the requirements of 105 C.M.R. 210.003, the review and revision of this Administrative Procedures and Guidelines and any related procedures should occur as needed but at least every two years.

VIII. Emergency Response Protocol
Anaphylaxis is a rare, extremely serious form of allergic reaction that may occur in adults or children. The reaction ranges from mild, self-limited symptoms to rapid death. Immediate action may be required to prevent fatality. This response may happen in adults and children not previously known to be allergic or hypersensitive.

Extreme sensitivity to one or more of the following may cause an anaphylactic response:
1. insect sting – usually bee or wasp
2. medication or immunizations – usually by injection
3. food, such as peanuts or shellfish
4. industrial or office chemicals or their vapors
5. latex rubber

An adult will immediately accompany an individual, staff or student, to the health office when the individual exhibits the initial symptoms of an allergic reaction, including any of the following:
1. bright red face or blotchy face
2. red patches of face or body (hives)
3. watery itchy eyes
4. swollen eyelids
5. swollen lips

Emergency intervention is necessary if a staff or student develops one or more of the following symptoms:
1. sudden onset of symptoms beginning within 15 minutes after exposure to an allergen
2. feeling of apprehension, sweating, weakness
3. feeling of fullness in throat
4. respiratory difficulty and/or change in quality of voice (This may signal closure of an airway).
5. tingling sensation around the mouth or face
6. nasal congestion, itching, wheezing
7. low blood pressure with weak, rapid pulse
8. loss of consciousness, shock, coma

If the school nurse is present, she/he will administer the EpiPen®. If the school nurse is not present, a delegated staff member, trained to administer the EpiPen® will inject the individual with the appropriately dosed EpiPen® obtained from the designated storage location in the school.

Adult: EpiPen;
Children under 60 pounds: EpiPen, Jr.

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Only those staff trained in accordance with the Burlington Public Schools Administrative Procedures and Guidelines in the administration of prescription medication may administer an EpiPen® in the event of a known prior diagnosis of life threatening allergic reaction. A current prescription for the administering of EpiPen® must be on record.

School personnel should immediately notify the school nurse and the main office. If no other adult is present to provide such notification, the school staff member responding to the emergency situation should have a student immediately notify the main office. The main office should immediately call 911 for emergency care and transport to the nearest medical facility.

Contacting 911, the following information must be provided:
1. identify self
2. identify school, and
3. advise that an allergic reaction is suspected and an EpiPen® has been given

The main office should:
1. immediately notify the student’s parents/guardians, and the school principal
2. ensure that emergency medical response personnel who are responding to the call are met at the school entrance and are directed to the student

While waiting for emergency response team:
1. cover the affected individual with blankets, if necessary, to keep warm
2. monitor time between initial administration of the EpiPen® and arrival of EMS.
3. school nurse should make note of pulse, B/P, temperature and pulse oximetry level.

School nurse will file a report of an EpiPen® administration and forward it to the school health manager.

Burlington Public Schools Administrative Guidelines for Food Allergy Program
Guidelines for School Staff
● Parents/guardians of food allergic students should be involved in developing a class plan for dealing with food allergies.
● Encourage parents/guardians of students with LTA to help organize food related special events.
● BPS prohibits food rewards in the classroom
● Avoid cross contamination. Be sure students wash their hands before and after eating with soap and water.
● Inform other classroom staff or volunteers that there is a student in the classroom with a food allergy.
● Remind the food-allergic student not to accept food from anyone unless it is the designated person.
● Keep information about each food-allergic student, including the student’s name (with parental/guardian permission), in your class roster so that substitute teachers will be aware.

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● Observe and be aware of how other students are reacting to the allergic student to prevent teasing and harassment.
● Review plans for field trips and plan how to handle eating situations.
● Work with the school nurse to plan for taking and using emergency medication on a field trip if ordered.
● Ensure that you have access to a phone in the case of emergency on a field trip.
● Know and follow the protocol for emergency response in the school.
● Provide a designated allergen sensitive table in each cafeteria.

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