

## **Catalyst Academy Charter School**

### **Food Allergy Management Policy**

#### **Purpose**

The Board is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all students and staff, with the understanding that Catalyst Academy Charter School (“Catalyst”) cannot guarantee that a student will never experience an allergy-related event while at school.

#### **Authority**

Catalyst shall establish guidelines and procedures for the safe and effective management of life threatening food allergies in the school and among the students. Throughout each school year, a coordinated and multidisciplinary effort among school staff, nutrition service coordinators, cafeteria employees, parents and our medical community shall insure that all students have individualized health care action plans that clearly articulate the nature of allergies, supports needed and emergency response protocol.

#### **Delegation of Responsibility**

The Board authorizes the CEO or designee to develop and maintain administrative procedures related to food allergy management to safeguard the health and well-being of Catalyst students and staff, and to protect the rights of the individual.

## **Food Allergy Management Guidelines**

### **Purpose**

Catalyst Academy Charter School has established the within guidelines and procedures for the safe and effective management of life threatening food allergies in our school and among our students. Throughout each school year, a coordinated and multidisciplinary effort among school staff, nutrition service coordinators, cafeteria employees, parents and our medical community will insure that all students have individualized health care action plans that clearly articulate the nature of allergies, supports needed and emergency response protocol.

### **Definitions**

**Allergen** - Any substance that causes an allergic reaction.

*Allergic reaction* - An immune system response to a certain substance that the body mistakenly interprets as harmful.

*Anaphylaxis* - A sudden, severe allergic reaction that involves various areas of the body simultaneously. In extreme cases, it can cause death.

*Antigen* - Any substance that provokes an immune response when introduced into the body.

*Antihistamine* - A medication used to block the effects of histamine, a chemical that is released during an allergic reaction. For example, an epinephrine auto-injector.

*Cross-contamination* - One food comes into contact with another and their proteins mix. Each food then contains small amounts of the other.

*Epinephrine* - Medicine of choice for controlling severe anaphylactic reactions. It is available by prescription.

*Food allergy* - Immune system reaction to a certain food. The food is mistakenly determined to be harmful and antibodies are created. With subsequent exposures, histamine is released causing an allergic reaction.

*Histamine* - Chemical released by the body during an allergic reaction.

*Individualized Health Care Plan (IHP)* - A plan developed by the school nurse used to implement the student's medical management plan. The plan describes functional problem areas, sets goals for overcoming problems, and lists tasks/interventions to meet the goals.

### **Guidelines**

Individual Health Care Plans (IHPs) are developed using physician documentation. The physician documentation delineates characteristics of the allergic reaction and anaphylaxis, medical procedures for administration of medication and emergency care, along with parent information about past and present medical history. Every effort will be made to appropriately

communicate student health information and emergency procedures with school staff while adhering to HIPAA and FERPA regulations.

1. At the beginning of each new school year, all Catalyst Academy Charter School parents are required to complete and submit to the principal and nurse, a form called the “Emergency Care Form (ECF).” On this Emergency Care Form, parents must provide information about a variety of things, including any health conditions that their child may have, along with medications that are prescribed for the management of a health condition. Specific questions are asked about allergies on this Emergency Care Form.
2. The Emergency Care Form shall be retained in the Main Office of the school and be used for reaching parents/guardians, as well as making emergency contact information available. The school nurse must receive a copy of the ECF. Emergency Care forms shall also be kept in the Health Office in a confidential binder labeled “Emergency Care Forms.”
3. Upon receipt of the ECF, the school nurse must carefully review the health information contained on the form. Follow-up shall occur by the school nurse with the parent and physician to secure appropriate documentation, which shall inform Catalyst’s efforts to safeguard a child’s health, safety and welfare, as well as prevent the occurrence of emergencies.
4. Once all documentation is received, students with health conditions, including allergies, shall be listed on Catalyst’s “Confidential Health List.” This listing identifies students by name, condition, medication needed and emergency protocol/contacts.
5. The Confidential Health List is reviewed at the beginning of each school year with the Principal and other school staff. The Confidential Health List is a ‘working document’ which allows for updates based on new enrollees, as well as changes in the health status and needs of students on the list.
6. An Individualized Health Care Plan (IHP) shall be developed for all students on the Confidential Health List. Both physician and parent are to sign off on the IHP, and it is retained in the student’s school health record. These records must be properly secured in the Health Office.
7. For students that have food allergies, the “Medical Plan of Care for School Food Service” must be completed by the school nurse, physician and parent. This Plan shall be retained with the school nurse, and is reviewed with the Principal and school staff to insure that no exposure to or dispensing of foods to which a student is allergic occurs.
8. While the Guidelines for the Administration of Medications and Emergency Care are followed in the school, Catalyst recognizes that in the absence of a licensed medical professional, and in a life threatening or seriously harmful health situation, it is critical that school staff are trained to respond to such emergencies. Designated staff will be trained by the school nurse [and at times, the parent is present during these trainings] to use an epinephrine auto-injector (e.g., the EpiPen). In addition, students who are able to self-carry

and administer an epinephrine auto-injector shall be permitted to do so in accordance with applicable Catalyst policy.

9. At the conclusion of each school year, epinephrine auto-injectors will be removed from the school and returned to the student's parent/guardian.
10. Annual professional development for school nurses will occur so that they are kept abreast of trends and scope of practice associated with the effective management of food allergies.
11. School nurses have the explicit responsibility of insuring that carefully developed plans are in place and monitored for students with food allergies throughout the school year.

*Adopted the 7th day of July, 2020*