STONEYBROOK PUBLIC SCHOOL ALLERGEN AVOIDANCE PROTOCOL

After extensive consultation and feedback from teaching and non-teaching staff members, students and our Stoneybrook Parent School Council, we have updated and clarified our own school protocol regarding students with life threatening allergies. As a school, we have a responsibility to provide as safe an environment as is reasonably possible, with the help and support of our school community, based on our “duty of care” and the following legislation in the Province of Ontario:

Education Act:
265 (1) Duties of principals:
   j) care of pupils and property – to give assiduous attention to the health and comfort of the pupils,

Education Act Regulations:
Reg. 298, s20 Duties of teachers:
   g) ensure that all reasonable safety procedures are carried out in courses and activities for which the teacher is responsible

An Act to Protect Anaphylactic Pupils, 2005 (Sabrina’s Law):

1. Contents of anaphylactic policy
   (2) The anaphylactic policy shall include the following:
   1. Strategies that reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents in classrooms and common school areas.
   2. A communication plan for the dissemination of information on life-threatening allergies to parents, pupils and employees.
   3. Regular training on dealing with life-threatening allergies for all employees and others who are in direct contact with pupils on a regular basis.
   4. A requirement that every school principal develop an individual plan for each pupil who has an anaphylactic allergy.
   5. A requirement that every school principal ensure that, upon registration, parents, guardians and pupils shall be asked to supply information on life-threatening allergies.
   6. A requirement that every school principal maintain a file for each anaphylactic pupil of current treatment and other information, including a copy of any prescriptions and instructions from the pupil’s physician or nurse and a current emergency contact list.

Contents of individual plan
   (3) An individual plan for a pupil with an anaphylactic allergy shall be consistent with the board’s policy and shall include:
   1. Details informing employees and others who are in direct contact with the pupil on a regular basis of the type of allergy, monitoring and avoidance strategies and appropriate treatment.
   2. A readily accessible emergency procedure for the pupil, including emergency contact information.
   3. Storage for epinephrine auto-injectors, where necessary.

Administration of medication
   3. (1) Employees may be preauthorized to administer medication or supervise a pupil while he or she takes medication in response to an anaphylactic reaction, if the school has up-to-date treatment information and the consent of the parent, guardian or pupil, as applicable.

Obligation to keep school informed
(2) It is the obligation of the pupil’s parent or guardian and the pupil to ensure that the information in the pupil’s file is kept up-to-date with the medication that the pupil is taking.

Emergency administration of medication

(3) If an employee has reason to believe that a pupil is experiencing an anaphylactic reaction, the employee may administer an epinephrine auto-injector or other medication prescribed to the pupil for the treatment of an anaphylactic reaction, even if there is no preauthorization to do so under subsection (1).

Immunity

(4) No action for damages shall be instituted respecting any act done in good faith or for any neglect or default in good faith in response to an anaphylactic reaction in accordance with this Act, unless the damages are the result of an employee’s gross negligence.

In developing our own school protocol, section 2 (2) (1) of Sabrina’s Law: Strategies that reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents in classrooms and common school areas is the section of the provincial law which causes us to enlist the support of our entire school community in making Stoneybrook P.S. as safe as is reasonably possible. We currently have twelve students enrolled at our school from kindergarten to grade eight that have a life threatening allergy to nuts. We have students within that group that are also allergic to other foods and some prescription medications. That being said, every current student at Stoneybrook P.S. that has a life threatening allergy is allergic to nuts and we must solicit parental support to not send nuts, or nut products to school. Based on the feedback from the various stakeholder groups, this is considered a reasonable measure based on the above quoted legislation and section 2.2 of Managing Life Threatening Allergies, which forms part of our current Thames Valley District School Board Policy “Medical/Health Support for Students”:

“It should be stressed that minute amounts of certain foods like peanut when ingested, touched or inhaled, can be life threatening. Children have had skin reactions just from simply contacting residual peanut butter on tables wiped clean of visible material. Therefore, protection of the anaphylactic child requires the school to exercise reasonable control over all food products, not only those directly consumed by the anaphylactic student.” We cannot guarantee a nut free environment for students nor an “allergen free” area at our school so we must ask parents and guardians in our school community for cooperation and support to make our school as safe as is reasonably possible in this regard. We cannot ban a food item. As such, we will provide updated resources for parents, ask parents to check food labels and to do their best in helping us. We realize this request may require additional planning and effort when packing lunches and snacks and we express our sincere appreciation for your support and cooperation.

While reviewing our school protocol regarding our current students who have life threatening allergies, we have also produced avoidance strategies for other allergens which will be shared with parents, teachers and students as a reference should a child develop a life threatening allergy to another substance or we have a new registrant who has another life threatening allergy. Again, these strategies do not “ban” the potential allergen, but are simply strategies to reduce the risk of exposure. These have been produced for milk, egg, latex and insect venom and are found in the appendices (Appendix B, C, D, E). They have been slightly modified from the work of the Halton District School Board. As brought forward at our School Council meeting in February of 2011, our school does not currently have any risk reduction strategies in place for these other allergens so we are proposing these guidelines for further discussion should a child present at Stoneybrook P.S. with one of these life-threatening allergies.

While we are encouraging the use of non-food items to mark celebrations and special events, we understand that some members of our community will continue to want to bring in food items for other students to have for these reasons. The feedback from a significant number of members in our school community is that while they appreciate the fact that a parent, guardian or family member may want to share food with other members of a particular child’s class, many families do not want their child to partake in these celebrations for a variety of reasons that may or may not have anything to do with food allergies (e.g. religious reasons, quality of food, quantity of food, cleanliness in preparation, food sensitivities). As well, these events often interrupt instructional
time at school and take away from time on task for learning. Given this feedback, we will be sending home a permission form to parents in the fall indicating their consent to have their child consume food purchased or prepared by someone else while they are at school.

Based on the feedback and advice from the Stoneybrook Parent School Council, our own staff, and student representatives, we will continue to ask parents who choose to bring food items into the school to affix a “Nut Safe” label to the product and to sign a form indicating that they have either produced an ingredient list or read an ingredient list to ensure the product does not contain nuts or nut products (Appendix F and G). A list to be used as a resource for this purpose will be published annually in the September school newsletter. It will not recommend brand names but will rely on parental cooperation and support to verify. These stickers and forms will be made available in every classroom. Parents will be asked to contact the classroom teacher in advance of providing the food in the classroom area so that they can sign off on the form and affix a label to the product.

We have included the following appendices in this package as strategies to minimize exposure to other allergens. Should a student register at the school who has a different type of life threatening allergy where Sabrina’s Law (2005) would be pertinent, staff will work with the child’s parents to come up with a reasonable risk minimizing strategy to share with parents in the child’s classroom.

All communication in these matters will be through the school administration to the parents in a particular class or to the school population as a whole. Parents of children with life threatening allergies should communicate directly with the school administration to provide information as needed to school community members. This will assist the school staff in maintaining a clear and consistent message through the principal at all times.

Appendix A – Anaphylaxis Letter re: Peanuts and Tree Nuts to School Community
Appendix B – Peanuts and Tree Nuts Avoidance Strategies
Appendix C – Milk and Egg Avoidance Strategies (for future use if required)
Appendix D – Latex Allergy Avoidance Strategies (for future use if required)
Appendix E – Insect Venom Risk Reduction Strategies
Dear Parent/Guardian:

This letter is to inform you that there are students in our school with life threatening allergies to peanuts/tree nuts. Some students have such a high sensitivity to the peanut/tree nut protein that even a trace amount from a known peanut/nut product or a food product/item that has come in contact with a peanut/nut source (cross contamination) and is ingested can result in a life threatening anaphylactic reaction. The most serious reaction being respiratory difficulties, blockage of the airways, which if not medicated immediately, can lead to death.

Sabrina’s Law, An Act to Protect Anaphylactic Pupils received royal assent in June 2005 making it law for each school in Ontario to provide an anaphylaxis management plan that will reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents (e.g. peanuts/tree nut protein) in the classroom and common school areas.

Our school anaphylaxis plan conforms to the TVDSB Medical/Health Support for Students Policy. The plan is designed to ensure that students at risk are identified, strategies are in place to minimize the potential for accidental exposure and staff and key volunteers are trained to respond in an emergency situation.

To provide the minimized allergen environment required by the legislation, we need the support and cooperation of you, the parents/guardians and the school community. Students are asked to bring lunches and snacks free of peanuts and tree nuts and products that may contain peanuts/ tree nuts such as donuts, granola bars, etc. We ask you to read food labels, checking for peanut/nut ingredients prior to sending food to school. Truly, this is a life saving measure. If you have caregivers who provide your child(ren) with lunches or snacks we encourage you to share this information letter with them.

We realize this request may require added planning and effort on your part when packaging your child’s lunch and snacks, however, we wish to express our sincere appreciation for your support and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Principal Name
APPENDIX B

PEANUTS AND TREE NUTS AVOIDANCE STRATEGIES

BACKGROUND:

• Peanut allergy requires stringent avoidance and management plans, as it is one of the most common food allergies in children, adolescents and adults.
• Reactions to peanuts are often more severe than to other foods.
• Peanut has been a leading cause of severe, life threatening, and even fatal allergic reactions.
• Very minute quantities of peanut, when ingested, can result in life threatening reaction.
• Cross contamination is more likely to occur with peanut butter due to the adhesive nature of the peanut protein to other foods/surfaces.

For any of the signs and/or symptoms observed with an anaphylactic child the first response is to follow the Anaphylaxis Emergency Treatment Plan: A.C.T.

• Administer the epinephrine auto-injector
• Call 911, stating you have an child with anaphylaxis
• Transport to hospital in an ambulance

Sample strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to peanuts and tree nuts in the classroom and common school areas:

Communication (e.g. by letter, newsletter, school web site etc.) is sent to each family in the school outlining that the school has students with life threatening allergies to peanuts/tree nuts and requesting parent/guardian support in making the school a minimized allergen environment by not sending or bringing food products that contain or may contain peanuts and/or tree nuts.

Include reminder items during holiday times and celebrations that the school is a minimized allergen environment and food items with peanut/tree nuts should not be brought on school site.

Provide parents of students in the allergic child’s class with information about how they can assist in supporting a safe learning environment. This communication should come directly from the school administration, not from parents of the allergic child.

Inform parents that food items should not contain traces of peanuts/nuts for celebrations (e.g., birthdays etc).
Stress with staff to be vigilant in not having food items with peanuts and other nuts in the school and not to bring food products that may contain the allergen (e.g. baked goods such as donuts, cookies from doughnut shops etc) to staff meetings/lunches or special occasions e.g., birthdays.

School fund raisers should avoid products containing the very allergens (e.g. peanuts and tree nuts) that the school is trying to minimize (e.g. chocolate almonds).

Teachers, particularly in the primary grades, should be aware of the possible peanut/nut allergens present in curricular materials:

- play dough;
- bean-bags, stuffed toys (peanut shells are sometimes used)
- counting aids (beans, peas);
- Science projects;
- special seasonal activities,

Students with anaphylaxis should not be involved in garbage disposal, yard clean ups, or other activities which could bring them into contact with food wrappers, containers or debris.

Foods are often stored in lockers and desks. Allowing the anaphylactic student to keep the same desk all year may help prevent accidental contamination.

LIST OF PEANUT/TREENUT FREE ITEMS:
Direction from Anaphylaxis Canada is NOT to provide a list of “safe” peanut/tree nut-free snacks, etc. The contents of products and the lines on which they are produced change often and cannot always guarantee that their product is peanut/tree nut free. The best advice is to request the parents/caregivers read the contents of the packages and where it says ‘may contain’ nut products – please do NOT send. Send to those parents requesting information the: PEANUT-TREE NUT ALLERGEN INGREDIENT CHECKLIST.
MILK AND EGG AVOIDANCE STRATEGIES

Anaphylactic reactions to milk and egg can occur when relatively small quantities are ingested. Therefore, the allergic child must avoid all traces of milk/egg. Direction from Anaphylaxis Canada is that products containing milk and eggs are ones that are not to be banned or restricted, as trying to eliminate them is both unrealistic and a burden for the wider community.

Risk Reduction Strategies – Milk
It is imperative for teachers to collaborate with parents/guardians to establish suitable risk reduction strategies.
Along with following key safety rules such as:
• carrying epinephrine auto-injector, and not to eat without the auto-injector
• wearing medical identification, such as a Medic-Alert bracelet
• eating only food items approved by parents/guardians
• Not trading or sharing foods, utensils or food containers
• Washing hands before and after eating

Elementary schools have adopted different strategies to reduce the risk of exposure for milk and egg allergic children.

MILK:
Milk products -
Where milk products are allowed in classrooms the following practices are implemented to reduce the risk:
• Children are given straws to put in bevel topped milk containers (which are distributed through milk programs) and are taught to close the top once the straw is inserted.
• Children who bring milk from home are asked to bring it in a plastic bottle with a straw.
• Children at risk for milk allergy sit at a table where spillable milk products are not being consumed. Alternatively, they sit at the same table but not directly beside classmates who have spillable milk products, e.g. milk, yogurt.
• Some parents of milk allergic children either take their child home for lunch on pizza days (where they have this option); others send their child with a homemade milk-free pizza or an alternative snack so they can still participate. Special care should be taken to ensure that children properly wash their hands after pizza lunches.

Risk Reduction Strategies: EGG
It is imperative for teachers to collaborate with parents/guardians to establish suitable risk reduction strategies.
Some food products which may contain egg protein are: bread bushed with egg white, deli meats with egg, drinks such as orange julep, and egg substitutes. Non-food items that may contain egg protein include: egg tempera paints, cosmetics, and shampoo.
In classrooms where there are egg-allergic children, parents and staff have worked to reduce the risk of accidental exposure by:
• Avoiding egg in cooking classes or egg shells in craft activities. (This includes both egg whites and yolks, either cooked or raw.)
• Selecting activities which do not involve the use of egg for special activities, e.g. Easter egg decorating or hunts (with real eggs).
• Seating children with egg allergy away from those who bring eggs for lunch or snack (e.g. hard boiled, egg salad sandwiches) or whose food may contain eggs (e.g. mayonnaise).
APPENDIX D

LATEX ALLERGY AVOIDANCE STRATEGIES

The latex sensitive need to avoid primarily elastic forms of latex rubber such as gloves and balloons.

Strategies to reduce the risk of exposure to latex products in classroom and common school areas:

Meet with parents/guardians of the anaphylactic child to work together to develop strategies to reduce the risk of exposure using the school’s protocol as a guide.

Provide parents of students in the allergic child’s class with general information about how they can assist in supporting a safe learning environment.

Inspect school facilities and replace where possible latex items with non latex products.

Inform parents not to bring in balloons for celebrations/crafts etc. into the classroom area.

Order latex free first aid supplies e.g. non latex gloves, non latex band aids.
APPENDIX E

INSECT VENOM (STINGS FROM BEES, WASPS, HORNETS, YELLOW JACKETS) RISK REDUCTION STRATEGIES

Meet with parents of the anaphylactic child to work together to develop strategies to reduce the risk of exposure, using the school protocol as a guide.

Student carries an epinephrine auto-injector with them during insect season.

Student directed to stay away from areas where stinging insects gather such as gardens, hedges, fruit trees and garbage cans.

Inspect outside facilities/playground for bee nests on a regular basis. Contact the Board’s Plant Department to have nests removed. Caution students not to throw sticks or stones at bee nests.

Advise students to:
- Wear light colours and avoid loose flowing garments.
- Wear shoes instead of sandals during the warm weather (do not go barefoot).
- Avoid highly fragrant varieties of products such as perfumes, colognes, suntan lotions, cosmetics, hair sprays or deodorant which attract insects.

Keep outdoor garbage away from eating and play areas (especially outside) and make sure they are covered with tightly fitted lids. Consider restricting eating areas to designated locations inside the school building during daily routines. This allows for closer supervision, avoids school yard clean up, and helps reduce the prevalence of stinging insects.

Depending on the severity of bee presence on the playground consider the following:
- Keep the students with a life threatening allergy to insect venom inside the school for all recess/noon periods during bee season/bee presence.
- Students outside under visual supervision by the teacher on yard duty. Students would be met by yard supervisor inside at their exit door and remain in visual contact at all times while outside (carrying their Auto-injector). The student would have to follow the yard supervisor as they patrolled the yard.
- Set up a ‘buddy system’. Student would be allowed the freedom of their designated yard area for his/her grade level (carrying their auto-injector). The ‘buddy’ would be an extra pair of eyes for the presence of bees as well as contacting the yard supervisor in case the anaphylactic student was stung.

If a bee/wasp gets into a classroom, immediately remove the student from the room.

Inform and identify to the bus driver, the student who has a life threatening allergy to bee/wasp sting. During bee season the following protocol is to be followed:
- The student is to occupy the first seat opposite the bus driver.
- Check that prior to departure that no bees are on the bus.
- The NO EATING rule, on the bus, is strictly adhered to.