

GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS AND EVENTS

The following guidelines were developed by the Wellness Committee regarding the planning of snacks, celebrations and after-school events. These guidelines have been developed to support Wellness Policy* goals, to be inclusive of students who have food restrictions, and to promote a clean and pest-free environment for our students. Our shared goal is not to eliminate celebrations, but to coordinate and plan food events that include healthy choices and offer alternatives to food celebrations that will limit excessive caloric intake and encourage physical activity. Our goals in making these recommendations are to foster a culture of moderation, increase health awareness and promote a healthy school environment for all students.

Holidays, birthdays, and other special occasions are wonderful opportunities for gatherings that help to build and strengthen communities. The emphasis in celebration can be on activities other than eating. The number of food celebrations throughout the school year should be limited. Principals and teachers can collaborate to determine best practices for individual schools.

- BRAINSTORM with grade level colleagues to identify age appropriate celebrations.
- BUILD CONSENSUS and agreement among parents and students.
- CHOOSE which occasions will include food in celebration.
- PLAN parties in advance.
- COMMUNICATE with families so that everyone will know what to expect.

**Research links
healthy habits in
childhood to higher
achievement in school,
and to healthier
adult lives.**

FOOD GUIDELINES

- Schedule food events after lunch
- Food should be consumed in cafeteria when possible
- Nuts and peanuts in cafeteria only
- Provide a nut/peanut restricted table in the cafeteria
- Restrict specific foods in classrooms with known allergies
- Dispose of food waste to avoid attracting pests
- Store classroom snacks carefully to avoid attracting pests

AVOID

- High sugar foods such as candy, cupcakes, doughnuts
- Nut/Peanuts consumption in the classroom
- Using food or treats as a reward
- Excessive quantities

NEVER

- Offer foods to children with food allergies without parental approval

* see page e 26 in Policy manual online, <http://www.brookline.k12.ma.us/nr/rdonlyres/D3BA8345-7162-4172-9Ce2-5C840187eCe7/1604/sectione6507.pdf>

**For information
on nutritious snacks,
refer to our
Healthy Snack
Handout.**

ALTERNATIVES FOR BIRTHDAYS

- Principal announces birthday over PA
- Hat, crown or badge for the birthday child
- Parent of child visits classroom to lead a special activity
- Teacher posts birthdays on bulletin board – classmates pin up cards, wishes
- Circle time: each child says or writes something positive about the birthday child
- Birthday student makes morning announcements over PA
- Line leader, messenger for the day
- Birthday student helps teach a class of interest

ALTERNATIVES FOR REWARDS

- Recognition at assembly
- Extra recess time
- Free choice time
- Special activity- arts, crafts, performance, sports
- Extra computer time
- Extra reading time
- Chat break
- Homework pass
- Free ticket to a school event
- Stickers, pencils, books