

DUBUQUE COMMUNITY SCHOOL **HEALTHY SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS**

Schools play a powerful role in influencing students' food choices. Birthday parties and holiday celebrations at school provide a unique opportunity to help make healthful eating fun and exciting for students. There are several ways that schools can ensure that students' eating habits contribute to their learning achievement and lifelong good health. Typically foods for school celebrations include cupcakes, candy, cookies, and soda. Even though there is nothing wrong with an occasional treat, unhealthy food choices have become more the norm than the exception. Teachers can also shift the focus of the celebration from the food to the student or an activity. This list will only have celebration suggestions. See the Healthy School Snack suggestions for food options.

(It is suggested that each school send a list of healthy food/snack choices for parties, birthdays, and celebrations to parents at the beginning of the school year.)

SUGGESTIONS FOR CELEBRATIONS:

- Make your own pizza party using chopped vegetables, fruits, and low-fat cheeses.
- Make your own fruit sundae bar with fresh fruit and low-fat yogurt or sorbet.
- Host a culture club – ask students to find and prepare healthy recipes from different cultures.
- Host an agriculture day – ask a local produce grower to bring in produce and have a tasting party.
- Play indoor/outdoor games of the students' choosing.
- Engage students in a special art project.
- Take students on a field trip.
- Allow an extra recess time instead of a party. If a birthday celebration, let the birthday student choose and lead an activity.
- Plan special party games and activities. Ask parents to provide game supplies, pencils, erasers, stickers, and other small school supplies instead of food.
- Create a healthy party idea book. Ask school staff and parents to send in healthy recipes and ideas for activities, games, and crafts. Compile these ideas into a book that staff and parents can use.
- Instead of food, ask parents to purchase a book for the classroom or school library in the birthday student's name. Read it to the class or invite student's parent to come in and read it to the class.
- Instead of a party, organize a special community service project.
- Create "Celebrate Me" book. Have classmates write/draw something that is special about the birthday student.
- The birthday student is the teacher's assistant for the day and gets to do special tasks like make deliveries to the office, start an activity, etc. Or, allow student to spend special time with the principal, etc.
- Have a dance party.

SOME HOW-TO TIPS FOR HEALTHY PARTIES

- Variety is the “special of life” and the “life of the party.” Plan several contrasting activities- active and quiet, indoor and outdoor, individual and group.
- Try something new. Students like adventure. In addition to familiar games and foods, offer something different.
- Plan creative experiences such as art, music and cooking.
- Involve students in planning and preparing the party. Let them make decorations and favors.
- Put food in its proper place. Refreshments should compliment the fun, not become the “main event.”
- Be sure that each student receives a prize or favor, if such awards are given.
- Don’t use food as a prize or reward.
- Choose foods for fun, good taste and health. Parties that feature healthful foods provide opportunities for students to practice making wise food choices.

Please refer to the Dubuque Community School District Wellness Policy for specific guidelines. such as food size portions.

WARNING: Some students have severe **peanut and/or tree nut allergies or other food allergies**. Before bringing in peanuts, peanut butter, or other nuts as a snack, check with the School Nurse to make sure none of the children/staff has an allergy. Make sure all ingredients are known/listed.

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