



Palos 118 is continuing its effort to address student health and wellness and to comply with the state law that took effect January 1, 2011 regarding prevention and management of life-threatening allergic reactions. This law required a change at our elementary schools in regards to birthday treats and room parties. The Board of Education adopted policy 7:272- Prevention and Management of Life-Threatening Allergic Reactions in 2010 to comply with the requirements.

Schools now have the responsibility to check all foods provided for students and to control classroom distribution of foods that are on the “big eight” allergy list: peanut, tree nut, milk, egg, wheat, soy, fish, and shellfish, especially when children in the class are allergic to them. In the lunchroom there is a different expectation for students. Each parent provides a personal lunch for his/her child, or chooses to purchase lunch from a prescribed menu. Further, there is no social peer pressure in the lunchroom for a student to consume certain foods or treats. The law recognizes this difference. Beginning January 1, 2011, the following took effect:

1. Edible birthday treats will **not** be permitted at school. This change will expand the district’s wellness program to promote student health and to comply with the legislation.
2. Non-edible birthday treats are prohibited because it is difficult to manage the type and value of such items in a fashion that would be fair, non-embarrassing, and economically available to all.
3. PFA sponsored room parties do not have food treats.

While these new rules may seem severe, it has been our experience that most students receive the greatest satisfaction from personal birthday recognition given in the classroom and attention received throughout the day. School-wide birthday celebrations will be implemented to ensure that each child receives this recognition. The PFA will continue to develop each seasonal party around a theme that features games and crafts that students will enjoy.

Finally, as a point of clarification, individual student snacks sent to school for consumption by your own child will continue. Lunchroom procedures will also remain the same. South Middle School does not permit birthday treats nor conduct room parties.

Parents who have questions or comments may contact their building principal.