



Dear Parents/Guardians,

At Encinitas Union School District, we work hard to ensure that students' minds and bodies are ready for learning each day. In addition to the hard work our teachers and staff do every day to prepare students for success in the classroom, we can also work to encourage healthy eating and physical activity, leading them to lifelong success. By helping them start healthy habits early in life, we can help reduce our children's' health risks and increase their chances for longer, more productive lives.

Birthdays and classroom celebrations are great opportunities to promote a healthy lifestyle, provide consistent messages and create excitement around nutritious choices at school. In line with the EUSD Wellness Policy and the district's focus on health and wellness, **classroom celebrations will be held once per month**, at the end of each month, to celebrate birthdays and any other classroom events. For these celebrations, the district encourages non-food birthday celebrations or healthy snacks for parents to bring in for students. All student birthdays can be celebrated on one day with one big celebration!

In planning for Classroom Celebrations, Parents/guardians should:

- Honor their child's birthday by sending non-food treats such as stickers or pencils
- Ensure all food sent to school for birthday celebrations promotes healthy food choices (see the list of healthy snack ideas attached to this letter).
- Ask your child's teacher what non-food or healthy rewards/incentives they are utilizing in the classroom.
- Become involved in planning school parties that include games, crafts, and healthy foods/beverages.
- Participate in brainstorming ideas for healthy, non-food focused fundraisers for the school.

To encourage your participation in this plan, attached to this letter you will find suggested food and beverages. These items are consistent with the intent of the district's Wellness Policy and will promote healthful eating among our students. If together with the teacher it has been determined that food will be served at the monthly celebration, it should be food that meets the healthy food guidelines and is void of any of the allergens of the classrooms.

As educators, caregivers, and loved ones, we all want the best for our students. Thank you for joining us in giving students healthy opportunities to celebrate important events and achievements.

If you have any questions, please contact your school teacher or principal. We are looking forward to making our school the healthiest it can be for our students to be successful!

Sincerely,

Encinitas Union School District

Our goal is not to cut out all treats, but to make sure they are eaten in moderation and are not the primary focus of parties or celebrations. The focus should be on fun, not food. The list below provides healthy suggestions for celebrations.

Healthier Options

- Trail mix
- Fruit or vegetables
- Popcorn (air popped)
- Low-fat yogurt
- Pretzel products
- “Ants on a Log” celery with peanut/almond or sun butter and raisins
- Cut veggies with low fat dip
- Whole wheat pita bread or crackers with hummus or bean dip
- Fruit Kebabs
- Fruit smoothies
- Dried fruit or 100% fruit leathers
- 100% fruit popsicles
- Frozen banana pops- sliced in half, dipped in yogurt and rolled in a whole grain cereal
- String cheese and whole grain crackers
- Build your own mini pizzas with whole grain English muffins and healthy toppings
- Beverages: 100% fruit juice, water, nonfat or lowfat milk, Spa water, sparkling water

We encourage parents to use the list above as a guide in providing healthy snacks. You may also choose to bring in non-food items to give to each child on your child’s birthday. Here is a list of ideas:

- Glow-in-the-dark items
- Slap bracelets
- Party hats
- Bubbles
- Chalk
- Stickers
- Little toys
- Stamps
- Plastic rings
- Erasers
- Holiday theme items
- Pencils
- Crayons
- Pens
- Decorative pencils
- Key chains

Here are a few other ways that you can celebrate your child’s birthday at school:

- Donate a book to the school in honor of your child’s birthday with his/her name inside
- Have your child bring their favorite book to share and read it to the class
- Donate a ball or jump rope to the classroom for recess
- Choose a favorite song or musical piece to sing or play for the class

When providing snacks for a classroom party or celebration, keep these things in mind:

- Snacks should be kid-size. Both children and adults don’t need large portions.
- Snacks should be colorful. Kids eat with their eyes. Make snacks visually appealing.
- Snacks should be healthy. Offer fruits and vegetables as often as you can.
- Drinks should be served in small portions, a cup or less each. Water is the healthiest choice.