Healthy Classroom Celebrations

Encinitas Union School District is committed to fostering a culture of health and wellness that supports the physical, mental, and emotional well-being of all students. Our Health and Wellness initiatives aim to equip students with lifelong habits, skills, and strategies to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Recognizing the vital connection between wellness and academic success, the district is dedicated to creating an environment where both students and staff are encouraged and empowered to make informed, healthy choices every day.

Classroom Celebrations: Birthdays and classroom celebrations are valuable opportunities to support healthy habits, align with consistent wellness messaging, and make nutritious choices fun and exciting for students. In accordance with the Encinitas USD Wellness Policy and our commitment to student health, **classroom celebrations will be scheduled once per month**—typically at the end of each month—to recognize birthdays and other classroom milestones. Families are encouraged to consider non-food options for birthday celebrations or to provide healthy snacks when food is included. To support a balanced day, any celebrations involving food must **take place after lunch**. All student birthdays can be celebrated together in one fun and inclusive classroom event!

Healthy Birthday Celebration Ideas:

- Parents can wrap their child's favorite book in birthday wrapping paper. The child can unwrap the book and the teacher can read it to the class.
- Create a "Celebrate Me" book. Have classmates write stories or poems and draw pictures to describe what's special about the birthday child.

The Birthday Child can

- Lead their favorite physical activity outdoors
- Bring their favorite toy to share with the class or one for each student in the class
- Parents can bring non-food treats for the whole class: pencils, stickers, key chains, etc.
- Be the teacher's assistant for the day
- Wear a special crown, sash, button or badge all day
- Choose the class music for writing or independent student time

Healthy Classroom Snack Ideas:

- Cut veggies with dip
- Cut fresh fruit
- Fruit Kebabs
- Fruit smoothies
- Dried fruit or 100% fruit leathers
- 100% fruit popsicles
- Frozen banana pops
- Whole grain pita bread or crackers with hummus
- "Ants on a Log" celery with sunbutter and raisins
- String cheese and whole grain crackers
- Build your own mini pizzas with whole grain English muffins and healthy toppings

Healthy Classroom Event Ideas:

- Watch an educational video as a class and serve popcorn (air popped)
- Put on some music and have a dance contest or dance party
- Have a gardening party, visit the school garden, plant seeds, etc.
- Make it a learning experience and celebrate the students' cultural heritage with traditional crafts, games and stories
- Incorporate special guests into the celebrations. For example, invite a parent or special guest to come read a book or talk to the class
- Celebrate with a fun outdoor activity like a kickball game
- Set up activity stations and rotate (twister, bean bag toss, etc.)

Healthy Beverage Ideas:

Water
100% Fruit Juice/Lower sugar juice options
"Spa Water"- water flavored with fruit
Nonfat or Low-fat Milk

Be Mindful of Food Allergies

Each classroom has a list of the allergies that are present in the class. Work together with the teacher and other classroom parents to bring in options that will include all students, even those with allergies.

Tips for Parents & Teachers:

- Work together to plan your monthly celebrations- class parents, work with your teacher and other parents to plan activities and/or healthy snacks
- Come up with a list of fun celebration ideas
- Keep food allergies in mind and work with other parents to come up with food ideas that will include all students

For more information regarding healthy celebrations, please contact your teacher/Principal, or check out Encinitas USD Wellness Policy at eusd.net/departments/child-nutrition-services under "Student Wellness."

Encinitas
UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT

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