

FOREST HILLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Guidelines for Food in the Classroom

Board of Education Policy 8510A, adopted August 2009

We recognize that food has had an important role in celebrating accomplishments and milestones in our classrooms.

To promote good nutritional practices and provide the **safest environment for all students**, we have developed the following Guidelines for Food in Classrooms.

Rationale

- Using food as a reward teaches children to eat when they aren't hungry.
- Using food as a reward undermines nutrition education and encourages over-consumption of foods high in added sugar and fat.
- We have numerous students in every school with multiple food allergies (many are life threatening). These students may experience reactions with ingestion and/or contact with food residue.
- Recent reports indicate approximately 9 million children older than age 6 in the United States are obese, leading to an increasing incidence of Type 2 diabetes.
- Recent legislative initiatives mandate that school districts develop policies regarding diet and nutrition which require foods served or available to students have high nutritional value and are low in fat, sodium and added sugar.

Definitions

- *Snack* – food with nutritional value (pizza, cheese, crackers, fruit, vegetables, yogurt) eaten between meals
- *Treat* – foods with no nutritional value (candy, cake, cupcakes)

Procedures for Food in Classrooms

- We strongly recommend that special events be celebrated with either nutritious “snacks” or remembrances such as pencils, stickers, note pads, donation of a game or book in the child's name for his/her classroom or school library.
- Any food or drinks brought in to school for instructional purposes or celebrations will be authorized at least 2 days in advance by **both the classroom teacher and the principal**. This will ensure that the needs of students with food allergies (e.g. soy, red dye, milk, wheat, egg, yeast, chocolate, cheese, etc.) will be met. Peanut/tree nut products or items processed in facilities that process peanuts will **not** be allowed.
- If food is authorized to be brought into the classroom, parents and staff are asked to supply edible snacks that are commercially prepared by a licensed food vendor. (This can include fruit and vegetable trays.) Pre-packaged foods should list all ingredients on the labels. **No food or drinks will be permitted without prior authorization.**

Health Standards

- Students will understand concepts related to health and wellness as a foundation for a healthy lifestyle.
- Students will understand the relation of food to health and wellness.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to practice health-enhancing behaviors and reduce health risks.
- Students will advocate for personal, family and community health.