

# Ada Vista Elementary

## School Policy Regarding Birthday Celebrations



**Important:  
Please read!**

One of the enduring social traditions of elementary school is celebrating birthdays with classmates. Ada Vista Elementary asks you to consider the following as you and your child(ren) decide how to celebrate birthdays with classmates at school this school year.

In the last several years, we have observed a sharp increase in food allergies among Ada Vista Elementary students. According to the CDC, 4% to 8% of children in the U.S. have food related allergies. The number of children in Forest Hills and at Ada Vista who are unable to participate in edible treats appears to exceed this national rate. In addition to allergies, there is increasing national and local concern about the number of children being diagnosed with other health issues such as obesity and diabetes.

Many Ada Vista parents and staff have expressed concerns about the treats our children are eating during the school day. We believe that parents should have final say in their own children's nutrition and food intake, and so we are moving away from edible birthday treats, as some of our Ada Vista teachers, and other elementary schools in Forest Hills have done in the last few years.

**Instead, we suggest that birthdays be celebrated with books!** On your child's birthday, plan for your child to share a favorite book with his/her classmates. Or you might consider having your child give a book as a "legacy gift" to your child's classroom or the media center at Ada Vista. Your child can present a book to his or her classroom with a bookplate or inscription inside showing that it was donated in honor of his/her birthday. Other legacy gift ideas might include a board game or playground toy. Please remember to add some type of label to the donation stating your child's name and the year in order to memorialize the event and recognize your child's generosity. Ada Vista Elementary is a tremendously generous community. A birthday is a wonderful opportunity for your child and his/her schoolmates to share a lasting gift that can be enjoyed day after day.

**If your child prefers to give each classmate a small non-food token,** the possibilities are endless and you can find them in a price range to rival two dozen edible treats! A few ideas are:

Pencils	Erasers	Gel pens/markers
Stickers	Silly straws	Stress balls/squeeze balls
Temporary tattoos	Colored pencils	Jump ropes
Super balls/bouncy balls	Decorated shoe laces	Sea shells
Pencil sharpeners	Backpack decorations	Small card games
Book marks	Mini notebooks	Seed packets
Visors	Kazoos	Yo-yos

Birthdays ARE a special time, and celebrating birthdays at school create special memories. Ada Vista wants your child to enjoy his/her own special day in a way that can include all of your child's classmates and in a manner that is safe and healthy for all.

Thank you so much for your cooperation as we implement this new procedure for celebrating birthdays at Ada Vista and all other elementary schools in Forest Hills Public Schools.

¡Gracias!

