

## Healthy Celebrations

Wellness Policy and Guidelines: Classroom celebrations that include food should strive to limit to one per month. Best practice would be to eliminate food and offer fun, creative, and engaging crafts, physical activity, and/or learning experiences. Be creative in celebrating without undermining valuable nutrition messages. If food/beverages are served, use the Smart Snack nutrition calculator. Use age appropriate portion control. Do not serve food/beverages with high fructose corn syrup, fried foods, or foods with sugar as the first ingredient.

- Invite a special guest (clown, musician, puppeteer, singer, “celebrity” reader)
- Watch a special (approved) movie
- Play games, particularly those involving physical activity
- Extra recess instead of party
- Birthday student leads an activity
- Birthday student is the teacher’s assistant
- Parent donates a book in honor of birthday and read it to the class
- Build a healthy snack:
  - Yogurt parfaits – low fat yogurt, fruit and granola
  - Fruit kabobs
  - Fruit pizzas
  - Individual pizzas (made with pita bread)
  - Wraps (turkey, chicken, vegetable)
- Better choice food/beverage items: (single serve)
  - Angel food cake – plain or topped with fruit
  - Animal crackers
  - Applesauce cups
  - Baked chips
  - Cakes/Brownies (low fat)
  - Chex mix/Goldfish snack mix
  - Cheese cubes, string
  - Fig Newtons
  - Frozen juice bars/sherbet
  - Fruit (fresh)
  - Graham crackers
  - Granola bars/Cereal bars (reduced fat, low fat)
  - Ham (lean), cheese (low fat), or turkey sandwiches (with low fat condiments)
  - Ice cream treats (low fat)
  - Individual fruit cups packed in juice
  - Juice boxes (100% juice with no added sweeteners, 8 ounces)
  - Milk (K – 8: low fat, 8 ounce, up to 140 calories)
  - Mini bagels with low fat spreads
  - Mini cereal boxes/bags
  - Muffins (low fat)
  - Nuts & Seeds
  - Pizza – low fat toppings (veggie, lean ham, Canadian bacon)



- Pizza dippers (pizza toppings and bread on skewer with marinara dip)
  - Popcorn (popped in trans-fat free oil)
  - Pretzels
  - Pudding cups (low fat)
  - Quesadillas with salsa
  - Raisins/dried fruit
  - Rice cakes
  - Smoothies
  - String cheese/low fat cheese cubes
  - Sunflower seeds
  - Trail mix (nuts, dried fruit, cereal)
  - Vegetables and dip (small)
  - Water (flavored, calorie-free)
  - Yogurt cups (low fat)
  - Yogurt parfaits
- Themed celebrations
    - Thanksgiving: create a garland of gratitude; do a service project
    - Winter: decorate the classroom in a winter theme; make cards for nursing home;
    - Valentine's Day: write positive comments about each classmate (nice smile; you are fun)
    - St. Patrick's Day: learn Irish step dance; decorate the room; scavengers hunt that leads to a pot of gold; read about Irish history or St. Patrick.
    - Spring: plan a nature walk; decorate plastic eggs with physical activity messages in them (hop on one leg 5 times; do 6 jumping jacks); visit a garden, orchard, farm;
    - Physical activity maze decorated around theme
    - Create a themed special craft
    - Decorate door competition
    - Sports (Super Bowl, World Series, etc.)

Note: At each school the EVSC Food and Nutrition Cafeteria Manager may be able to provide a delicious and nutritious snack at a discounted price.

Smart Snack in the School Nutrition calculator is available at the following website:

<https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator/>