

Birthday Celebration Policy

Port Barre Elementary Families,

This year, we will be implementing a school wide building policy regarding birthday celebrations. **We will no longer be allowing food treats to be brought in.** Deliveries of balloons, flowers, etc. for students will not be accepted in the front office. This policy is necessary for the safety of all our students. Some of the considerations are:

Safety: With 1 in 13 of children having at least one food allergy, anyone serving food to children needs to be made aware of food allergies and the potential for a life-threatening allergic reaction. More than 15% of school aged children with food allergies have had an allergic reaction at school. These reactions range from mild to severe and even fatal. The safety of all students is one of PBES's top priorities.

Inclusion: Sending in a food treat to a classroom to celebrate can exclude those children who have food allergies, diabetes, or other dietary restrictions. It can also exclude children who come from families facing financial hardships who are unable to afford to send in items for a special celebration.

Loss of instructional time: Although staff will continue to find creative ways of celebrating birthday/special events with students, it is important to protect the instructional day so that it is not spent on cutting cake, cleaning up messes, and dealing with hurt feelings.

We also ask that if students intend to hand out party invitations at school that they only do so if they plan to give one to every student in the class. If that is not their intention, they will need to make other arrangements to invite friends.

Please know that we are not trying to take the fun out of birthdays. If you would like to celebrate your child's birthday, there are suggestions for non-food ways to do so on the bottom of this letter. We just ask that you always check with your child's teacher prior to sending something in.

This is a learning process for all of us, but we trust that you understand how deeply important it is to respect and adhere to these guidelines. The safety of our students is our utmost priority and we appreciate your cooperation and understanding. Thank you for your continued partnership!

Tiffany Perry
Principal

Non-Food Alternatives

Non-Food Trinkets: such as pencils, erasers, coloring books, etc.

Board Game Donation: classrooms are always looking for items to help entertain students on those rough weather days where we need to remain inside for recess.

Recess Donation: donate a jump rope, basketball, soccer ball, etc.

Craft Activity: ask your child's teacher if they would be willing to let you come in and do an arts and crafts project with the class.

Science Experiment: volunteer to bring in items to complete a STEM activity or science experiment. This is a great way to not only celebrate a birthday but have a little fun and learn something along the way.

Autograph Item: send in a special item such as a t-shirt or picture frame that your child's classmates and teachers can autograph for them. This is a great way to create a lasting memory of this special occasion.