



HAUPPAUGE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

BRETTON WOODS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

1 Club Lane
P.O. Box 6006
Hauppauge, New York 11788

George Gagliardi
Principal

August 2017

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The education, health and safety of our students are the primary goals of our schools. Our District Wellness Committee has worked hard to focus attention on the importance of making informed choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits.

Teachers are a constant presence in their students' lives and, as such, have the perfect opportunity to establish a healthy climate in their classrooms. Food may often be included in classroom activities; for example as classroom celebrations, birthday parties and snack. Oftentimes in our culture we look to food to celebrate and to acknowledge our successes, which can be appropriate at times. However, the constant availability of high fat, high sugar foods can lead to overeating as well as set up an unhealthy relationship with food where internal hunger cues are ignored. In addition, because much of the food presented to a child is not high in nutrients, the child is exposed less and less to nutrient-rich alternatives that can promote healthier food preferences.

Your child may celebrate his/her birthday on an agreed upon day with the classroom teacher. We strongly request that non-food based celebrations become more the norm as opposed to the exception. Listed below are some non-food ideas for celebrating birthdays in the classroom. This will help teachers set the tone in their classroom - one that reflects health, well-being and an environment conducive to learning. In addition, it will provide a safer environment for students with food allergies.

- Provide a class set of birthday pencils, stickers, etc.
- Have your child bring in his or her favorite book to read to the class.
- Share photos from your child's early years

Classroom parties to celebrate the holidays will offer many of the traditional fare but will also provide students with healthier selections to encourage making good choices. Parents who want more restricted dietary plans for their child may decide not to have their child partake in any of the food in the celebrations. Parents are asked to contact their child's classroom teacher to discuss their concerns and alternative options.

Finding healthy snacks to send with your child to school can be a challenge. Healthy Snack Guidelines offered by the Heart Links organization are provided on the back of this letter to make these selections easier for parents. Please discuss with your child the choices they are making in the cafeteria on the snack line. Encourage the need to limit the amount of snacks they purchase and to only eat these items after they eat their lunch.

Working together with the Bretton Woods community, we can help to create an environment that supports the development of a healthier lifestyle.

Thank you in advance for your on-going support.

Sincerely,

George Gagliardi
Principal