

Putnam County Schools

School Celebration Guidelines

SY 2023-24

Foods available at school should contribute to the development of sound nutritional habits. All foods offered to students must reflect concern for the health and well-being of all students. All Putnam County Schools are being directed to follow the practices outlined below:

Classroom Celebrations:

- All foods served must meet all requirements of the policy and be considered safe for all children to consume in the classroom setting.
- Healthy food items shall be considered and preferred! See a list of suggested healthy party foods.
- For student safety, no homemade treats from individual student/staff households are permitted!
- Approved school-wide party times during the school day will be after the end of the last lunch period.
- Food items must be commercially prepared, packaged and factory sealed with a visible ingredient and nutrition label so they may be properly evaluated for possible allergy reactions with students. The exception would be fresh vegetables, fruits, and bottled water.
- No individual student birthday parties at school will be permitted! (Parents cannot bring food treats to individual classrooms to celebrate their child's birthday).
- Treat bags that include food are not permitted. See a list of suggested party favors for treat bags.
- Beverages permitted will be bottled water, 100% fruit juice, and milk only.
- Food allergens and ingredients—Food items containing the 8 most common allergens must be considered for children while at school (**peanuts, tree nuts, milk, eggs, wheat, soy, fish, shellfish, sesame**). Treats that contain these allergens will not be permitted if these allergens exist with students in individual classrooms. **Food items that include peanuts or tree nuts (almonds, brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamias, pecans, pine nuts, pistachios, and walnuts) may not be served.** Cross contact can occur with food manufacturers when a safe food encounter's a food allergen. Precautions must be taken when approving all foods containing these allergens. Chocolate candies are not permitted due to them being manufactured in plants that also contain peanuts and/or tree nuts.
- All school sponsored events that also include food items, but which may be prepared in bulk will be approved and purchased by the Putnam County Schools Child Nutrition Office and/or prepared in a Putnam County Schools facility that is regulated and permitted by the local health department. This will ensure safety and sanitation requirements are met. The county Child Nutrition Office will follow all guidelines for safe consumption for all students.
- **These guidelines regulating foods served in schools at celebration events are subject to change as often as the WVDE and USDA regulations are revised and updated. These guidelines may change annually or as needed.**
- The county Child Nutrition Office will be available to assist schools and to offer support and guidance in the selection of appropriate food items for all children.

Good nutrition and the value of healthy food choices are often taught in classrooms. To keep our children healthy, school administrators, teachers, staff and parents can work together to offer healthy classroom party alternatives. The focus of school parties and events should be more about the planned activities and games than the food itself. Portion sizes should be of a reasonable size given the age of the students.

Healthy classroom party food suggestions:

- Fresh fruits with low-fat dip
- Fruit cups packed in juice or water
- Squeezable applesauce
- Raisins or dried fruit snacks
- Fresh vegetables with low-fat dip
- Hummus or low-fat dips or salsa
- Mini bagels or muffins
- Yogurt cups or tubes
- Low-fat string cheese sticks
- Low-fat Skinny pop popcorn
- Low-fat, low-salt tortilla chips, pretzels, baked chips
- Frozen 100% juice bars
- Frozen yogurt
- Low-fat pudding cups
- Whole grain cereals
- Whole grain crackers, goldfish crackers, graham crackers, animal crackers, teddy grahams
- Nutra-grain bars or low-fat granola bars (be aware of products that contain nuts)
- Rice crispy bars or rice cakes
- Bottled water
- 100% fruit juice
- Low-fat or non-fat milk

Nonfood treat bag suggestions:

Pencils	Keychains	Coloring Books	Stencils	Silly Sunglasses
Pens	Mini Flashlights	Tattoos	Bookmarks	Crazy Straws
Crayons	Shoelaces	Pencil Toppers	Glow Sticks	Pinwheels
Markers	Bracelets	Bubbles	Kazoos	Bouncy Balls
Erasers	Rings	Silly Putty	Sidewalk Chalk	Magic Wands
Coupons	Notepads	Stickers	Beach Balls	Rulers
Frisbees	Jump ropes	Yo-Yos	Puzzle games	Slinkies
Whistles	Finger Puppets	Paddle balls	Magnets	Jacks