

Dear Ridgewood Avenue Parents,

Here at Ridgewood, we continue to have a very large number of students with life threatening food allergies. The numbers seem to vary between 45-50 students each year. We like to discourage the use of baked items at school not only for the safety of these children but also as an awareness to nutrition and the growing obesity problem.

The Department of Agriculture gives us the parameters for not serving any foods of minimal nutritional value. Our Administrative code and BOE policy defines how we are to manage Life Threatening Food Allergies in school in order to keep our students safe. We would like to keep class parties to a minimum and celebrations healthy.

In the past, crafts have been successful and still provide a special time for the parents and children alike. Goody bags without food are also a great substitute. We encourage you to be creative. Most parties take place after lunch so a meal is not necessary. A healthy snack such as, cut fruit, veggie platters, cheese and crackers and either fruit juice or bottled water.

ALL food products that enter the school must have the ingredients listed. If ingredients are not listed the food will be sent home. This is certainly nothing new but the parties seem to have taken on a life of their own and could possibly be life threatening to some.

I have had to administer an epi-pen several times during school. Although our staff and I are trained for this emergency, it is a traumatic experience, especially for the child involved. Please consider this when planning any parties at school. It will be greatly appreciated.

So, with all that being said, class parties should be fun and healthy. Food can even be absent with some creative minds.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me, or Mr. Donovan.

Thank you for your support and understanding.

Warmest regards,

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"Caring is the essence of Nursing" jean watson