

SAMPLE PARENT LETTER

Below is a sample letter to parents from the principal regarding celebrations and fundraisers. Attach the Healthy Snacks List in the DineWELL section as a resource for parents.

Dear Chicago Public Schools Parents and Guardians,

{School Name} understands the important link between health and academic performance. In addition to the hard work our teachers and staff do every day to prepare students for success in the classroom, we are working to encourage healthy eating and physical activity. By starting these healthy habits early in life, we can help reduce our children's health risks and increase their chances for longer, healthier lives.

To ensure all students have a healthy school environment in which to learn and play, CPS established LearnWELL: an initiative to support all schools in achieving the criteria of the district's wellness policies. These policies include guidelines for recess, physical education, nutrition education, physical activity, and all foods available on school grounds. Please review the following summary of the CPS Healthy Snack & Beverage Policy.

Fundraisers:

- Foods may not be served or sold on school grounds at ANY TIME during the scheduled meal times of the National School Breakfast and Lunch Programs, including food sold for fundraisers, in vending machines, or school stores. Meal times refer to the span of time that all grades are scheduled to eat lunch or breakfast.
- Only foods that meet nutritional criteria can be offered on school grounds during the school day. The school day is defined as 12:00am to 30 minutes after final dismissal.

Celebrations:

- The Healthy Snack and Beverage Policy requires that schools adopt local school celebration guidelines. If guidelines are not established schools will default to providing foods and beverages of minimal nutritional value only twice per year. The two celebrations must be approved and documented by the Office of Student Health and Wellness (OSHW).
- Schools should celebrate student achievements, holidays, and birthdays by focusing on fun rather than food
- Student birthday celebration treats should be non-food items (i.e. pencils, stickers, erasers)
- Foods cannot be homemade and must be purchased with an ingredient label and provided in sealed container(s)

Rewards:

- Teachers and staff should not use food as a reward. Food may not be withheld from any student for any reason.
- In the case of student detention, students must be allowed go through the dining center service line and select a meal.

Parents/guardians should:

- Honor their child's birthday by sending non-food treats such as stickers or pencils
- Ensure all food sent to school for birthday celebrations promote healthy food choices (see the list of healthy snack ideas attached to this letter).
- Ask your child's teacher what non-food or healthy rewards/incentives they are utilizing in the classroom. (Art parties, dance parties, etc.)
- Become involved in planning school holiday parties that include games, crafts and healthy foods and beverages.
- Participate in brainstorming ideas for healthy, non-food focused fundraisers for the school.

We encourage your support of this plan and attached to this letter you will find the CPS Approved Snack List. These items meet CPS nutrition guidelines and will promote healthy eating among our students. As educators, caregivers and loved ones we all want the best for our students. Thank you for joining us in giving students healthy opportunities to celebrate important events and achievements.

In health,

{Principal Name}