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BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Dear Parents or Guardians,

This letter is written to share information with you about our district wellness policy/practice that addresses treats and treat bags. Our school district organized a wellness committee comprised of teachers, parents, an administrator, and our district's director of nutrition.

As a committee, this team enacted a health and wellness practice of not allowing home baked treats, bakery treats, or treat bags containing food items. All birthday or special day treats must be commercially packaged with an intact nutrition label (see example on the back). We encourage families to send healthy snacks. Fresh fruit and vegetables are allowed if they are factory or commercially sealed and packaged (ie: packaged apple slices, packaged celery). Snacks requiring freezing or refrigeration will not be allowed unless cleared by an administrator. If there is an allergy in the classroom, an allowable treat list will be sent home by the classroom teacher. Schools have the right to refuse any birthday treats, special treats or snacks that do not meet school requirements. Treat bags containing food items will not be allowed at any time which includes classroom parties (ie: Halloween, Christmas, and Valentines parties.)

This decision was made after much thought and discussion at a District level, as a community, and as a staff. There are a variety of reasons why this change has been made, the main one being; to coordinate and align our district's wellness policy with federal regulations. The purpose of the wellness policy and committee is to assure a school environment that promotes and protects students health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. The complete policy is available on the Ottawa Elementary District Website: <http://http://www.oes141.org>.

Other rationale for restricting treats at school includes: Expense, Equity, and Allergies. Our new no home baked or bakery treats policy compliments our healthy snack policy of fruits and/or vegetables, cheese and yogurt snack break guidelines. We realize not everyone supports this change. We have learned that parental support has been more than favorable from the schools and classrooms that have moved in this direction. Please know that we are not trying to take the fun out of birthdays or classroom parties. Classroom teachers will continue to recognize children on their special day in special ways. Thank you in advance for your support and for helping to promote healthy snacks at Ottawa Elementary. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your school's principal.

Sincerely,

OES Wellness Committee

Mission Statement

"Our community is committed to quality education provided by the Ottawa Elementary School District for all children in a positive and inviting environment that empowers students to become diverse and global lifelong learners"