Create a healthy celebration for students by focusing the party on activities and games instead of food. Make the food count at your party by providing healthy choices.

- Plan special party games and activities.
- Create a healthy party idea book. Ask school staff and parents to send in healthy recipes and ideas for activities, games and crafts. Compile these ideas into a book that staff and parents can use.
- Instead of a party, organize a special community service project. Involve parents in planning the project.
- For birthdays, let the birthday child choose and lead an active game for everyone.
- Create a “Celebrate Me” book. Have classmates write or draw a picture to describe what is special about the birthday child.
- Make the birthday child the teacher’s assistant for the day and let him or her do special tasks like make deliveries to the office, lead the line, start an activity and choose a game or story.
- Make a healthy snack with the students.
- Introduce students to fruits they may have never tried such as star fruit, kiwi, mangos and papaya.

**Healthy food ideas for classroom parties**:

- Thin crust pizza with low-fat toppings (ham, Canadian bacon or just cheese)
- Fruit or grain muffins
- Bagel slices with jam
- Hot pretzels
- Popcorn (no butter added)
- Sandwiches or wraps with turkey or ham
- Yogurt parfaits
- Yogurt topped with granola
- Yogurt whips
- Go-gurt
- Ice cream cups (Example: Blue Bunny’s ©100-calorie cup)
- Fruit by the Foot - Ingredient statement will specify grapes, orange juice or pears from concentrate
- Fruit Roll-Ups - Ingredient statement will specify grapes, orange juice or pears from concentrate
- Fruit Gushers - Ingredient statement will specify grapes, orange juice or pears from concentrate
- Fruit Snacks - Ingredient statement will specify grapes, orange juice or pears from concentrate
- Fresh fruit and cheese kabobs
- Cheese cubes or string cheese
- Angel food cake, plain or topped with fruits
- Fruit pizza
- 100 percent juice products

**Remember, in accordance with sanitation standards, all food brought to school from home for classroom parties must be store-bought**

Food not allowed: most cookies, cakes, candies and cupcakes.
The Missouri Eat Smart Advanced Guidelines do not allow food to be given as a reward.

Alternative ideas for classroom rewards

Elementary
- Stickers, pencils or bookmarks
- Certificates
- Show-and-tell
- Bank system - earn play money for privileges
- Extra computer time
- Make deliveries to the office
- Be the classroom helper
- Sit by friends
- Play a favorite game
- Fun physical activity break
- Dance or listen to music in the classroom
- Have extra art time
- Watch a fun video
- Eat lunch or have class outside

Secondary
- Sit with friends
- Reduced homework or no homework pass
- Extra credit
- Fun brainteaser activities
- Computer time
- Watch a fun video
- Five-minute chat break
- Listen to music while working at desk

Using food as rewards teaches children to eat when they are not hungry. This can lead to problems for children such as obesity, diabetes and hypertension. Using food as a reward can also undermine classroom nutrition lessons. Students are taught about a healthy lifestyle and choosing healthy foods in proper portion sizes.

Parent Group Fundraisers

The District strongly encourages parent groups to adhere to the Eat Smart Advanced Guidelines for fundraising events for our schools. Please see requirements below regarding catalog sales.

Updated - July 2014
- If the fundraiser is a 100-percent food item catalog, 25 percent of the items should meet the Missouri Eat Smart Advanced Guidelines.
- If it is a mixed product catalog, no more than 25 percent of the items can be food (It is not mandatory that this 25 percent meet the Advanced Guidelines but we encourage you to find a healthy mix).

Resources

http://extension.missouri.edu/FNEP/nutrition displays/celebrations/FEBFoodAsRewardHO1.pdf

Classroom party ideas
http://www.reasontoparty/schoolevents.htm

Party ideas for school and home
http://party-games-etc.com/school/