

September, 2007

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In June, 2004, the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act was signed into law making it mandatory for local education agencies to create a local wellness policy. As a District, we will continue to offer nutritious food and beverage choices consistent with current Dietary Guidelines for Americans for Food Guidance System published jointly by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Agriculture.

The health of all of our students is very important! It begins with a healthy diet. Last year a ban on “junk food” was instituted in all elementary and middle schools in Illinois. Our District is compliant with the law. The lunches served in our buildings are high in nutritional content; students do not have the ability to purchase candy, soda, and chips. Healthier children have higher attendance rates, better behavior, and superior test scores.

The health of our students also depends on ensuring that students with food allergies are not put in danger. Recent studies have indicated that an estimated 600,000 children in the U.S. are allergic to peanuts. Yet peanuts are only one of six foods that most commonly cause allergic reactions in children. Others are everyday staples such as milk, eggs, wheat, soy, and tree nuts (walnuts, almonds, pecans, etc). The number of children with food allergies is growing at an alarming rate each year. Many of these children are so sensitive to certain foods that they may require emergency care when exposed. Ingredients contained in seemingly harmless homemade products can be potentially lethal to a student with an allergy.

This year, in addition to making sure that the food provided by the district is healthy and safe, we will also monitor food brought in from home. On occasions such as birthdays and room parties, parents volunteer and provide food for students within a classroom. In order to control the nutritional content and monitor the ingredients in all donated food the following procedures will be implemented in all district schools.

- Food items for birthdays, parties, and snack breaks will only come from an approved list (see attached list).
- All treats must be “store bought” and packaged with ingredients listed (No bakery products will be accepted).
- Parents may bring lunch for their children only.
- Food items that may be used for rewards will be limited to the approved snack list.

I realize that parents who do not have children with allergies may find these procedures unfair. However, as a school community dedicated to children, we must protect the health and safety of all students. I remain confident that by following these procedures we will provide a healthier environment for all.

For the Children,

Dr. Gary A. Peck, Superintendent