

## **Birthday Celebration Policy**

Dear Port Barre Elementary Families,

At Port Barre Elementary, the safety and well-being of our students are our highest priorities. To ensure a secure, inclusive, and productive learning environment for every child, we are implementing a school-wide policy regarding birthday celebrations. We ask that all families adhere to the following guidelines:

### **Birthday Celebration Guidelines:**

- **No Food Treats:** We will no longer allow food items (such as cupcakes, cookies, or candy) to be brought to school for birthday celebrations.
- **No Outside Deliveries:** The front office will not accept deliveries of balloons, flowers, or gift arrangements for students.
- **Party Invitations:** Students may only hand out party invitations at school if **every student in the class** receives one. If you are planning a private event for a select group, please make arrangements to distribute invitations outside of school hours.

### **This policy is necessary for some of the following reasons:**

1. **Safety & Health:** With 1 in 13 children affected by food allergies, serving shared food poses a significant risk for life-threatening reactions. Statistics show that over 15% of school-aged children with allergies have experienced a reaction at school; we are committed to preventing these emergencies.
2. **Inclusion:** Food-based celebrations often exclude children with allergies, diabetes, or specific dietary restrictions. Additionally, we want to remove the financial pressure on families who may struggle to provide treats for an entire classroom.
3. **Instructional Integrity:** Our primary goal is to protect teaching time. By moving away from food celebrations, we eliminate the time spent on setup, cleanup, and the management of social distractions, ensuring the focus remains on learning.

**Continuing the Celebration** Our staff will continue to find creative, non-food ways to recognize and celebrate our students' special days within the classroom. We encourage parents who wish to do something special to consider "non-food" alternatives, such as donating a book to the classroom library or providing small items like fun pencils or stickers.

We trust that you understand how deeply important it is to respect these guidelines. We appreciate your continued partnership in keeping our school a safe and welcoming place for all children.

Thank you for your continued partnership!

Sincerely,

**School Administration, Port Barre Elementary**