

September 2017

**To: St. Jude the Apostle Parents and Guardians**  
**From: Mrs. Schulte, Principal & Mr. English, Vice Principal**  
**Re: Student food safety 17.18**

Please know that the safety of students is a priority for the administration each and every day. For students to learn, they need to be kept physically, emotionally, and spiritually safe. Food safety for students who have food allergies and diabetes falls into the category of physical safety. These are medical conditions that could be life-threatening.

There is a documented increase in the last ten years based on data from the Center for Disease Control for the number of students who have these conditions. Today, 1 in 13 children has food allergies, and nearly 40% of these children have already had a severe allergic reaction, and in many cases, these can occur at school.

Our goal is to have school and classroom celebrations that keep all children safe. To accomplish this, administration and faculty have created guidelines for student food safety:

- Keep the classroom celebrations as food-free as possible.
- Ask families to restrict identified allergens from the classroom.
- Avoid using food as a reward. As a staff, we are focusing on using non-food incentives.
- Find safe, fun, and inclusive ways to celebrate.

*Birthday celebrations:* We focus on birthdays being recognized by the classroom teacher. Each grade level has worked out positive ways for children to be recognized on their special day. Birthdays are also announced as part of student council morning announcements.

*Valentine's Day:* Valentines that are brought to school should not have candy attached. This will also apply to the student council Valentine-gram sales. There are lots of creative options for stickers, pencils, and other fun items to replace candy.

*Holidays and other celebrations:* Using the guidelines above, grade level teachers and administration meet and discuss the food items appropriate for each event, and communicate what is needed with the room parents.

**Reminder:** Any distribution of food needs to be cleared with the administration. When in doubt, please call. Any items brought without clearance will be sent to the office.

As always, our decisions are based first and foremost on student safety. We appreciate the high level of parental involvement and enthusiasm throughout the school year. We look forward to your continued contributions to creative and fun student celebration activities. Thank you in advance for your cooperation and support.