

## Healthy Classroom Rewards for Students

*A Teacher's guide to healthy classroom choices according to the Nebo School District Student Wellness Policy*



This generation of students faces extraordinary health issues related to diet and exercise. Healthy students are better learners. As a result, the Nebo School District Student Wellness Policy, passed in 2008, created some guidelines for when foods and beverages are made available to students. The policy asks that the food and beverages be more nutritious and feature healthy choices. See: <http://www.nebo.edu/pubpolicy/E/EFA.pdf>

How can teachers assist in helping our students adopt healthier practices?

- 1) When recognizing students please keep the following in mind:
  - a. Non-food rewards are enjoyed by students who are diabetic, suffer from allergies, or have been taught at home to avoid unhealthy food.
  - b. Many students would rather have a variety of rewards other than a piece of candy. (Extra credit, homework passes, extra recess time, prizes, pencils, praise, time with teacher, stickers, privileges, etc.)
  - c. Help parents choose non-food celebrations. These can include playing games, making crafts, or purchasing items for your classroom such as books, hand sanitizer or sporting equipment.
  
- 2) Use of healthier snacks. If food is to be served, consider nutrient rich products. Nutrient rich products are healthier than products with “empty calories.”
  - a. Examples of nutrient rich products are: Fruits, dried fruits, vegetables, string cheese, granola bars, yogurt, fruit smoothies, fruit juice, water, milk, whole grain crackers, breads or rice cakes, whole grain breakfast cereal, lightly buttered popcorn, pretzels, lightly salted nuts (be careful of allergies), raisins, peanut butter, trail mix, granola, and real fruit roll ups.
  - b. If beverages are provided, choose water, milk or products with 100% juice instead of soda pop or non-fruit juice drink.
  
- 3) Occasional use of empty calorie snacks
  - a. Empty calorie snacks are foods that have little nutritional value. These products contain primarily refined grains (white flour), sugar, saturated and/or trans fats, and high fructose corn syrup.
  - b. The constant and repeated use of empty calorie products should be replaced by more progressive and healthier choices.
  - c. Work with parent classroom volunteers to choose appropriate times and activities when empty calorie snacks might be served.

Together, parents and teachers of Nebo School District can help students to achieve and maintain good physical health as part of the child's growth and education.