Dear Parents/Guardians,

In the spirit of creating a welcoming environment for ALL learners, we have been reviewing various district processes and protocols to support all learners. During this process, we have revised the Valley View School District food policy in response to the significant increase of students with life-threatening allergies. These updates are also in alignment with recommendations for safe schools, and are similar to surrounding districts processes and protocols. It is our intention in Valley View School District 365U to be transparent with communication regarding birthday treats, daily snacks, and class celebrations. Please read below for more information regarding our food policies. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact your school administrator. We appreciate your understanding and cooperation in keeping all of our students safe and healthy.

**Birthday Treats:** We recognize that birthdays are important to every child and that kids like to celebrate with their classmates. The school administrators and teachers also honor birthday children on their special day in a variety of ways. We are asking that any birthday treats sent to school for your child’s birthday is a non-food item. To celebrate your child’s birthday, please consider donating a small gift to your child’s classroom or providing non-food items for the students. This could include: donating an educational game, a book for the class library, a ball or jump rope for class recess or a pencil (or other trinket) for each student in the room.

**Healthy Snacks:** Each classroom teacher will assess if and when to allow snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. Each teacher will communicate to parents/guardians the classroom healthy snack policy. If healthy snacks are allowed, it is the parents/guardians responsibility to provide healthy snacks from home. This is to ensure that each child has healthy food that is safe for him/her. Please be aware that many classrooms will have restrictions on the type of food allowed due to allergies within the classroom.

**Class Celebrations:** Throughout the school year, children and teachers have numerous reasons to celebrate. Celebrations are a great way for children to feel part of the school community, where the learning environment is made festive and where children, teachers, and parents can come together to enjoy a break from the routine. In the past, school celebrations have revolved around food. Foods such as cupcakes, cookies, candy, chips, and beverages are often the central components of the school party menu. Class celebrations at Valley View School District 365U will focus on an activity and/or craft rather than food. No food will be served at class celebrations. Classroom teachers will determine what type of celebration will be held and will notify you of party specifics and if parent volunteers are needed.

**VVSD Student Handbook States (Page 25):**
“Due to food allergies and other health concerns, food may not be brought into the school/classroom for group consumption, whether the food is shared at school or sent home.”

Providing a safe environment for all children is a top priority, we greatly appreciate your help in achieving this goal!

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Martinez