

Gloucester County Public Schools Wellness Committee

Healthy Celebrations

Birthdays, holidays, appreciation, good behavior and more! It is important to celebrate our students and staff and let them know we care. However, sweet rewards do not have to contain sugar! There are tons of other ways to celebrate important milestones in school. Moderation is key! It is not about taking away all the sweet stuff, but finding balance and encouraging others to choose healthy foods and non-food treats most of the time. Here are some resources to check out for lots of sweet ideas!

Celebrations

- <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/storage/documents/parent-toolkit/partner-resource-pdfs/healthypartyguide-cando.pdf>

Rewards

- <https://www.eatright.org/health/wellness/healthy-aging/say-yes-to-nonfood-rewards>
- <https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/activity/healthy-active-non-food-rewards/>

Fit Fundraisers

Fundraisers are an important tool to secure funding for the great programs, initiatives, and equipment our schools need to grow and thrive. However, fundraisers can also be a source of promoting and supporting unhealthy options and choices. Focusing on activity-based, non-food and healthier food fundraisers is important for the overall message and culture we are creating in Gloucester. Gloucester has celebrated their 9th year of our Educational Foundation 3k & 8K Run/Walk.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/gloucester-high-school-virginia/2020-gloucester-educational-foundation-3k8k-runwalk/661990387656491/>

Did you know that there are federal regulations that prohibit the selling, marketing, and promotion of foods DURING the school day that do not meet Smart Snacks in Schools standards? Refer to the wellness policy for more details on sale of food during and after school hours. <https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/15b2898c/files/uploaded/health%20and%20wellness%20guidelines.pdf>

- <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/game-on/find-challenges/at-home-challenges/1207-healthy-fundraising>
- <https://www.fns.usda.gov/best-practices-healthy-school-fundraisers>

Savvy Snacking

Many schools provide snack time during the school day for classes that eat lunch early or late during the day. Snacks are an important way to provide energy for the brain and body to keep kids thinking and learning all day long. GCPS encourages students to bring healthy snack options to school to ensure kids have the important nutrients they need to think, play, and grow.

The ideal snack includes lean protein, whole grains, and healthy fat. Also, snacks in class may be sitting without refrigeration for several hours and teachers often encourage snacks that don't make too much of a mess! We also prohibit snacks containing nuts in the classroom to protect our friends with life

threatening allergies. Please follow your school's requirements for snacks as they may have additional practices.

- <https://cspinet.org/protecting-our-health/nutrition/healthy-school-snacks>
- <http://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/childrens-health/in-depth/childrens-health/art-20044350?pg=1>
- <http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/planning-and-prep/snack-and-meal-ideas/25-healthy-snacks-for-kids>

Packing Healthy Lunches

Gloucester County Public Schools offers innovative, nutritious and cost efficient breakfast and lunch programs, which strives to encourage a lifetime of good nutrition. For more information related to Food Services, go to <https://gets.gc.k12.va.us/food-service>. However, for those families that choose to pack lunches for their students, we encourage nutritious choices to fuel students for a day of learning and fun. Packing a healthy lunch is about balance, variety, and choice. We encourage you to use the USDA's MyPlate (<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/>) as a guide for creating a balanced lunchbox.

- <http://www.parents.com/kids/nutrition/lunch/healthy-school-lunches-snacks/>
- <http://www.eatright.org/resources/food/nutrition/eat-right-at-school>
- <http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/nutrition/eat-right-at-school/my-child-doesnt-eat-the-lunch-i-pack-what-do-i-do>

Brain Games

Brain Boosters, also commonly known as brain breaks or brain energizers, are effective breaks in learning that last only a few minutes to help refocus the learner. These breaks help active, energize, and stimulate the student's brains. Active brain boosters get students up and moving during a lesson or transitions within the classroom environment.

Check out more resources on brain boosters

- <https://www.edutopia.org/article/brain-breaks-restore-student-focus-judy-willis>
- <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/tools-for-schools/1252-brain-breaks-instant-recess-and-energizers>

Active Lessons

Kids are made to move! Additionally, the kid (and adult) brain is not made to maintain attention all day long and continue to be active and engaged. The classroom holds an enormous opportunity to engage students in learning through movement and kinesthetic learning. Kinesthetic learning incorporates movement and action into the learning process and replaces more sedentary and passive learning experiences like lecture or demonstration. Gloucester County Public Schools encourages our schools to incorporate movement throughout the day, including walk and Talk after lunch and during the learning process.

Want to learn more about physical activity, and its impact on the brain and student? Here are some resources to get you started

- <http://brainrules.net/exercise?scene=>
- <http://activelivingresearch.org/active-education-physical-education-physical-activity-and-academic-performance>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/physicalactivity/facts.htm>

Active Recess

Recess is one of the few times of the school day that provides less structure and more opportunities to play. Research shows that play is an important part of child development and even contributes to the learning process in the classroom. Along with the physical benefits of recess, there are social, emotional, and cognitive development and impact as well.

Providing students recess in our elementary schools is part of our GCPS Wellness Policy <http://web.gc.k12.va.us/J%20Students/JHCF%20Student%20Wellness.pdf>. All schools should be providing at least 30 minutes of recess, which includes transition time, most days of the week. While recess provides students will personal choice, we encourage students to be active during recess time. We also encourage teachers to incorporate movement and activity, as practicable, during recess time on the days where they enjoy indoor recess due to inclement weather. Many of our elementary schools have walk and talk after or before eating lunch each day.

- <http://www.playworks.org/playbook/studies?page=1>
- <http://www.playworks.org/playbook/games>

Smart Snacks Standards

Smart Snacks in Schools, developed by the USDA, is the federal regulations that provides nutrition standard requirements for all foods sold during the school day that is outside of the reimbursable school meal program. This includes a la carte foods in the cafeteria as well as foods sold in vending machines, school stores, or during-school fundraisers.

Foods that are offered/provided but not sold to students during the school day does not follow the same regulatory standards; however, we encourage schools and families to offer foods that do align with the standards outlined in the Smart Snacks in Schools guidelines.

For more information on Smart Snacks in Schools standards, please visit <https://www.fns.usda.gov/healthierschoolday/tools-schools-focusing-smart-snacks>

Also, to determine if a food or beverage meets the standards, the Alliance for a Healthier Generation has a great online tool.

<https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator/>