



Mary Hopkins Elementary School

PROUD SCHOOL OF HAMILTON-WENTWORTH DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

At Mary Hopkins, we strive to create a welcoming and inclusive environment for all students. We're constantly looking for ways to celebrate diversity and ensure everyone feels included in our school community.

One area we're focusing on is classroom celebrations for holidays, birthdays, and other special occasions. Traditionally, these celebrations often involve families sending in food items to share with the class.

However, we've come to realize that this can sometimes pose challenges, such as:

- **Food allergies and sensitivities:** Ensuring everyone's safety is a priority. With food allergies on the rise, it can be difficult to ensure a safe environment for all students.
- **Inclusiveness:** Not all families feel comfortable or are able to contribute food items. We want to ensure all students feel they can participate in celebrations.
- **Convenience:** Preparing and sending in food can add an extra burden to busy families.

Therefore, we're moving towards alternative ways to celebrate in the classroom that are inclusive and fun for everyone! Here are some ideas we'll be exploring:

- **Class activities and crafts:** Students can create decorations, sing songs, or participate in themed games related to the occasion.
- **Sharing stories and traditions:** Students can share stories or traditions from their own cultures and backgrounds.
- **Reading books and poems:** Teachers can choose books or poems that celebrate diversity and inclusion.

While we appreciate the sentiment behind sending in treats, to ensure a safe and inclusive environment for all students, we kindly ask that no food items be sent in for classroom celebrations.

We understand that some families may enjoy celebrating their child's birthday at school. If you'd like to acknowledge your child's birthday in the classroom, we encourage you to consider non-food options such as a small gift for the teacher to distribute to classmates (pencils, stickers, etc.) or a donation to the classroom library in your child's honor.

We appreciate your understanding and support as we implement these changes. We believe this will create a more inclusive and enjoyable experience for all our students.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact your child's teacher or myself.

Sincerely,

Susete Bloom, Principal