



Tom Smith
Principal

VANSVILLE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

HOME OF THE WILDCATS

6813 Ammendale Road, Beltsville, MD 20705
301-931-2830 Phone 301-931-2840 Fax
<http://www.pgcps.org/vansville>



Shawna Holden
Assistant Principal

October 14, 2009

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As we continue to have a productive school year, we feel that there needs to be clarifications about bringing items to celebrate a child's birthday at school. Daily we recognize the children who are celebrating birthdays and a birthday pencil is provided to them. We have been experiencing several parents bringing in cakes, cupcakes, snacks bags, balloons, stuffed animals, presents, etc. to celebrate their child's birthday at school. We do recognize that this is a special event for not only children but for parents. However, it has gotten out of hand. We have established the following guidelines so we can make sure that this type of celebration does not interfere with our day to day operations of the school:

1. A contact must be made at least 48 hours in advance with the child's teacher.
2. It is strongly recommended that we celebrate with a healthy snack rather than high sugar, high fat, high preservatives/additives. Remember we have several students that have allergies to many foods.
3. If you choose to do a baked item, only cupcakes...no sheet cakes for this presents a problem with clean up, cutting, etc.
4. If you choose to bring an item, there must be enough for the entire class. When you make your contact with the teacher, the count can be provided. These guidelines also pertain to items brought during the child's lunch period to celebrate. Again, there must be enough for the child's class. There have been many incidents where the parent comes to during the child's lunch period with a hand full of items. Having a child choose who he will share items with presents hostility and hurt feelings.
5. Balloons, gifts, flowers, etc. will not be allowed.
6. If items are brought, the teacher will share the items with the class the last 15 minutes of our school day or a time determined by the teacher. We want to remember our focus is instruction and every minute counts.
7. Guests are limited to parents/guardians. Bringing the extended family definitely interferes with our classes. Please save such large family celebrations for home.

We appreciate your compliance with this matter. The guidelines for celebrating a child's birthday are left to the individual schools. We do not want to eliminate this part of a child's experience, so compliance is necessary to avoid such action.

Again, thank you for helping us out with this matter.

Tom Smith
Principal

Imagine, Believe, Achieve