WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO USE NON-FOOD REWARDS?

Students are often offered snacks as a reward for good behavior or accomplishments. While doing this may be easy and effective, using food as a reward can:

- Send the message to students that achievements should be celebrated by eating
- Encourage students to eat when they're not hungry, a habit that could last a lifetime
- Contradict healthy eating messages and practices being taught at home and school

It can also lead to weight gain - one study found that using food incentives or rewards that promote low-nutrition foods in a school is associated with a 10% increase in students' body mass indexes (BMI)!

WHAT DOES THE DISTRICT’S WELLNESS POLICY SAY?

SDP Policy 145: Student and Staff Wellness states that "District schools will not use unhealthy foods or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior."

If food is used as a reward, it must comply with the USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards. Use this Smart Snacks Product Calculator to find foods that comply:

foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

There are plenty of fun alternatives to food rewards! Flip over for a list of easy ideas you can use with students of all ages - either individually or for the whole classroom.

If you choose to use food rewards, try offering healthy class-wide rewards after a long-term group goal has been met instead of immediate food reinforcements. For example, you could give the class one letter at a time from the word "SMOOTHIE" as an immediate reward for good behavior, then hold a smoothie party when the word is spelled out!

For more information, visit philasd.org/nutrition
TAKE ACTION!

INDIVIDUAL REWARDS

Student of the week
Student recognition board
Certificate or ribbon
Phone call, email, or letter to parents
Free time for activity of choice
Extra computer time
Shout-out in morning announcements
Homework pass or extra credit
Choose activity for class
Pick a prize from the "treasure box"
Make a delivery to the office
Be a classroom helper or line leader
Show and tell to the class
Walk or have lunch with the principal
Earn points toward privileges or prizes
Sit in the teacher's chair
Read morning announcements
Lead a movement break

CLASS-WIDE REWARDS

Classroom recognition board
Extra recess or PE time
Game day
Listen to music while working
Dance party
Free time at the end of class
Watch a movie
Earn points toward privileges or prizes
Dress-down day
Have class outside

WHAT EAT RIGHT PHILLY CAN DO:
The Eat Right Philly team can help every step of the way! We can offer more ideas and provide assistance in transitioning to non-food rewards.

CONTACT US TODAY TO GET STARTED!
Reach out to your Eat Right Philly Educator or visit our website to find out which partner is working in your school and access their contact information.

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