

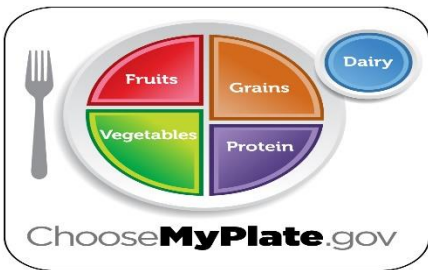


HEALTHY FOODS LETTER

Dear Family,

In an effort to provide students with the healthiest environment we can, and to adhere to the new Hillsborough County Licensing Recommendations, we are encouraging you to provide only healthy foods for lunches and school snacks.

Children need foods for energy, vitamins, minerals and other nutrients, and to help them grow, learn and be active. Healthy students are better able to pay attention in class and do their best school work. We want your children (our students!) to be the healthiest they can be. Hillsborough County Licensing recommends that your child has a lunch that consists of food from four of the five different food groups. All children staying at school past 11:30 must bring a lunch.



The food groups are:

- **protein**—lean meats, legumes, tofu, and nuts
- low-fat **dairy** foods such as milk and yogurt
- **fruits** and 100% juice
- **vegetables** and 100% juice
- **grains** such as bread, cereal, crackers and popcorn.

Snack Ideas

A good guideline to follow when choosing foods for healthy snacks is to choose foods and beverages that are low in fat and sugar and are minimally processed. Snacks that are especially good for kids (and adults!) are fruits and vegetables, low-fat dairy products such as milk and yogurt, and whole-grain foods including whole-wheat tortillas, bread, and cereal. Lean meats, eggs, and nuts in small portions can be healthy snacks, too. Processed, less-healthy snack foods such as chips, sugary drinks, candy and cake are OK to eat once in a while but should not be offered every day. These foods usually have a lot of extra and unnecessary fat, calories, salt and/or sugar.

Several parents have asked for suggestions on what to send to school on their child's snack day. The following is a list of recommended foods. Of course, this list is not all-inclusive. We do ask that you send food from two different food groups in order to comply with Child Care Licensing standards. Sending in 100% fruit juice would cover one food group.

Animal crackers
Apples
Bagels (whole-grain)
Banana
Carrot/celery sticks
Cereal
Cheese
Crackers
Fresh Fruit – all varieties
Graham crackers
Granola bars
Grapes (cut in half)

Melons
Muffins (whole-grain)
Nilla Wafers
Oranges
Peaches
Pretzels
Pudding
Rice cakes
Strawberries
String cheese
Fresh Veggies – all varieties



Combinations
Baked tortilla chips and salsa
Fresh cut-up fruit with yogurt for dipping
Low-fat cheese melted on a whole-grain tortilla
Ritz crackers w/ cheese
Vegetables and low-fat dip
Whole-grain crackers or toast with hummus
Yogurt with whole grain cereal or fruit on top

Join with us in making God's Garden Preschool the healthiest it can be so our students can thrive and do their best work!