

# Valentine's Day Reminder

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Remember Valentine's Day celebrations of your youth? While much has remained the same, times are certainly different, particularly as it relates to food allergies. That said, we wanted to remind you about Harte's food guidelines to ensure the children's safety.

Researchers estimate that up to **15 million** Americans have food allergies. This potentially deadly disease affects 1 in every 13 children (under **18** years of age) in the United States. That's roughly **two** in every classroom. And it's critical to note that these statistics would suggest that there are many children with food allergies who have yet to be diagnosed.

On a related note, we are bound by federal and state guidelines and district policy which prohibit us from allowing:

- foods of minimal nutritional value as defined by U.S. Department of Agriculture regulations;
- all food and beverage items listing sugar, in any form, as the first ingredient; and
- all forms of candy.

Consequently, in response to the need to keep all of our children safe and remain in compliance with state and federal regulations, Harte has taken the progressive stance of not allowing candy to come in for birthdays or holidays. Once again this year, our PTA has generously offered to provide a school-wide snack that is both allergy sensitive and meets nutritional guidelines. To that end, when purchasing Valentine's Day cards, please do not select those that include candy.

**Thank you in advance for your support and cooperation. These protocols should assure us of a festive and safe Valentine's Day celebration.**

