

Purpose: The purpose of this policy is to establish clear guidelines for classroom celebrations that promote a positive, inclusive, and safe learning environment while adhering to district health and safety guidelines. Classroom celebrations should enhance the educational experience, foster community, and respect the diverse backgrounds and needs of all students.

Below is Amani Public Charter School's revised policy for Middle School Classroom Celebrations **This goes into effect, December 2nd 2024**

Policy Guidelines

A. Inclusion and Respect for All Students

- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Classroom celebrations should be inclusive and mindful of the diverse cultural, religious, and personal beliefs of students and their families. Celebrations should be designed to avoid any exclusions based on cultural practices, holidays, or dietary restrictions.
- **Non-Religious Celebrations:** While celebrating various events such as birthdays, holidays, or academic achievements, celebrations must remain neutral with respect to religion, ensuring that all students feel included and respected.
- **Special Needs Accommodation:** Any student with food allergies, dietary restrictions, or other special needs must have appropriate alternatives provided. Teachers should communicate with parents/guardians about such needs prior to celebrations.

B. Health and Safety Considerations

- **Food Guidelines:** All food served at celebrations should meet the district's health and safety standards, including the avoidance of items that are allergenic or unhealthy for the majority of students (e.g., nuts, high sugar content). **Food must be pre-packaged or come from a certified source to prevent contamination.**
- **Allergen-Free Zones:** **Amani is a nut free establishment.**

C. Academic Focus

- **Learning Goals Integration:** Celebrations should never interrupt instructional and learning time. Teachers are encouraged to tie celebrations into relevant curriculum connections to enrich student learning.

- **Limit Disruption:** Classroom celebrations should be scheduled in a manner that minimizes disruption to the instructional day. Celebrations should be brief (typically no more than 15 minutes) and should not interfere with core academic time.

D. Birthday and Personal Celebrations

- **Scheduling:** Parents must schedule a request for a classroom celebration at least 5 days in advance. All parent requested celebrations take place only during Wednesday's Advisory period. Once a parent schedules this with the homeroom/advisory teacher, the teacher is responsible for informing the main office. ****Birthday celebrations and personal milestones should not disrupt the larger school environment. **Parents are encouraged to provide pre-packaged treats or simple favors (stickers) if desired keeping in mind health and allergy considerations.**
- **No Extravagant Gifts:** Large or disruptive gifts or decorations should not be brought to school.
- **Invites:** The school does not permit the distribution of invitations on school grounds.
- **Avoiding Competitive Celebrations:** Celebrations should avoid creating feelings of competition or exclusivity.

E. Teacher's Role in Celebrations

- **Neutral Stance:** Teachers should act as facilitators, ensuring that celebrations are respectful, inclusive, and promote a positive classroom environment.
- **Communication:** Teachers should regularly communicate with parents and guardians regarding celebration expectations, especially regarding birthdays, holidays, and other student milestones.

F. Examples of Acceptable Celebrations

- **Academic Milestones:** Celebrating the completion of a class project or successful academic achievement (e.g., perfect attendance, honor roll) with certificates, a class shout-out, or simple treats.
- **Seasonal Celebrations:** Acknowledging seasonal holidays (e.g., Fall, Winter) with non-religious activities such as arts and crafts, group games, or community service projects.
- **Special Days:** Recognizing special observances such as National Reading Month, International Day of Peace, or Earth Day, with relevant, educational activities.

Classroom celebrations at the middle school level are an opportunity to build community, celebrate success, and create a positive and inclusive atmosphere. By following this policy, celebrations will be memorable and meaningful, reflecting our commitment to providing a respectful, supportive environment for all students.