



# St. MICHAEL PRESCHOOL

## Power Snacking

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Dear Parents,

Your child will be offered a snack each day they are at school. Your child's teacher will be asking you to sign up to send in a snack for the whole class. We encourage healthy low-sugar snacks and have found that asking parents to send in snacks for the whole class exposes the children to a wide variety of nutritious foods. Thank you in advance for your participation and generosity.

### **Safe Snacks:**

To maintain a safe environment for children with life-threatening allergies, **snacks may NOT contain peanuts/tree nuts or peanut/nut products. *This includes foods that have been produced in a plant with nut products.*** Please carefully read the food labels on the snacks you send in. Due to potential choking hazards, all grapes, cherries, and mini tomatoes must be cut in half. Popcorn and hard candy are not permitted.

### **Birthday Celebrations:**

For birthdays, parents will be asked to bring a snack based on the "Power Snack" guidelines (see below). Fun suggestions might include:

- Whole grain muffin with whipped Greek yogurt icing
- Diced fresh fruit-filled ice cream cone
- A snack in your child's favorite color
- Simply your child's favorite snack
- Serving power snack on party plates

Children will be recognized on their birthday with a special certificate, crown, hat, song, etc.

### **Healthy Power Snacking:**

Possibilities of healthful snacking are endless. Ideally, snacks should be a good balance of carbohydrate, protein, and fat. They should also include, when possible, natural foods that are high in protein and fiber.

There are great benefits to the body when protein is consumed with carbohydrates high in fiber (think fruits, veggies, and whole grains). Protein and fiber help to keep blood sugar even and decrease the tendency for blood glucose spikes as well as subsequent blood sugar crashes. Fiber helps to keep little tummies full for longer periods of time. This can be advantageous when you need to run to a store following pick up or if lunch is delayed. Lastly, fiber in combination with good water intake will help to regulate your child's digestive system and decrease the frequency of constipation.

Overall, the combination of complex carbohydrates (fruits, veggies, and whole grains) with protein and heart-healthy fats, help children to maintain their energy levels for longer periods of time, thereby, increasing your child's "learning ready" time and decreasing the likelihood of meltdowns possibly due to low blood sugar levels.

Below is a list of nutritious foods that most children enjoy including commonly available snacks that are free of peanuts and tree nuts. We think that you will find it helpful, but it is not a complete list. We encourage you to be creative and to check with your child's teachers if you have a question about what you'd like to send in. Thank you for your support!

**Please choose 1 Protein and 1 Carbohydrate to make your snack a "Power Snack."**

Protein	Carbohydrate
Beans <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• edamame</li> <li>• bean salsas, salads, or dips</li> </ul>	Whole Grain Crackers and Chips <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3 to 5 grams of fiber per serving is ideal</li> <li>• Triscuits, Wheat Thins</li> <li>• bean chips, whole grain tortilla chips</li> <li>• Goldfish, pretzels</li> </ul>
Hummus SunButter (sunflower seed butter) *Please clearly mark that it is SunButter and not peanut butter, or it will not be served.	Whole Grain Cereals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wheat, Corn, Rice Chex,</li> <li>• Oatmeal Squares (Life Cereal)</li> <li>• Kashi</li> <li>• Cheerios (Multi-Grain and Oat)</li> </ul>
Yogurt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• watch for hidden sugars in flavored varieties</li> </ul> Milk / Soy Milk	Fresh Fruits <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• apples, pears, watermelon, cantaloupe, grapes (cut in half), berries, peaches, etc.</li> <li>• Other acceptable fruits include applesauce, fruit spreads, and raisins</li> </ul>
Cheese <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hard cheeses -cheddar, mozzarella,</li> <li>• soft cheeses - cottage, ricotta, brie</li> <li>• cream cheese</li> <li>• cheese sticks, cubes, slices</li> </ul>	Fresh Veggies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• carrot sticks, celery, cauliflower, cucumbers, red peppers, green peppers, broccoli, zucchini, cherry tomatoes (cut in half), etc.</li> </ul>
Meats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sliced turkey, ham, or lean beef</li> <li>• turkey pepperoni</li> </ul> Eggs (hardboiled)	Whole Grain Bread <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 100% whole wheat or whitewheat</li> <li>• pita, tortilla, bagel, muffin</li> <li>• can be used with fruit spread, sun butter, deli meat or cheese</li> </ul>

**\* We always have snacks on hand if no one volunteered, children are absent, or parents forget.**