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August 2009

Dear GFPS Parents:

We know that your child's nutrition and well-being are important to you and we are pleased to announce exciting changes that will help our children and teens make healthier snack choices while at school. Our goal is to insure that the food available to your child at school:

- Has nutritional value that helps them grow, thrive, and achieve their best academically.
- Does not undermine your efforts at good nutrition.
- Does not contribute to the rise in childhood obesity and other chronic diseases.

In the coming year the staff of the Great Falls Public Schools will be focusing on:

- Improving offerings in school stores, vending machines, snacks for hungry students and fundraising during the school day and extended school day.
- Rethinking food rewards and incentives.
- Providing fun and healthy school celebrations.
- Continuing to provide opportunities for students to be physically active at school.

While our staff and our snack/beverage vendors will be following specific guidelines relative to nutritional content for the foods they make available to students, parent choice will not be impacted.

- Snacks for birthdays in the elementary school are still a parent's choice.
- Brown bag lunch items are a parent's choice.
- And while we encourage children to bring healthy snacks from home, staff will not be monitoring food students bring for their personal consumption at school.

Your building principal will provide more information at your "Back to School" Night. Please take a moment to review the Nutrition Standards on the back of this letter. If you are interested in the Approved Food List that will serve to guide staff and vendors for the coming school year, please visit our website at www.gfps.k12.mt.us or call 268-6770, the CARE Program office, and the Approved Food List can be sent to you.

Thank you in advance for supporting the efforts of your district to help make our schools healthier places for all our children and teens to learn and thrive.

Sincerely,