

MORAN PRAIRIE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
HOLIDAY ACTIVITY GUIDELINES, FEBRUARY, 2005
(based on results of 11/04 Community Survey on Holiday Activities)

We want to create an **educational environment that is inclusive and respectful for all of our students and families** at all times, including holiday seasons. At Moran Prairie, we have families and students from a wide range of backgrounds and traditions. While religion plays an important role in many holidays, our school district and staff may not teach any religious perspective as the “right” religion, rather we would say “some people believe....” Our objectives for holiday activities are to build community and/or to expand the global awareness of our students along with their perceptual and developmental skills. As even the youngest children learn more about their fellow world-citizens, greater understanding of our cultural differences and similarities is sure to follow.

We **strongly encourage families to open dialogue with Moran Prairie staff** (teachers, administration and/or support staff) regarding our current practices, especially if the family’s individual beliefs require accommodations made for their child(ren). We also **strongly encourage staff not only to be open to such dialogue, but to invite it** (at least annually for classroom teachers and their students’ families).

Based on the Community Survey on Holiday Activities, the Moran Prairie Site Council recommends the following practices:

- **During the month of December**, the Moran Prairie Associated Student Body (ASB) will select as one of its three annual community service projects a giving project to help those in need around the December holidays. This project will adorn the entryway of the school annually. During this time of year, classroom teachers are discouraged from having parties, as our Halloween and Valentine’s Day parties are the ones ‘endorsed’ by PTG and the school. Teachers will address the multitude of ways people celebrate holidays at this time of year if such studies fit into their curriculum. If they do choose to address holidays in their classrooms, teachers will follow Spokane Public Schools’ guidelines and abide by any legal guidelines surrounding holiday recognition in public schools.
- On **Halloween** (or the last school day prior to October 31st if Halloween falls on a non-school day), the Halloween celebration and parties will begin with students changing into their costumes for a parade at 1:30 PM, culminating in games and food in classrooms until 3:00. We have guidelines for appropriate school costumes that meet school dress codes as well as keep gore (e.g. blood) and violence (e.g. weapons) out of school. In addition, the PTG has guidelines to help keep sugar treats to a reasonable level. Snacks not planned for in advance should not be ‘accepted’ or offered to students. Importantly, every effort will be made to accommodate students with food allergies and other special dietary needs on an individual/ classroom-to-classroom basis.
- On **Valentine’s Day** (or the last school day prior to February 14th if Valentine’s Day falls on a non-school day), Valentine’s Day classroom parties will occur during the last hour of school. Students exchange Valentine cards and have food and drink treats. If students choose to exchange cards, they must exchange cards with all of the other students in their class. We strongly encourage students and families to be aware when choosing their Valentine’s cards that we have students with a wide variety of beliefs and to be sensitive in choosing appropriate pictures and messages to exchange in school. In addition, the PTG has guidelines to help keep sugar treats to a reasonable level. Snacks not planned for in advance should not be ‘accepted’ or offered to students. Importantly, every effort will be made to accommodate students with food allergies and other special dietary needs on an individual/ classroom-to-classroom basis.

The Site Council also recognizes that while these recommendations come after an extensive community survey, these issues can and should be revisited on a regular basis, especially if and when shifts in our student and family population occur.