



eco-cycle

Working to Build Zero Waste Communities



Green Star Schools Zero Waste Party Tips

As you plan your parties throughout the school year, the following are some suggestions that can help generate less waste.

- Provide finger foods that require no utensils and can be served on napkins or paper towels, which are compostable.
- Use washable (reusable) plates and cups. You may wish to have each student provide his/her own. Susan Secord, a teacher at Bear Creek Elementary, has a class-size set of washable plates, cups and utensils that she reuses for classroom parties.
- If disposable plates must be used, avoid colorfully decorated plates (which are plastic coated and must be thrown in the trash.) Choose plain, **uncoated** ones, which are compostable and generally more reasonably priced. You may even want to have younger students decorate their own plates as a party activity, using non-toxic markers/pencils.
- Serve drinks in juice boxes, metal cans, or #1, #2, or #5 plastic **bottles** (with necks) which can all be recycled (straws, straw wrappers, & lids must go in the trash.) **Only #2 & #5** plastic drinking cups are recyclable (and very difficult to find.) #1 plastic **cups** are **trash!**
- If you are using table coverings, avoid plastic tablecloths that are disposable. School butcher paper can be decorated by students and composted after the party. Remove any cellophane or plastic tape **before** composting.
- Almost all packaging around individual servings of purchased snacks is trash. Homemade goodies or snacks purchased in bulk (without individual wrappers) generate less waste.
- **Clean, balled up** aluminum foil and aluminum plates are recyclable. Individual cupcake papers (non-metallic) are compostable.

