

September 16, 2020

Dear Stratton School Families,

Gardening, cooking, health, and wellness are part of our culture at Stratton.

This is why with the help of many families and staff who volunteered their time, we planted and are maintaining our school garden this past spring during this pandemic. Now, we have crops that must be harvested! That means it is time to get busy using those crops to cook healthy snacks and meals.

I know what you must be thinking. Is it safe for students to cook at school during a health pandemic? This letter is meant to assure you that it is. In collaboration with Laura Qynn, our SNAP Educator and partner at the Franklin County Health Network, we have put new procedures and protocols in place to enable us to continue cooking with our garden crops while providing valuable health and wellness education. The following are our new procedures and protocols:

- **Your child will only consume what he or she handles.** We will no longer eat family style. For example, if we are making garden salsa, your child will have their own 1-2 tomatoes, one eighth of an onion, 1 sprig of cilantro, and an individual baggie of additional spices to cook their own portion of salsa.
- **Your child will NOT be sharing cooking utensils.** We have obtained enough cooking tools so that each child has their own utensils to use. These will be washed and sanitized in our school kitchen after each use.
- **All ingredients will be prepared and portioned by Mrs. Quynn who will be following all health and safety guidelines.**

We are also working with Mrs. Quynn and our Franklin County School Garden Food Corp partners to design a Family Fall Harvest Event that follows Health and Safety Guidelines. As many are aware, The Family Fall Harvest Meal has been a shared meal that children have prepared for their families. As a result, this event will likely look extremely different this year. However, we aim to celebrate our culture of gardening, cooking, health, and wellness, as well as the work of our Growing

Gardeners. So stay tuned for more details to follow. If you have any questions please let the teacher of your child know.

There will also be a monthly newsletter posted on the school website under classrooms and gardens. This newsletter holds nutritional information as well as affordable, easy recipes you and your child(ren) can cook together.

As the garden season comes to an end, we are busy making plans for our community Pot Luck To Go Harvest Fest. Please stay tuned to Stratton School social media pages as we plan. We will be collecting donations as we have done in years past from Monday, September 21 to October 16th.

Happy Gardening and Cooking!

From,

Your Teachers at Stratton School