

## Osborn Elementary School, Rye, NY, Chooses Healthy Rewards

On December 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> many 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students participated in an ERB (Educational Records Bureau) exam. These exams are given to ERB member schools which are made up of independent and suburban public schools who have committed to monitoring challenging student assessment. In the desire to perform well, a great deal of stress can be associated with this testing. In addition to asking students to get plenty of rest and have a healthy breakfast, students at Osborn typically receive a treat upon the completion of the exam. In the past, this reward has come in the form of ice cream and pizza parties and movie watching afternoons.

Osborn Committee for Better School Health to the rescue! Headed by Kate Ward and Kim Potter, this newly formed committee took on the task of providing a healthy alternative as a reward, with the focus on fun. With a generous donation of manpower from the Rye YMCA and their Activate America program, 105 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students were treated to an extra hour of recess with activities such as football, kickball, soccer, and free play on the playground. The children played hard and had a wonderful time. It was quite possibly the first time ever that students were sad to see the school day come to a close. At the end of the recess program, the students were treated to a bag of pre-sliced apples provided by the Osborn PTO. Instead of missing the ice cream, the only complaint was that there weren't enough apples for seconds.

Even the teachers were included in the wellness "reward". A great deal of time and preparation went into the testing process, and the Osborn Committee for Better School Health wanted to recognize their work as well. As they enjoyed the hour off while their students had an extra recess, the teachers received a small bouquet of flowers and a chocolate bar. All in all, the program was a huge success and the hope is that the choice of a healthier reward becomes what the students ask for, and the teachers initiate in the future. As one student reported, his teacher told the class the ERB test stood for "Extra Recess Break", something to look forward to. A big improvement for a class that last year took state CTP4 tests that they thought stood for "Child Torture Program".



