

# BMES International Festival Celebrates a Spring Festival of Colors

## What is Festival of Color also known as Holi?

The Festival of Color at the Bells Mill Elementary International Festival is a celebration of colors in the style of the Holi holiday. It involves opening many, many colorful packets of rainbow dust that folks throw around in a playful way, marking all light-colored clothes with a vibrant rainbow explosion of COLOR.

## When and where does it happen?

Festival of color or Holi is the finale of the International Festival at Friday, April 28 on the BMES field.

## How does it work?

Volunteers will pass out packets of color powder to each person. Then, on the count of 3, we will all start running, gently throwing powder and LAUGHING until we are all covered from shoulders to toe in a light dusting of rainbow color powder. **No throwing color in others' eyes or mouth.**

## Why is it super fun?

It's an energetic, gorgeous, powdery explosion of fun and beauty with our school community! It will actually be a metaphor for all the beautiful diversity we are celebrating at the International Festival. Plus, it's super fun to safely throw non-harmful stuff around in a big group. It's cathartic!

## What should you wear?

Please wear white or light-colored clothing that will be fine to have non-toxic and washable color powder all over it. If you like, bring a bag and a change of clothes to go home or an old towel/sheet to cover your car's interior.

## Take Care

Kids and adults are welcome to wear goggles, masks, and sunglasses to avoid getting the non-toxic and harmless powder in your eyes, nose and mouth. If the powder gets into your mouth or nose, it will not harm you. **Please Note: Individuals with asthma or who are allergic to cornstarch or food grade dyes, should use caution and possibly not participate in this activity.**

*Thanks for helping to pick up the empty powder packets when the fun is over and put them in the marked bin. We will recycle the Ziploc bags from Holi*

### Important Things to Know:

- You will get messy! While the powder is washable, wear clothes and shoes that can get dirty.
- White or light-colored clothing is recommended.
- Parents/guardians must sign this waiver for all participants:  
<https://forms.gle/dUF3j4rJSLdXWoF17>
- Grades K-2 and 3-5 will use separate sides of the field.

## Color Powder Safety Information

### Is color powder safe?

The powder is made with a blend of 100% food-grade cornstarch, baking soda and FD&C approved food/cosmetic dyes. It is safe, non-toxic and biodegradable. It is not intended for consumption. It is safe for all ages and the environment. The color powder will wash out of most fabrics. It washes off with a shower (or two!) and is safe on skin and hair.

*Safety Recommendations:* Just as the color powder shouldn't be consumed, it also not meant to be inhaled in large quantities. **Individuals with asthma or who are allergic to cornstarch or food grade dyes, should use caution when taking part in an event where the color powder is present.**

### Is powder flammable?

No. Color powder is OSHA-certified non dust-explosive.

### Does your color powder clean easily?

Yes, the color powder is made of washable dyes. Most clothing and surfaces can be cleaned using water. Although we ensure our colors wash out very easily, we advise you not to wear your best clothes or most expensive shoes. Leather and suede especially are known for easily absorbing colored powder.

## Learn About Holi

This event is inspired by Holi which is also known as the Festival of Colors. Holi is a Hindu festival celebrating the start of spring, which is the season of hope and new beginnings. Often referred to as the "Festival of Colors" or "Festival of Love," Holi is celebrated around the world and is recognized as a national holiday in India. It is a day people get to unite together forgetting all resentments and all types of bad feelings towards each other.

The first noted celebrations date back to the fourth century C.E. in ancient India. It is truly a celebration of diversity – the story dates to a boy named Prahlad who was able to survive due to his strong faith and overcome the negativity of Holika and also of Krishna's love for Radha. On this day, we try to burn away our unwanted traits or habits. The full story will be shared on International Night.

The timing of Holi, like other Hindu festivals, is synchronized with the moon, which means that the actual dates vary from year to year. Holi typically falls on the full moon day between the end of February and the middle of March, according to the Hindu lunar calendar.

Like Diwali, Holi is one of the most anticipated and widely celebrated Hindu festivals.

## Questions?

If you have any questions, please email [bmes.intlfest@gmail.com](mailto:bmes.intlfest@gmail.com).