

Superintendent Procedure 3405SP

Student Wellness: Recess for Elementary School Students



Approved by: s/Dr. Brent C. Jones Date: 9/3/24

Dr. Brent C. Jones, Superintendent

Board Policy No. 3405, Wellness, and state law require that students have adequate opportunities to be physically active before, during, and after school, including adequate recess and regular physical activity breaks.

Recess is an essential part of the day for elementary school students. Young students learn through play, and recess supports the mental, physical, and emotional health of students and positively impacts their learning and behavior.

At least 30 minutes of recess will be provided for elementary school students during each school day that exceeds five hours. Schools may provide additional recess time before or after the school day, but that time may not be counted toward the 30 minutes of recess that is required under this procedure and state law. Additionally, time spent changing into and out of clothes for outdoor play should not be used to meet the 30-minute requirement.

Recess must be supervised and student directed. It may include organized games, but schools should avoid including, or permitting the student use of, computers, tablets, or phones during recess. Recess must aim to be safe, inclusive, and high quality. To achieve those aims, schools will offer opportunities that align with state and national recess recommendations and maintain safe and age-appropriate equipment for use during recess.

Recess should be held outside whenever possible. If recess is held indoors, schools should use an appropriate space that promotes physical activity.

Recess will complement, not substitute for, physical education class.

Recess should not be withheld as a form of discipline unless a student's participation in recess poses an immediate threat to the safety of the student or others. Nor should recess be withheld to compel students to complete academic work. Schools should develop alternatives to withholding recess as a form of discipline or as a way to compel students to complete academic work.

Recess should be scheduled before lunch whenever possible. Scheduling recess before lunch reduces food waste, maximizes nutrition, and allows students to be active before eating. If recess is offered before lunch, schools should place appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing mechanisms in or near the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away

coats/hats/gloves, will be built into the recess transition period/timeframe before students enter the cafeteria.

Approved: September 2024

Revised:

Cross Reference: School Board Policy Nos. 2185; 3405