



Creating Healthy Schools

Elementary Recess

Students at our school spend a majority of their day here. Because we care about the health and well-being of our students, we have implemented School Wellness Policies. Our recess policy requires at least one recess that lasts 20 minutes each day. Recess should be held before lunch and outside when weather conditions are favorable. During recess, we promote opportunities for physical activity. Recess is held in addition to physical education classes and does not replace that time. Recess is not taken away as a form of punishment or used as a time to complete classwork. The principals and teachers, as well families, help us implement this policy on recess. Your family's support helps the health and wellness of your child and all the children attending our school.

Why is recess so important?

Recess helps students be physically active during the school day. Students who are physically active have been shown to have improved concentration, better memory and better classroom behavior. Recess and play improve a child's health, as well as their social, emotional and physical development. The current guidelines for physical activity state that children need at least 60 minutes of physical activity per day. Many children don't get this amount of physical activity and active play time each day. A 20-minute recess helps your child pay attention in class and stay on task. In addition, it helps your child stay fit and active, succeed in the classroom, and improve social skills with their classmates.

Other Resources:

- Let's Move! Active Schools website contains many resources on why exercise is important in schools. <https://www.activeschoolsus.org/>
- The Learning Connection: What You Need to Know to Ensure Your Kids are Healthy and Ready To Learn guide: http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/storage/documents/pdfs/afhk_thelearningconnection_digitaledition.pdf

I'm interested in learning more!

Who do I contact?

Principal: _____

PTO President: _____

School Wellness Coordinator: _____

District Wellness Coordinator: _____

How can I get more involved?

There are several ways you and your family can support the recess policy. Here are a few examples:

Talk with school staff

- Talk with the principal and your child's teacher to learn how they manage recess time.
- Talk with your child's teacher to make sure recess is not taken away as a punishment or used for extra time to complete schoolwork.

Talk with others

- Go to Parent Teacher Organization (Association) (PTO/A) meetings and talk about the importance of physical activity and recess.
- Reinforce the importance of recess time with friends and family.

Talk with your child

- When you talk with your children about the school day, ask a question or two about what they did at recess. This is a time they should enjoy.
- Talk with them about how to best handle arguments on the playground or at home.
- Make it comfortable for them to share if they had any problems during recess time.

Take action when needed

- Provide opportunities for you and your child to enjoy play and physical activity at home—go on a family walk, take your child to the park, or invite friends over to play.
- If you suspect your child experiences bullying, talk about it and follow up with the teacher.

