

## Guide for Recess Policy

Policy Component	Recommended Policy Language	Accountability Measure	Rationale for Policy Component
<p>1. State requires daily recess for all students in grades K-12.</p>	<p>Schools must provide all students in grades K-12 with at least one daily period of recess.</p>	<p>Require inclusion of recess in master school schedule.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>5-2-1-0 Goes to School Wellness Policy Guide:</u></b> All students shall have a minimum of 30 minutes of developmentally appropriate daily physical activity, through recess, active classroom lessons, in-class physical activity breaks, and physical education.</li>   <li>• <b><u>Accelerating Progress in Obesity Prevention: Solving the Weight of the Nation: School Environments: Goal, Recommendation, Strategies, and Actions for Implementation:</u></b> For local education agencies, potential actions include: adopting requirements that include opportunities for daily physical activity outside of physical education, such as active transport to school programs, intramural sports and activity programs, active recess, classroom breaks, after-school physical activity programming, and integration of physical activity into curricula lesson plans.</li>   <li>• <b><u>Action Strategies Toolkit:</u></b> School officials can offer regular recess that is properly supervised by trained staff to provide additional opportunities for students to engage in physical activity. State policy-makers can implement policies and programs supporting recess as a necessary component of the school day.</li>   <li>• <b><u>Active Healthy Living: Prevention of Childhood Obesity Through Increased Physical Activity:</u></b> Recommendations: The provision of a variety of physical activity opportunities in addition to PE, including the protection of children’s recess time and the requirement of extracurricular physical activity programs and non-structured physical activity before, during, and after school hours, that address the needs and interests of all students.</li>   <li>• <b><u>A Research-Based Case for Recess</u></b> Article 31 of the UN Convention on Rights of the Child states children have the right to play. Advocates for the wellbeing of all children need to be concerned about the number of children deprived of recess. Given the strong evidence</li> </ul>

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			<p>suggesting recess meets so many physical, social, emotional, and academic needs, recess for <i>all</i> is a goal worth pursuing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Comprehensive School Physical Activity Program (CSPAP) Policy Continuum:</u></b>            Recess (Elementary): Daily scheduled period of time allocated for students as a break from academic rigor.            Physical Activity Breaks (Secondary): Breaks from academic content designed to provide opportunities for physical activity. These breaks can take the form of recess, classroom-based physical activity or drop-in recess.</li> <li>• <b><u>Educating the Student Body: Taking Physical Activity and Physical Education to School:</u></b> Students should engage in additional vigorous or moderate-intensity physical activity throughout the school day through recess, dedicated classroom physical activity time, and other opportunities.            Strategies for Reviving Recess: Additionally, regulations should be in place to ensure that schools offer at least 20 minutes of recess per day. Beyond physical education, opportunities for increasing physical activity are present in the classroom and, for elementary and middle schools, during recess.</li> <li>• <b><u>Elementary Schools Should Provide Daily Recesses in Addition to Planned Physical Education for All Students:</u></b> Whereas, maturing children need daily recess that is unstructured or semi-structured, child initiated play in order to develop healthily.            Therefore, be it resolved that the American School Health Association:           <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Supports well-supervised elementary school recesses of at least 15 minutes each for all elementary school children;</li> <li>2) Recommends more than one recess per day, particularly for elementary students in prekindergarten through third grad who attend full-day school programs;</li> <li>3) Recommends retaining recess in elementary schools, and reinstating it in schools where it has been eliminated; and</li> <li>4) Urges its members and constituent organizations to advocate that local school districts develop and implement policies that maintain or mandate daily</li> </ol> </li> </ul>

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			<p>recesses (unstructured or semi-structured child-initiated play) of at least 15 minutes each, for all elementary school students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Evidence Based Physical Activity for School-Age Youth:</b> Recommendation: School-age youth should participate daily in 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity that is developmentally appropriate, enjoyable, and involves a variety of activities. The recommended 60 minutes or more of physical activity can be achieved in a cumulative manner in school during physical education, recess, intramural sports, and before and after school programs.</li> <li>• <b>Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn: Chapter D: Policies to Promote Physical Activity and Physical Education:</b> Model Policy: Recess and Physical Activity Breaks: With guidance from the <i>school health advisory council</i>, each <i>school district/ school</i> shall develop and implement a multifaceted, integrated policy to encourage physical activity that incorporates the following components: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. daily periods of supervised recess (either outdoor or indoor) in elementary schools that may not be denied for disciplinary reasons or to make up lessons;</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b>Healthy People 2020:</b> PA-6 Increase regularly scheduled elementary school recess in the United States. PA-6.1 Increase the number of States that require regularly scheduled elementary school recess. PA-6.2 Increase the proportion of school districts that require regularly scheduled elementary school recess. PA-7 Increase the proportion of school districts that require or recommend elementary school recess for an appropriate period of time.</li> <li>• <b>Play to Learn: Active Recess Through Systematic Supervision:</b> Recess Best-Practice Recommendations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-All elementary children should participate in daily recess.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Preventing Childhood Obesity: Health in the Balance</u></b> Child development centers, elementary schools, and middle schools should provide recess that includes a total of at least 30 to 60 minutes daily of physical activity.</li>   <li>• <b><u>Recommended Community Strategies and Measurements to Prevent Obesity in the United States:</u></b> Child development centers, elementary schools, and middle schools should provide recess that includes a total of at least 30 to 60 minutes daily of physical activity.</li>   <li>• <b><u>School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity:</u></b> Require daily recess for elementary schools. Guideline 4: Implement a Comprehensive Physical Activity Program with Quality Physical Education as the Cornerstone; Provide Ample Opportunities for All Students To Engage in Physical Activity Outside of Physical Education Class: Require daily recess. All elementary schools should follow the NASPE recommendation that at least one daily 20-minute period of recess be provided to all students (420).</li>   <li>• <b><u>Strategies for Supporting Recess in Elementary Schools:</u></b> National organizations (e.g., Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Academy of Pediatrics) recommend that districts provide at least 20 minutes of daily recess for all students in elementary schools. States -Develop and adopt daily recess policies, and monitor district and school implementation. School Districts and Schools -Review and revise the district wellness policy to align with national recess recommendations and assist schools with implementing the policy. -Offer daily recess for elementary school students in addition to PE.</li>   <li>• <b><u>The Crucial Role of Recess in School:</u></b> After recess, for children or after a corresponding break time for adolescents, students are more attentive and better able to perform cognitively.</li> </ul>

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			<p>Recommendations:</p> <p>1. Recess is a necessary break in the day for optimizing a child’s social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. In essence, recess should be considered a child’s personal time, and it should not be withheld for academic or punitive reasons.</p> <p>• <b>Time to Play: Improving Health and Academics through Recess in New York Elementary Schools:</b> A mandatory daily active recess policy provides all the benefits associated with being physically active by requiring that daily active recess be included as part of the daily curriculum.</p>
<p>2. State mandates a time requirement for daily recess periods.</p>	<p>Schools must provide all students in grades K-12 with at least one daily period of recess of at least 20 minutes in length.</p>	<p>Require inclusion of recess in master school schedule.</p> <p>Require reporting of recess minutes for all grades K-12 in school profile or report card.</p>	<p>• <b>5-2-1-0 Goes to School Wellness Policy Guide:</b> All students shall have a minimum of 30 minutes of developmentally appropriate daily physical activity, through recess, active classroom lessons, in-class physical activity breaks, and physical education.</p> <p>• <b>Educating the Student Body: Taking Physical Activity and Physical Education to School:</b> Strategies for Reviving Recess            Additionally, regulations should be in place to ensure that schools offer at least 20 minutes of recess per day. Implement policies requiring both the recommended number of physical education minutes and physical activity opportunities outside of physical education classes for every grade level.</p> <p>• <b>Elementary Schools Should Provide Daily Recesses in Addition to Planned Physical Education for All Students:</b> Whereas, maturing children need daily recess that is unstructured or semi-structured, child initiated play in order to develop healthily.            Therefore, be it resolved that the American School Health Association:            1) Supports well-supervised elementary school recesses of at least 15 minutes each for all elementary school children;            2) Recommends more than one recess per day, particularly for elementary students in prekindergarten through third grad who attend full-day school programs;</p>

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			<p>3) Recommends retaining recess in elementary schools, and reinstating it in schools where it has been eliminated; and</p> <p>4) Urges its members and constituent organizations to advocate that local school districts develop and implement policies that maintain or mandate daily recesses (unstructured or semi-structured child-initiated play) of at least 15 minutes each, for all elementary school students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn: Chapter D: Policies to Promote Physical Activity and Physical Education</u></b> Model Policy: Recess and Physical Activity Breaks: School leaders shall implement schedules that cumulatively provide at least 30 minutes within every school day for students to enjoy supervised recess or other unstructured time.</li> <li>• <b><u>Healthy People 2020:</u></b> PA-6 Increase regularly scheduled elementary school recess in the United States. PA-6.1 Increase the number of states that require regularly scheduled elementary school recess. PA-6.2 Increase the proportion of school districts that require regularly scheduled elementary school recess. PA-7 Increase the proportion of school districts that require or recommend elementary school recess for an appropriate period of time.</li> <li>• <b><u>Play to Learn: Active Recess Through Systematic Supervision:</u></b> Recess Best-Practice Recommendations -Recess is at least 20 minutes in length.</li> <li>• <b><u>Recommended Community Strategies and Measurements to Prevent Obesity in the United States:</u></b> Child development centers, elementary schools, and middle schools should provide recess that includes a total of at least 30 to 60 minutes daily of physical activity.</li> <li>• <b><u>School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity:</u></b> Require daily recess for elementary schools. Guideline 4: Implement a Comprehensive Physical Activity Program with Quality Physical Education as the Cornerstone; Provide Ample Opportunities for All Students To Engage in Physical Activity Outside of Physical Education Class: Require daily recess. All elementary</li> </ul>

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			<p>schools should follow the NASPE recommendation that at least one daily 20-minute period of recess be provided to all students (420).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Strategies for Supporting Recess in Elementary Schools:</u></b> National organizations (e.g., Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American Academy of Pediatrics) recommend that districts provide at least 20 minutes of daily recess for all students in elementary schools.</li> <li>• <b><u>The Crucial Role of Recess in School:</u></b> There is consensus about the need for regularly scheduled recess based on national guidelines, even though the length of the recess period has not been firmly established. In schools, the length specified for recess ranges widely, from 20 to 60 minutes per day. In other countries, such as Japan, primary school-aged children have a 10- to 15-minute break every hour, and this is thought to reflect the fact that attention spans begin to wane after 40 to 50 minutes of intense instruction. On the basis of this premise, to maximize cognitive benefits, recess should be scheduled at regular intervals, providing children sufficient time to regain their focus before instruction continues.</li> </ul>
3. State requires schools to provide recess before lunch.	Schools are required to schedule recess before lunch for all students in grades K-12.	Require inclusion of recess in master school schedule.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Action Strategies Toolkit:</u></b> Recess before lunch has been shown to improve student behavior and performance in the classroom.</li> <li>• <b><u>Educating the Student Body: Taking Physical Activity and Physical Education to School:</u></b> Schedule recess before lunch. Research also has shown that, if recess is offered before lunch, youth display better behavior and playground injuries are reduced.</li> <li>• <b><u>Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn: Chapter D: Policies to Promote Physical Activity and Physical Education:</u></b> Model Policy: Recess and Physical Activity Breaks: Lunch-time recess shall be scheduled before mealtime.</li> <li>• <b><u>Play to Learn: Active Recess Through Systematic Supervision:</u></b> Recess Best-Practice Recommendations -Schedule recess before lunch.</li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Recess Before Lunch: A Guide for Success:</u></b> The concept of eating lunch after recess is based on research data. Expected benefits of the program:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Less classroom discipline problems – children are more settled when they return to class after eating.</li> <li>-Better classroom performance – children pay more attention to the lessons when they are not hungry.</li> <li>-Better cafeteria behavior – children are ready to eat and not eager to leave lunch to go outside and play.</li> <li>-Greater nutrient consumption – children are ready to eat, and they eat more of the foods. Foods served but not consumed are of no nutritional benefit.</li> </ul> </li>   <li>• <b><u>School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity:</u></b> Actions to support safe and healthy eating include providing recess before lunch, which can reduce plate waste, increase student consumption of food, decrease student wait time in line, and reduce student discipline referrals.</li>   <li>• <b><u>The Crucial Role of Recess in School:</u></b> When students have recess before lunch, more time is taken for lunch and less food is wasted. In addition, teachers and researchers noted an improvement in the student behavior at meal time, which carried into the classroom in the afternoon. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the US Department of Agriculture support the concept of scheduling recess before lunch as part of a school’s wellness policy.</li> </ul>
4. State requires schools to ensure that age-appropriate equipment and facilities for physical activity meet or exceed recommended safety standards.	<p>Schools must provide sufficient, age-appropriate equipment for all students K-12 to participate in physical activity.</p> <p>All spaces and facilities used for physical activity,</p>	Require documentation of regular, comprehensive safety assessments that must be conducted for all school facilities and equipment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>5-2-1-0 Goes to School Wellness Policy Guide:</u></b> The schools will provide a physical and social environment that encourages safe and enjoyable physical activity and fosters the development of a positive attitude toward health and fitness.</li>   <li>• <b><u>Accelerating Progress in Obesity Prevention: Solving the Weight of the Nation:</u></b> For local school districts, potential actions include improving and maintaining an environment that is conducive to safe physical education and physical activity.</li> </ul>

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	<p>including playing fields, playgrounds, gymnasiums, swimming pools, multipurpose rooms, cafeterias, and fitness centers should be regularly inspected and maintained.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Educating the Student Body: Taking Physical Activity and Physical Education to School:</u></b> Strategies for Reviving Recess: First, it is necessary to provide a safe environment with ample recreational equipment to encourage physical activity.</li> <li>• <b><u>Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn: Chapter D: Policies to Promote Physical Activity and Physical Education:</u></b> Model Policy: Recess and Physical Activity Breaks. Every preschool, kindergarten, elementary, and middle school shall have safe playgrounds, other facilities, and equipment available for free play.</li> <li>• <b><u>Play to Learn: Active Recess Through Systematic Supervision:</u></b> Recess Best-Practice Recommendations -Schedule recess before lunch.</li> <li>• <b><u>Recess for Elementary School Students:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Adequate and safe spaces and facilities are provided for all students to be physically active at the same time. Outdoor spaces are used whenever the weather allows.</li> <li>-Adequate, safe, and developmentally appropriate equipment is provided for students to engage in enjoyable physical activity.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <b><u>School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity:</u></b> Schools might try to facilitate increased physical activity during recess by having staff members encourage students to be active; providing students with space, facilities, equipment, and supplies that can make participation in activity appealing; using point-of-decision prompts; and providing structured, organized physical activities (e.g., four-square, active tag, or flag football) for interested students. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that spaces and facilities for physical activity meet or exceed recommended safety standards. The following should be in place to support safe and enjoyable student physical activity: 1) safe and age-appropriate playgrounds and equipment for physical education, physical activity, and recess during the school day.</li> <li>All spaces and facilities for physical activity, including playing fields, playgrounds, gymnasiums, swimming pools, multipurpose rooms, cafeterias, and</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

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			<p>fitness centers, should be regularly inspected and maintained, hazardous conditions should be corrected immediately, and a comprehensive safety assessment should be done at least annually. Regular inspection and maintenance of indoor and outdoor play surfaces should ensure that environmental safety devices are provided and maintained, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-padded goal posts and gym walls;</li> <li>-breakaway bases for baseball and softball;</li> <li>-slip-resistant surfaces near swimming pools;</li> <li>-sidewalks that are clear of debris and other hazards;</li> <li>-securely anchored portable soccer goals that are stored in a locked facility when not in use;</li> <li>-shade structures that are used for sun safety;</li> <li>-bleachers that minimize the risk for falls; and</li> <li>-pools and spas designed, constructed, and retrofitted to eliminate entrapment hazards (including evisceration or disembowelment, body entrapment, and hair entrapment or entanglement).</li> </ul> <p>• <b><u>Strategies for Supporting Recess in Elementary Schools:</u></b> Work with districts to upgrade and maintain PA equipment, sports fields, courts, and playgrounds that are used for recess.  States -Work with districts to upgrade and maintain PA equipment, sports fields, courts, and playgrounds that are used for recess.  School Districts and Schools -Maintain safe and age-appropriate equipment for students to use during recess. -Ensure that well-trained supervisors are present during recess.</p> <p>• <b><u>The Crucial Role of Recess in School:</u></b> Whether structured or unstructured, recess should be safe and well supervised. Environmental conditions, well-maintained playground equipment, and well-trained supervisors are the critical components of safe recess.  There are measures schools can take to address these concerns and protect children while still preserving play during recess. Compliance with the Consumer Product Safety Commission’s Playground Safety Handbook</p>

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			<p>(<a href="http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSC/PUBS/325.pdf">http://www.cpsc.gov/CPSC/PUBS/325.pdf</a>) will help to ensure proper maintenance of playground equipment that meets all of the following applicable federal guidelines:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provision of adequate safe spaces and facilities.</li> <li>2. Maintenance of developmentally appropriate equipment with regular inspections.</li> <li>3. Establishment and enforcement of safety rules.</li> <li>4. Implementation of recess curriculum in physical education classes to teach games, rules, and conflict resolution.</li> <li>5. Establishment of a school-wide, clear policy to prevent bullying or aggressive behavior.</li> <li>6. Provision of adequate supervision by qualified adults who can intervene in the event a child's physical or emotional safety is in jeopardy.</li> </ol>
<p>5. State requires schools to provide annual professional development opportunities for staff members who lead or supervise recess.</p>	<p>School staff shall be provided resources and at least one annual professional development event each year on conducting active recess, the benefits of physical activity, behavior management, emergency protocols, and systematic supervision.</p> <p>The ratio of recess supervisors to students shall be equal to the school's teacher to student</p>	<p>Require documentation of annual recess professional development from all school staff that lead or supervise recess.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Action Strategies Toolkit:</b> School officials can offer regular recess that is properly supervised by trained staff to provide additional opportunities for students to engage in physical activity.</li> <li>• <b>Educating the Student Body: Taking Physical Activity and Physical Education to School:</b> Strategies for Reviving Recess. It is imperative as well that training be provided to recess supervisors and staff, with a focus on both safety issues and ways to interact with students to better promote physical activity.</li> <li>• <b>Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn: Chapter D: Policies to Promote Physical Activity and Physical Education</b> Integrated Policy: With guidance from the <i>school health advisory council</i>, each <i>school district/ school</i> shall develop and implement a multifaceted, integrated policy to encourage physical activity that incorporates the following components:             <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6. daily periods of supervised recess (either outdoor or indoor) in elementary schools that may not be denied for disciplinary reasons or to make up lessons;</li> </ol> </li> <li>• <b>Play to Learn: Active Recess Through Systematic Supervision:</b> Recess Best-Practice Recommendations -Recess is supervised by trained playground staff who promote participation in a variety of physical activity opportunities.</li> </ul>

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	ratio for academic classes.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Recess for Elementary School Students:</u></b> Recess is properly supervised by qualified adults.</li> <li>• <b><u>Recess Rules:</u></b> To get the most out of recess, we need well-trained professionals who know how to facilitate structured play on the playground.</li> <li>• <b><u>School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity:</u></b> Maintain high levels of supervision during structured and unstructured physical activity programs. Trained staff members or volunteers, including coaches, teachers, parents, paraprofessionals, and community members, should supervise all physical activity programs. Provide school staff members with comprehensive professional development to deliver quality health education, physical education, food services, and health services. Guideline 9: Provide annual professional development opportunities for staff members who lead or supervise recess and cafeteria time. Teachers, school staff members, community volunteers, and staff members from local partner organizations (e.g., local YMCA or parks and recreation departments) who lead or supervise recess should be appropriately trained to provide active supervision, promote physical activity during recess, minimize conflict among students, and maximize cooperation among students.</li> <li>• <b><u>The Crucial Role of Recess in School:</u></b> Whether structured or unstructured, recess should be safe and well supervised. Environmental conditions, well-maintained playground equipment, and well-trained supervisors are the critical components of safe recess. To be effective, structured recess requires that school personnel (or volunteers) receive adequate training so that they are able to address and encourage the diverse needs of all students.</li> <li>• <b><u>Time to Play: Improving Health and Academics through Recess in New York Elementary Schools:</u></b> Adequate supervision that prevents playground injuries and mediates conflict is critical to having a successful recess period. It is important to plan for staff training once supervisory staff members are identified. Training can provide skills on how to promote activity in</li> </ul>

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			spontaneous and organized play, prevent injuries, and teach children conflict resolution.
6. State mandates that schools may not assign or withhold physical activity as punishment.	<p>School employees are prohibited from assigning physical activity to a student as a form of discipline or punishment.</p> <p>School employees are prohibited from withholding physical activity (including recess) from a student as a form of discipline or punishment.</p>	Require written communication of policy to all school staff to include other suggested methods of student discipline.	<p>• <b><u>5-2-1-0 Goes to School Wellness Policy Guide:</u></b> The school demonstrates a commitment to neither deny nor require physical activity as a means of punishment. Schools will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) as punishment. Schools will not withhold opportunities for physical activity during the day (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment, unless participation would cause a student to be a danger to himself/herself or others or is allowed by a student's individual education plan (IEP).</p> <p>• <b><u>Educating the Student Body: Taking Physical Activity and Physical Education to School:</u></b> Recess has been shown to be beneficial for academic achievement. It is counterproductive to withhold recess or replace it with classroom activities as a punishment. Implement policies that prohibit withholding recess as a punishment for poor behavior or allowing students to complete schoolwork during recess. Students cannot be physically active during recess if they are not present.</p> <p>• <b><u>Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn: Chapter D: Policies to Promote Physical Activity and Physical Education</u></b> Integrated Policy: With guidance from the <i>school health advisory council</i>, each <i>school district/ school</i> shall develop and implement a multifaceted, integrated policy to encourage physical activity that incorporates the following components:          6. daily periods of supervised recess (either outdoor or indoor) in elementary schools that may not be denied for disciplinary reasons or to make up lessons;          7. daily periods of physical activity breaks incorporated throughout the day for all grades that may not be denied for disciplinary reasons or to make up lessons.          Model Policy: Recess and Physical Activity Breaks: Staff shall not deny a student's participation in recess or other unstructured time as a form of discipline or punishment, nor shall it be used for instructional makeup time.</p>

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			<p>• <b><u>Physical Activity Used as Punishment and/or Behavior Management:</u></b> Administering or withholding physical activity as a form of punishment and/or behavior management is an inappropriate practice. Examples of the inappropriate use of physical activity include:            -Withholding physical education class or recess time for students to complete unfinished school work or as a consequence for misbehavior.            -Threatening students with physical activity or no physical activity (e.g., no recess, no game time), and then removing the threat because of good behavior. The core issue is that administering or withdrawing physical activity as punishment is inappropriate and constitutes an unsound education practice. However, any prolonged withdrawal of physical activity (e.g., holding a child back from recess or physical education as a consequence of classroom behavior) is both inappropriate and unsound for the same reasons mentioned above. NASPE opposes administering or withholding physical activity as a form of punishment and/or behavior management. School administrators, physical education teachers, classroom teachers, coaches, parents and others working with children and young adults play a critical role in providing meaningful physical activity experiences. Therefore, teachers should see providing meaningful physical activity as a way to ensure that children and youths develop positive attitudes about physical activity and stop viewing physical activity as a means of punishment and/or behavior modification.</p> <p>• <b><u>Play to Learn: Active Recess Through Systematic Supervision:</u></b> Recess Best-Practice Recommendations -Do not withhold recess as a punishment.</p> <p>• <b><u>Recess for Elementary School Students:</u></b> Recess is not viewed as a reward but as a necessary educational support component for all children. Therefore, students should not be denied recess so they can complete class work or as a means of punishment.</p> <p>• <b><u>School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity:</u></b> Do not use physical activity as punishment. Teachers, coaches, and other school and community personnel should not use physical activity as punishment or</p>

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			<p>withhold opportunities for physical activity as a form of punishment. Using physical activity as a punishment (e.g., forcing students to perform push-ups or sit-ups for bad behavior in physical education) might create negative associations with physical activity in the minds of students. Exclusion from physical education or recess for bad behavior in a classroom deprives students of physical activity experiences that benefit health and can contribute toward improved behavior in the classroom. Disciplining students for unacceptable behavior or academic performance by not allowing them to participate in recess or physical education prevents students from accumulating valuable free-time physical activity and 2) learning essential physical activity knowledge and skills.</p> <p>• <b><u>The Crucial Role of Recess in School:</u></b> The American Academy of Pediatrics believes that recess is a crucial and necessary component of a child’s development and, as such, it should not be withheld for punitive or academic reasons.</p>
<p>7. State prohibits schools from using recess to fulfill state mandated physical education requirements.</p>	<p>Schools may not use recess time toward fulfillment of mandated physical education requirements.</p>	<p>Require reporting of physical education minutes and recess minutes for all grades K-12 in school profile or report card.</p>	<p>• <b><u>The Crucial Role of Recess in School</u></b> Recess is a complement to, but not a replacement for, physical education. Physical education is an academic discipline. A problem arises when the structured activities of recess are promoted as a replacement for the child’s physical education requirement. The replacement of physical education by recess threatens students’ instruction in and acquisition of new motor skills, exploration of sports and rules, and a concept of lifelong physical fitness. Whichever style is chosen, recess should be viewed as a supplement to motor skill acquisition in physical education class.</p> <p>• <b><u>Educating the Student Body: Taking Physical Activity and Physical Education to School:</u></b> It is important to note that the primary focus of recess is to help youth develop social and emotional skills through unstructured, free play; using recess as a substitute for physical education is inappropriate. Physical activity programs are neither equivalent to nor a substitute for physical education, and both can contribute meaningfully to the development of healthy, active children.</p> <p>• <b><u>Fit, Healthy, and Ready to Learn: Chapter D: Policies to Promote Physical Activity and Physical Education:</u></b> Model Policy: Recess and Physical Activity</p>

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			<p>Breaks. Recess and unstructured time shall complement, not substitute for, physical education classes. Activity breaks should be used to complement, not substitute for, physical education classes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><u>Recess for Elementary School Students:</u></b> Recess does not replace physical education classes. Physical education provides sequential instruction to enhance the development of motor skills, movement concepts, and physical fitness. Recess provides unstructured play opportunities that allow children to engage in physical activity.</li> <li>• <b><u>School Health Guidelines to Promote Healthy Eating and Physical Activity</u></b> Recess should not replace physical education or be used to meet time requirements set forth in physical education policies.</li> </ul>

**Sources:**

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