MODEL POLICY #12

RECESS

Why Adopt This Policy?

School boards should consider adopting a policy mandating recess to recognize the essential role of physical activity in promoting students' overall health and well-being. Recess provides students with valuable opportunities for social interaction, unstructured play, and cognitive rest, which are integral to their development and academic success.

Policy

For purposes of this policy, "recess" means a structured play environment outside of regular classroom instructional activities, where students are allowed to engage in supervised safe active free play.

All K through 8 schools in the district will offer a minimum of one recess period of twenty minutes per day. This may be incorporated into the lunch period.

Recess will serve as a complement to, rather than a replacement for, physical education classes. During recess, monitors or teachers will actively encourage students to engage in physical activity and will lead by example by participating alongside students whenever possible.

Schools should set indoor recess guidelines when there are inclement weather conditions or outdoor temperatures are deemed too low or too high, inclusive of wind chill factors and heat indexes, or at the discretion of the school principal based on the principal's best judgment of safety conditions.

School staff shall discourage the withholding of or use of recess or physical activity breaks as a disciplinary consequence.

Legal Analysis

Wis. Admin PI § 8.01(2)(f) (The school hours are computed as the period from the start to the close of the school's daily instructional schedule. Scheduled hours under this subdivision include recess and time for pupils to transfer between classes but do not include the lunch period. No more than 30 minutes per day may be counted for recess.); Wis. Admin. PI § 8.01(2)(k)(3) (designating the school board with the authority to establish a district curriculum plan regarding the allocation of instructional time, by week, semester, and school term, among all subject areas).

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