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| (Name of School District) | | Policy Code: |
| <p style="text-align: center;">A Model Elementary Recess School Policy for School Districts in Georgia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The (insert name of school district) School Board recognizes that children who participate in either indoor or outdoor recess are more productive and attentive in class and behave better in the classroom. Recess can also serve to foster relationships among students, create youth involvement opportunities, and teach conflict resolution. Children who are allowed to play and interact during recess develop important communication and coping skills such as cooperation, problem solving, and self-control. • Thus, by (insert date), all school districts will offer a minimum of one recess period of twenty minutes per day shall be provided for children in elementary schools, which may be incorporated into the lunch period. • Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. <p>Potential Barrier: Weather conditions may discourage recess. School districts should set indoor recess guidelines when outdoor temperature is above/below District-set temperature.</p> <p>Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommends that children and adolescents get 60 minutes or more of moderate- or vigorous-intensity physical activity throughout the day. <p>NASPE Recommendations PE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NASPE recommends 20 minutes of daily recess and 150 minutes of PE per week at the elementary level (and 225 minutes/week at the MS/HS levels). <p>State files of Recess Laws at varying levels:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong Daily Recess Laws (4 states: CT, MO, RI, and VA)—These are laws that require that recess be provided daily. In addition, you will see that Connecticut and Missouri require that the time for recess be 20 minutes. 2. Weak Daily Recess Laws (8 states: AR, CA, IN, NH, NC, OK, TX and DC)—These are laws that suggest or encourage that recess be provided every day in elementary school. They generally take the form of “physical activity may include daily recess” or otherwise “encourage daily recess.” DC’s local wellness policy and Oklahoma’s law specifically suggest/encourage 20 minutes of daily recess, but do not require it. 3. Weak Recess Laws (4 states: CO, MN, MS, and SC)—These laws mention recess, usually as part of the physical activity program, but do not require it and do not mention the frequency with which it should be provided. | | |
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State files of Recess Laws at varying levels (continued):

State Examples of Strong Recess Laws:

Missouri:

(3) "Recess", a structured play environment outside of regular classroom instructional activities, where students are allowed to engage in supervised safe active free play.
 (4) A minimum of one recess period of twenty minutes per day shall be provided for children in elementary schools, which may be incorporated into the lunch period.

Connecticut:

Sec. 10-221o. Lunch periods. Recess. Boards to adopt policies addressing limitation of physical exercise.

(a) Each local and regional board of education shall require each school under its jurisdiction to (1) offer all full day students a daily lunch period of not less than twenty minutes, and (2) include in the regular school day for each student enrolled in elementary school time devoted to physical exercise of not less than twenty minutes in total, except that a planning and placement team may develop a different schedule for a child requiring special education and related services in accordance with chapter 164 and the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act, 20 USC 1400 et seq., as amended from time to time. Chapter 164 shall be deemed controlling in the case of conflict.

Rhode Island:

Research shows that students are better able to learn when they are engaged in regular physical activity and receive adequate and proper nutrition. **Therefore, each LEA shall:**

- Ensure the provision of statutorily required, standards-based instruction in physical education;
- Implement a policy for physical activity and nutrition and a plan to address the physical activity and nutrition needs of students;
- **Provide daily recess opportunities for students in grades Kindergarten through grade 5;**

Provide a variety of physical activity opportunities to students in grades 6 through 12, such as stretch breaks, dance programs or classes, intramural athletics, interscholastic athletics, or other activities.

State Example of Weak Daily Recess Laws

California:

(c) **Encourage school districts offering instruction in kindergarten and any of grades 1 to 12, inclusive, to the extent that resources are available, to provide quality physical education that develops the knowledge, attitudes, skills, behavior, and motivation needed to be physically active and fit for life; to provide daily recess periods for elementary school pupils, featuring time for unstructured but supervised play;** to provide extracurricular physical activity and fitness programs and physical activity and fitness clubs; and to encourage the use of school facilities for physical activity and fitness programs offered by the school, public park and recreation districts, or community-based organizations outside of school hours.

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Georgia School Districts Recess Policies at varying levels:

1. Strong Daily Recess Policies (Fayette and Clarke Counties)—These are policies that require that recess be provided daily. In addition, you will see that Fayette County and Clarke County require that the time for recess be 15 minutes.
2. Weak Daily Recess Policies (Burke County)—These are policies that state recess will be provided daily, however, they do not state recess time requirements.

School District Examples of Strong Daily Recess Policy

Fayette County:

Daily Recess:
 All elementary schools will offer at least 15 minutes of recess on all or most days during the school year (This policy may be waived on early dismissal or late arrival days). If recess is offered before lunch, schools will have appropriate hand-washing facilities and/or hand-sanitizing mechanisms located just inside/outside the cafeteria to ensure proper hygiene prior to eating and students are required to use these mechanisms before eating. Hand-washing time, as well as time to put away coats/hats/gloves, will be built in to the recess transition period/timeframe before students enter the cafeteria.

Outdoor Recess:
 Outdoor recess will be offered when weather is feasible for outdoor play. Students will be allowed outside for recess except when outdoor temperature is deemed too low or too high, inclusive of wind chill factors and heat indexes, during “code orange” or “code red” days, during storms with lightening or thunder, or at the discretion of the building administrator based on his/her best judgment of safety conditions. In the event that the school or district must conduct indoor recess, teachers and staff will follow the indoor recess guidelines that promote physical activity for students, to the extent practicable. Recess will complement, not substitute, physical education class. Recess monitors or teachers will encourage students to be active, and will serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students whenever feasible.

Teachers are expected to incorporate daily opportunities for physical activity in the classroom whenever possible and will be encouraged to serve as role models by being physically active alongside the students.

All District elementary schools will provide 15 minutes of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which students are engaged in moderate to vigorous physical activity.

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

Clarke County:

School District Examples of Weak Daily Recess Policy

Burke County:

Guidelines will include:
 Physical activity that is encouraged and integrated across curricula throughout the school day. Physical activity will not only be encouraged during physical education class, but through classroom activities such as in-class fitness breaks and recess. Recess will be made available each day to elementary school students.

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