

Edwards-Knox School District's Wellness Plans on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Introduction

The Edwards-Knox Central School District is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. Through this policy, the district will ensure that:

- The school district will engage students, parents, teachers, food service professionals, health professional, and other interested community members in developing, implementing, monitoring, and reviewing district-wide nutrition and physical activity policies.
- All students in grades PK-12 will have opportunities, support, and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis.
- Foods and beverages sold and served at school will meet or exceed the nutrition recommendations of the *U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.
- Qualified child nutrition professionals will provide students with access to a variety of affordable, nutritious, and appealing foods that meet the health and nutrition needs of students; will accommodate the religious, ethnic, and cultural diversity of the student body in meal planning; and will provide clean, safe, and pleasant settings and adequate time for students to eat.
- To the maximum extent practicable, our district will participate in available federal school meal program (including the School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program [including after-school snacks], Summer Food Service Program, Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program, and Child and Adult Care Food Program [including supper]).
- Schools will provide nutrition education and physical education to foster lifelong habits of healthy eating and physical activity, and will establish linkages between health education and school meal programs, and with related community services.
- The district will conform to all federal and state laws and regulations governing school meals, foods sold in competition with school meals, and requirements for school nutrition and wellness policies.

I. School Health Committee

The Edwards-Knox School District will create, strengthen, or work within existing school health council to develop, implement, monitor, review, and, as necessary, revise school nutrition and physical activity policies. The council also will serve as resources to school sites for implementing those policies. (A school health council consists of a group of individuals representing the school and community, and should include parents, students, and representatives of the school food authority, members of the school board, school administrators, teachers, health professionals, and members of the public.) The wellness committee will develop and revise plans as needed that lead to meaningful compliance of the intent of this policy (see plans in Appendix A)

II. Nutritional Quality of Foods and Beverages Sold and Served on Campus

School Meals

Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:

- be appealing and attractive to children;
- be served in clean and pleasant settings;
- meet, at a minimum, nutrition requirements established by local, state, and federal statutes and regulations;
- offer a variety of fruits and vegetables;

Breakfast. To ensure that all children have breakfast, either at home or at school, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn:

- EK will, to the extent possible, operate the School Breakfast Program.
- EK will, to the extent possible, arrange bus schedules and utilize methods to serve school breakfasts that encourage participation, including serving breakfast in the classroom, "grab-and-go" breakfast, or breakfast during

morning break or recess.

- EK will serve breakfast to students; will notify parents and students of the availability of the School Breakfast Program.
- We will encourage parents to provide a healthy breakfast for their children through newsletter articles, take-home materials, or other means.

Free and Reduced-priced Meals. We will make every effort to eliminate any social stigma attached to, and prevent the overt identification of, students who are eligible for free and reduced-price school meals. Toward this end, schools may utilize electronic identification and payment systems; provide meals at no charge to all children, regardless of income; promote the availability of school meals to all students; and/or use nontraditional methods for serving school meals.

Summer Food Service Program. EK may sponsor the Summer Food Service Program for at least six weeks between the last day of the academic school year and the first day of the following school year, and preferably throughout the entire summer vacation since it meets the free or reduced New York State standard.

Meal Times and Scheduling. EK Central School:

- will provide students with at least 10 minutes to eat after sitting down for breakfast and 20 minutes after sitting down for lunch;
- should schedule meal periods at appropriate times, *e.g.*, lunch should be scheduled between 10:30 am and 1:30 pm;
- should not schedule tutoring, club, or organizational meetings or activities during mealtimes, unless students may eat during such activities;
- will provide students access to hand washing or hand sanitizing before they eat meals or snacks; and
- should take reasonable steps to accommodate the tooth-brushing regimens of students with special oral health needs.

Qualifications of School Food Service Staff. Qualified professionals will administer the school meal programs. As part of the school district's responsibility to operate a food service program, we will provide continuing professional development for all nutrition professionals in schools. Staff development programs should include appropriate certification and/or training programs for child nutrition directors, school nutrition managers, and cafeteria workers, according to their levels of responsibility.

Sharing of Foods and Beverages. EK will discourage students from sharing their foods or beverages with one another during meal or snack times, given concerns

about allergies and other restrictions on some children's diets.

Foods and Beverages Sold Individually (*i.e.*, foods sold outside of reimbursable school meals, such as through vending machines, cafeteria a la carte [snack] lines, fundraisers, school stores, etc. [excluding concessions and social events, such as dances, outside of regular school hours])

Elementary Schools. We will recommend that we provide most of all food and beverage sales to students in elementary schools. Given young children's limited nutrition skills, food in elementary schools should be sold as balanced meals.

Middle/Junior High and High Schools. In middle/junior high and high schools, all foods and beverages sold individually outside the reimbursable school meal programs (including those sold through a la carte [snack] lines, vending machines, student stores, or fundraising activities) during the school day, or through programs for students after the school day, will meet the following nutrition and portion size standards:

- **Beverages**

- **Allowed:** water or seltzer water without added caloric sweeteners; fruit and vegetable juices and fruit-based drinks that contain at least 50% fruit juice, low-fat or fat-free milk (flavored and regular) and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners during regular hours; whereas sports drinks can be sold after 2:30 pm in the various vending machines.
- **Not Allowed:** soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks (prior to 2:30 pm); iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine) (excluding staff areas).

- **Foods**

- A food item sold individually will meet or exceed the following guidelines and will be altered to conform with local/state/federal regulations/laws:
 - will have no more than 35% of its calories from fat (excluding nuts, seeds, peanut butter, and other nut butters) and 10% of its

- calories from saturated and trans fat combined;
- will have no more than 35% of its *weight* from added sugars;

- A choice of at least two fruits and/or non-fried vegetables will be offered for sale at any location on the school site where foods are sold. Such items could include, but are not limited to, fresh fruits and vegetables; 100% fruit or vegetable juice; fruit-based drinks that are at least 50% fruit juice and that do not contain additional caloric sweeteners; cooked, dried, or canned fruits (canned in fruit juice or light syrup); and cooked, dried, or canned vegetables (that meet the above fat and sodium guidelines).

- **Portion Sizes**

- Limit portion sizes of foods and beverages sold individually to those listed below:
 - One and one-quarter ounces for chips, crackers, popcorn, cereal, trail mix, nuts, seeds, dried fruit, or jerky;
 - One ounce for cookies;
 - Eight ounces for non-frozen yogurt;

Concessions. Concession stands must offer at least one food that is a healthy alternative, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy and lean protein.

Fundraising Activities. Edwards-Knox will encourage fundraising activities that promote physical activity. The school district will make available a list of ideas for acceptable fundraising activities.

Snacks. Snacks served during the school day or in after-school care or enrichment programs will make a positive contribution to children's diets and health, with an emphasis on serving fruits and vegetables as the primary snacks, milk etc. We will assess if and when to offer snacks based on timing of school meals, children's nutritional needs, children's ages, and other considerations. The district will disseminate a list of healthful snack items to teachers, after-school program personnel, and parents.

- If eligible, we will provide snacks through after-school programs and we will pursue receiving reimbursements through the National School Lunch Program.

Rewards. The use of foods and beverages as reward or punishment is discouraged, including but not limited to reward or punishment related to academic performance or behavior.

Edwards-Knox will occasionally use foods or beverages that do not meet the nutrition standards for foods and beverages sold individually (above), as rewards for academic performance or good behavior. In the event that food is used as a reward, healthy alternatives should be offered, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, lean protein and water. Withholding food as punishment is prohibited. The district will make available a list of ideas for healthy rewards; see Appendix B.

Celebrations.

The district will limit the frequency of classroom celebrations that involve food to no more than one party per class per month, excluding birthdays. Each party that includes food will include at least one healthy food and beverage options, such as fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy, and/or lean protein. The district will provide recommendations for healthy celebrations; see Appendix C.

III. Nutrition and Physical Activity Promotion and Food Marketing

Nutrition Education and Promotion. Edwards-Knox Central School District aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Schools should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:

- is offered at each grade level as part of a sequential, comprehensive, standards-based program designed to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health;
- is part of not only health education classes, but also classroom instruction in subjects such as math, science, language arts, social sciences, and elective subjects;
- includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities, such as contests, promotions, taste testing, farm visits, and school gardens;
- promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices;
- emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure

- (physical activity/exercise);
- links with school meal programs, other school foods, and nutrition-related community services;
- teaches media literacy with an emphasis on food marketing; and
- includes training for teachers and other staff.

Communications with Parents. The district will support parents' efforts to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for their children. The district/school will offer healthy eating seminars for parents, send home nutrition information, post nutrition tips on school websites, and provide nutrient analyses of school menus. Schools should encourage parents to pack healthy lunches and snacks and to refrain from including beverages and foods that do not meet the above nutrition standards for individual foods and beverages. The district/school will provide parents a list of foods that meet the district's snack standards and ideas for healthy celebrations/parties, rewards, and fundraising activities. In addition, the district/school will provide opportunities for parents to share their healthy food practices with others in the school community.

The district/school will provide information about physical education and other school-based physical activity opportunities before, during, and after the school day; and support parents' efforts to provide their children with opportunities to be physically active outside of school. Such supports will include sharing information about physical activity and physical education through a website, newsletter, or other take-home materials, special events, or physical education homework.

Food Marketing in Schools. School-based marketing will be consistent with nutrition education and health promotion. As such, schools will limit food and beverage marketing to the promotion of foods and beverages that meet the nutrition standards for meals or for foods and beverages sold individually (above).

Staff Wellness. Edwards-Knox Central School District highly values the health and well-being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle.

IV. Physical Activity Opportunities and Physical Education

Physical Education (P.E.) K-12. All students in grades K-12, including students with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, should receive quality physical education for the entire school year. All physical

education will be taught by a certified physical education teacher.

Daily Recess. All elementary school students will have at least 20 minutes a day of supervised recess, preferably outdoors, during which schools should encourage moderate to vigorous physical activity verbally and through the provision of space and equipment. Limiting or eliminating recess as punishment is discouraged. A list of alternative discipline options and other recess resources can be found in Appendix D.

Physical Activity Promotion: For students to receive the nationally recommended amount of physical activity (i.e. at least 60 minutes per day) and for students to fully embrace physical activity as a personal behavior, students need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end;

- Classroom teachers are encouraged to provide short physical activity breaks (i.e. Energizing Brain Breaks), before, between or after lessons, as appropriate. See Appendix E for information and resources.
- The district will provide resources for physical activity opportunities, such as Math in Movement.
- Start the School Day with a Walk is also an example of physical activity promotion; see Appendix F for description of this program.

Physical Activity Opportunities Before and After School. Edwards-Knox will offer a range of activities that meet the needs, interests, and abilities of all students, including boys, girls, students with disabilities, and students with special health-care needs.

Use of School Facilities Outside of School Hours. The Edwards-Knox fitness center will be available to students, staff, and community members after the school day. These spaces and facilities also should be available to community agencies and organizations offering physical activity and nutrition programs. School policies concerning safety will apply at all times.

V. Monitoring and Policy Review

Monitoring. The superintendent or designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each

school, the principal or designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her school and will report on the school's compliance to the school district superintendent or designee.

School food service staff, at the school or district level, will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within school food service areas and will report on this matter to the superintendent (or if done at the school level, to the school principal).

Appendix A

**Healthy Schools NY, Health Initiative
Wellness Policy Monitoring & Evaluation Plan**
School District/Building: **Edwards-Knox CS**

HEALTHY SCHOOLS NY
AA



Date: 6.19.13

How will you know that what you set out to do is happening?

Key element of policy to monitor and evaluate	How will this be monitored?	Who is responsible?	How often will monitoring take place? (e.g., monthly, quarterly, annually)	Who will you report results to?*
Limiting of Sugar-Sweetened/Less Healthy Beverages	Checking the vending machine	Wellness Committee	Monthly	Superintendent or designee
Limiting food rewards/encouraging healthy food or non-food rewards	Email survey to classroom teachers	Wellness Committee	Annually (end of each school year)	Superintendent or designee
Limiting frequency of celebrations that involve food/encouraging healthy food or non-food celebrations	Email survey to classroom teachers	Wellness Committee	Annually (end of each school year)	Superintendent or designee
Discouraging limiting of recess as punishment	Email survey to classroom teachers	Wellness Committee	Annually (end of each school year)	Superintendent or designee
Encouraging physical activity during the school day	Email survey to classroom teachers	Wellness Committee	Annually (end of each school year)	Superintendent or designee

Appendix A (cont.)

**Healthy Schools NY, Health Initiative
Wellness Policy Monitoring & Evaluation Plan**
School District/Building: **Edwards-Knox CS**

HEALTHY SCHOOLS NY
AA _____



Date: **6.19.13**

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****Reporting: Who will you share monitoring and evaluation with?***

Reporting policy compliance is important for maintaining support for policies and gathering support for new strategies as needed. Reports may be monthly, quarterly, annually, etc., and should be shared with the school administration, school board, community and key stakeholders.

Healthy Non-Food Rewards¹



Rewards happen at many levels across a school. Teachers, administrators and parent groups offer rewards to recognize and celebrate student accomplishments. The goal of rewarding students is to help them internalize desirable behaviors and create motivation for learning that comes from inside. The most effective rewards fit naturally into the context and mission of the school community and should promote healthy living as a desired value of the community. Non-material rewards involving recognition, privileges and opportunities for physical activity or other types of enrichment are powerful ways to help meet these goals. Material rewards such as school supplies, trinkets, toys, and gift certificates can be donated by parents or provided by parent-teacher organizations for use on a more limited basis.

Brave teachers have even been known to offer rewards like kissing a frog or letting students cut their hair!

Elementary School Students

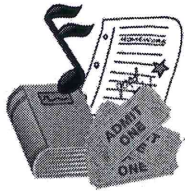
- Make deliveries to office
- Fun movie
- Teach class
- Be a helper in another classroom
- Read morning announcements
- Sit with friends
- Have lunch or breakfast in the classroom
- Play a favorite game or do puzzles
- Extra recess time
- Show and tell
- Free time at the end of class
- Dance to music in the classroom
- Gift certificate to school store (non-food items)
- Walk with the principal or teacher
- Fun physical activity break
- Teacher or volunteer reads special book to class
- Certificate, trophy, ribbon, plaque
- Listen to music or a book on audiotape
- Read outdoors or have class outdoors
- Extra art, music or reading time
- Teacher performs special skill, e.g., singing, guitar playing, juggling
- Earn points or play money to spend on privileges or non-food items
- Commendation certificate or letter sent home to parents by teacher or principal
- Trip to treasure box filled with nonfood items, e.g., stickers, pencils, erasers, bookmarks, school supplies
- Access to items that can only be used on special occasions, e.g., special art supplies, games, or toys

Recognition in itself is a huge reward.

Consider recognizing students during morning announcements, at a school assembly, on a photo recognition board, or on the school's website. Most kids enjoy hearing their successes acknowledged in front of their peers. Don't underestimate the power of small, personalized efforts such as a phone call or email to the students' parents, a hand-written note commending the achievement, or a certificate of recognition.

Middle School Students

- Sit with friends
- Choose partners for activities
- Listen to music while working at desk
- Reduced homework or "no homework" pass
- Extra credit
- Fun movie
- Brainteaser puzzles, group activities and games
- Earn points or play money for privileges or non-food items
- Computer time
- Free choice time or chat break at end of class
- Assemblies
- Field trips
- Eat lunch outside or have class outside



Healthy Non-Food Rewards

High School Students

- Extra credit
- Fun movie
- Reduced homework
- Late homework pass
- Donated coupons for music, movies or books
- Drawings for donated prizes
- Pep rally
- Recognition on morning announcements
- Tickets to school events, e.g., dances, sporting events

PTO/PTA Rewards

- Water bottles
- School-branded apparel
- Movie passes
- Special time with a teacher
- Dance Dance Revolution, Wii or video game party
- Pool party, hike, or group trip to a kids' fun place
- Raffle for bigger prizes, such as a bike, an iPod or a ride in a limo



*"Rewarding children with unhealthy foods in school undermines our efforts to teach them about good nutrition. It's like teaching children a lesson on the importance of not smoking, and then handing out ashtrays and lighters to the kids who did the best job listening."*³

— Marlene Schwartz, PhD, Co-Director
Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity, Yale University

Food Rewards

Food Rewards contradict classroom lessons on nutrition, add empty calories to kids' diets and teach kids to eat when they're not hungry – setting the stage for unhealthy habits that can last a lifetime and contributing to the childhood obesity epidemic sweeping the country. One study found that every separate food-related practice (e.g., a food incentive or reward) that promotes low-nutrition foods in a school is associated with a 10% increase in students' body mass indexes (BMI).²

Check your school's wellness policy or school improvement plan to see if they contain any guidelines or goals about healthy, non-food rewards. If they don't, find out what it would take to address this topic.

Action for Healthy Kids® partners with teachers, students, parents, school wellness experts and more to fight childhood obesity, undernourishment and physical inactivity by helping schools become healthier places so kids can live healthier lives. Our programs, tools and resources make it possible for everyone to play their part in ending the nation's childhood obesity epidemic.

www.ActionforHealthyKids.org

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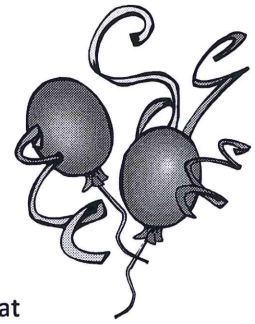
¹Adapted from "Effective and Healthy Rewards for Kids," Coalition on Children and Weight San Diego and "Alternatives to Food Rewards," Connecticut State Department of Education, May 2005 (Revised November 2011).

²Kubik M., Lytle L., Story M. "Schoolwide Food Practices Are Associated with Body Mass Index in Middle School Students." Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, 2005, vol. 159, pp. 1111-1114.

³"Alternatives to Food Rewards," Connecticut State Department of Education, May 2005 (Revised November 2011).



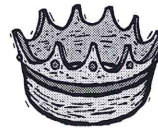
Healthy Birthdays, Celebrations & Family Events¹



Birthdays, celebrations, and family events are great opportunities to promote a healthy lifestyle, provide consistent messages and create excitement around nutritious choices at school. Plan events that emphasize healthy foods and align with classroom lessons or shift the focus and plan non-food events centered on physical activity, music, art and games. Host events that make it easy for children to practice making healthy choices.

Birthdays – *the birthday child can:*

- Be the teacher's helper.
- Wear a special crown, sash, button or badge all day.
- Donate and/or read a favorite book to the class.
- Choose the class music for writing or independent study time.
- Receive a personalized birthday card from the teacher via email or snail mail.
- Choose a game or activity the class does for the last few minutes of the school day.
- Have special time (for a walk, game or other activity) with the teacher, principal or another adult.
- Receive a "Celebrate Me" book from classmates with written stories, poems or drawings about the birthday child.



*Children like
adventure – don't
be afraid to try
something new!*

Promote Healthy Living

Plan family events that get parents engaged and on board with healthy living, as this will create more buy-in and support for a healthy school food culture. It also makes it more likely that healthy habits will be reinforced at home.



*For a list of healthy
school food ideas for
snacks, celebrations
and family events visit:*

Family Events

- Health fairs
- School garden work days
- Cooking lessons or "Iron Chef" competitions
- Physical activity events with healthy snacks or prizes (dance contests, fun runs, obstacle courses, bike-a-thons, sock hops)
- Screenings of movies that promote healthy living
- Nutrition classes for the family from community partners like your cooperative university extension service
- Fall festival with active fall-themed games and a farmers' market
- Walk-to-school month with parent participation
- Creation of school teams for local runs or walks
- Parents and teachers vs. kids sports competition
- 30-day challenges – pick a healthy habit and organize a competition around it, starting with a kick-off event and ending with a celebration

www.ActionforHealthyKids.org/ParentToolkit-FoodIdeas



Healthy Celebrations

Celebrations

- Give children extra recess time instead of a party.
- Have a dance party. Let students select the music. Invite the principal and other school staff!
- Get students involved in planning and preparing for celebrations – let them make decorations and favors and let them choose the games.
- Create a book honoring what is being celebrated that day. Have students draw pictures showing what the day means to them.
- Organize a special community service project instead of a party. Invite senior citizens in for lunch, collect goods and make cards for sheltered families, organize a project outside for Earth Day.
- Have students vote on a special class art project or craft. Invite a local artist to come in and do a demonstration.
- Arrange a treasure hunt around the classroom. Provide a special non-food treat at the end. Use a theme that ties into what the kids are learning in class.
- Ask students to come up with healthy party ideas, and ask parents to send in healthy recipes and ideas for activities, games and crafts. Create a “healthy classroom party guide” to distribute to parents.
- Plan around holiday themes. Students can make cards for winter holidays, decorate the classroom with hearts for Valentine’s Day, and learn an Irish step-dance for St. Patrick’s Day. Search education websites for ideas.



When food is offered

- Make good nutrition the expectation and the easy choice – offer fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low fat/fat-free dairy products and water.
- Check your school’s wellness policy or school improvement plan to see if they contain any guidelines or goals about foods for birthdays, celebrations, and family events. If they don’t, find out what it would take to address this issue.



Resources

Coalition for Activity and Nutrition to Defeat Obesity (CanDo) & Healthy Kids Club
Guide to Healthy School Celebrations:
www.ActionforHealthyKids.org/HealthyPartyGuide-CanDo

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¹ Adapted from “Healthy Celebrations,” Connecticut State Department of Education, May 2005 & “Healthy Celebrations at School,” Ohio Action for Healthy Kids, 2012

Recess for Learning

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) recommends that schools provide 20 minutes of recess per day. Yet, up to 40 percent of U.S. school districts have reduced or eliminated recess in order to free up more time for academics.¹ Scaling back recess comes at a cost to learning. Research has shown that recess helps students to focus and learn better.² It's time for education policymakers to take play seriously and enhance recess to improve learning and school climate – and parents can help.



Advocate for More Recess

If your school does not offer recess, does not meet the recommended 20 minutes a day, or allows recess to be withheld as a form of discipline, start a campaign to bring it back. Check out **Playworks** and **Peaceful Playgrounds** for campaign resources.

Advocate for Better Recess

An effective recess program should include:

- Enough trained adults to enforce safety rules and prevent aggressive, bullying behavior
- Enough space, facilities, and equipment
- A physically safe environment

Principals agree...

- Four out of five principals report that recess has a positive impact on academic achievement.
- Two-thirds of principals report that students listen better after recess and are more focused in class.
- Virtually all believe that recess has a positive impact on children's social development (96%) and general well-being (97%).

"The State of Play," Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

Advocate for Active Recess

Sometimes called "structured recess," this is a planned and actively supervised recess period where:

- Students engage in organized "play" or games that emphasize turn-taking, helpfulness, rule-following, and emotional control.
- Each game or activity has pre-set rules that the entire school population follows.
- Older students may be trained to help lead activities for younger students.



The benefits include reduced bullying, better behavior, and easier transitions from recess to learning.³ The goal is to get all students moving and engaged. Staffing can be one of the biggest barriers to implementing an active recess program. Parents can volunteer to lead activities and supervise at recess. Schools can always use help in this area. Make sure parent volunteers receive training – either from school staff or other experts. **Playworks** offers trainings and a free, online "playbook" with hundreds of games and activities.

Indoor Recess Kits

Ryan Elementary in Westminster, Colorado, put together indoor recess kits for inclement weather days as part of their *Fuel Up to Play 60* program. The kits include Chinese Jump Ropes, Juggling Scarfs, Dice with Movement Cards, and a teacher's guide to brain-break activities. The kits replace the old standard of showing a movie to make sure students get a much needed movement break even though they can't go outside.

Playground Design

Playground enhancements can help decrease safety concerns and promote increased activity. When you're ready to revamp your playground, check out **KaBOOM!** and **Peaceful Playgrounds** for playground improvement guides, planners, blueprints, stencil sets and fundraising support.



Recess for Better Health

Advocate for Recess Before Lunch

Just as it sounds, this is the practice of switching school schedules so that students play at recess first, then eat lunch. Kids tend to eat a better lunch if they've already had their time on the playground, leading to less waste, better behavior and better performance in the classroom.⁴ Although major schedule changes can be challenging, many schools are doing it successfully and reaping lots of benefits. Visit the **HealthierUS School Challenge**, **Peaceful Playgrounds** and **Game On! The Ultimate Wellness Challenge** for resources.

Recess for Secondary Students

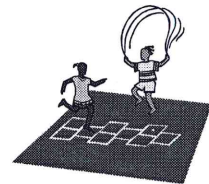
Recess is for younger kids, according to some teenagers! So **Apex Middle School** students in North Carolina don't have recess, they have 12 minutes after lunch called "Blacktop Time." The PTA painted the blacktop to mark out various activities to inspire more movement, and adults are around to encourage participation. **Panther Creek High School** in North Carolina offers SMART Lunch, an extended, single lunch period for all students. Students spend half their time eating lunch and half their time participating in a variety of activities, including rotating sports activities that are set up in the gym. Your school could also include Dance, Dance Revolution, Wii Fit, yoga, or exercise videos.

Make Your Recess Inclusive

When planning your recess program, give special consideration to children with particular physical activity needs and those who are at-risk for a less active lifestyle, including children with chronic illnesses, physical and other disabilities, as well as those who are overweight. Most activities can be modified to ensure that all students can join in and realize the benefits. Check out **SPARK PE** for inclusive recess strategies.

Resources

- *Fuel Up to Play 60*
www.fueluptoplay60.com
- *Game On! The Ultimate Wellness Challenge*
www.ActionforHealthyKids.org/game-on/
- SPARK PE inclusive strategies
www.sparkpe.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/K2_R_Inclusive_Strategies.pdf
- USDA HealthierUS School Challenge Recess Before Lunch Resources
<http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/healthierus-school-challenge-resources/recess-recess-lunch>
- KaBOOM!
<http://kaboom.org/>
- Playworks
www.playworks.org/
- Peaceful Playgrounds
www.peacefulplaygrounds.com



Action for Healthy Kids® partners with teachers, students, parents, school wellness experts and more to fight childhood obesity, undernourishment and physical inactivity by helping schools become healthier places so kids can live healthier lives. Our programs, tools and resources make it possible for everyone to play their part in ending the nation's childhood obesity epidemic.

www.ActionforHealthyKids.org

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¹The State of Play. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation,

<http://www.playworks.org/files/StateOfPlayFeb2010.pdf>

²<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/article/recess-makes-kids-smarter>

³<http://www.playworks.org/research-reveals-playworks-reduces-bullying>

⁴<http://www.peacefulplaygrounds.com/pdf/benefits-of-recess-before-lunch.pdf>



Appendix E

Fitness Breaks at School



Fitness breaks activate the brain, improve on-task behavior and leave students more focused and ready to learn.¹ There are lots of fun and creative ways to include fitness breaks in the daily schedule, and there are lots of resources available to help schools get started.

Classroom Activity Breaks

- Brain breaks are quick exercises that can last a minute or more. Some are specifically designed to cross the body's midline, which helps to engage both sides of the brain. **Brain Gym**, **Energizing Brain Breaks** and the **Just-a-Minute (JAM)** school program are all good resources.
- Breathing, stretching and short **yoga exercises** have been shown to have many benefits for kids in school. They can calm and clear the mind, relieve tension and stress, increase concentration, focus and attention span.²

Instant Recess®

UCLA health services professor Antronette Yancey created the **Instant Recess** program. Composed of 10 minute movement routines that the average American can easily perform, much of the appeal of Instant Recess lies in its incorporation of sport and cultural dance techniques. For example, one video depicts Native American tribal dancing and integrates it into the 10-minute workout.

The point of having these cultural elements is to build enthusiasm for exercising, something Dr. Yancey says is largely absent in America today – in fact her concern is that fitness has become too “medicalized.”³

Music Is Key

Music is a powerful tool. At **East Grand School District** in Granby, Colorado, you might see students dancing to music during transitions or movement breaks, special education classes doing ball exercises with music, music setting the tone of the day or being used to introduce a lesson theme.⁴

- Physical activity can also be linked to specific academic content learning.⁵ Teachers can have students practice spelling or vocabulary words while walking around the room. Or they could play a game of charades based on a topic the class is studying. **Active Academics**, **Take 10** and the **Healthy Kids Club** are good resources.



More Ideas⁶

- Use fitness alarms – like fire drills, ring the bell and have the whole school drop everything for a fitness break.
- Ask teachers to take “Walk and Talk” breaks – the class goes for a walk and discusses the lesson along the way.
- Have the PE teacher or other school staff lead fitness breaks during morning announcements.
- Use music to get kids moving more in the classroom, in the hallways during transitions and during lunch. Be sure to use music and videos that appeal to the age groups you are targeting.

For middle and high school students:

- Implement fitness breaks during homeroom or the “advisory” period.
- Involve students in creating, planning and leading their own activity breaks.
- Start slowly, have patience and be persistent.⁷



Fitness Breaks at School

Tips for Success⁸

- Teachers, school staff and parent volunteers: model enthusiasm for physical activity by participating in breaks with students.
- Demonstrate the breaks during staff meetings – a few at a time. Don't give a whole stack of activities for teachers to try all at once. They'll be overwhelmed and will be less likely to use any of them.
- Start a video exercise library for classroom use. Gather ideas from students, teachers and other parents, and your favorite resources.
- Modify activities so that all students can participate, whatever their fitness level and whatever special needs they may have.
- Write fitness breaks into wellness policies and school improvement plans to ensure they become a permanent part of the school culture.

Parent Advocate Shannon Ratliff, felt that **Brain Breaks** should be a routine part of the day at **South Lakewood Elementary** in Colorado. With a grant from Action for Healthy Kids, Shannon provided each teacher with a box of props, laminated training cards and a Smart Board application for the entire school to use. Shannon held a training class, implemented a program to track progress, and created incentives for them to reach their goals. Teachers and kids love the program!

Classroom Activity Breaks

- Instant Recess: www.toniyancey.com/IR_Products.html
- Just-A-Minute (JAM) Program: www.healthetips.com/jam-program.php
- Energizing Brain Breaks: energizingbrainbreaks.com/
- Brain Gym: www.braingym.org
- Healthy Kids Club: pvhs.org/body.cfm?id=1545

Yoga Programs

- Yoga Health Foundation: yogahealthfoundation.org/
- Yoga 4 Classrooms®: www.yoga4classrooms.com/
- Mindful Life: www.mindfullifeyoga.com/
- Yoga Kids: www.yogakids.com/
- K-12 Yoga: www.k-12yoga.org/

Resources

Content Learning with Movement

- Active Academics: www.activeacademics.org
- Take 10!: www.take10.net
- Math and Literacy Activity Cards: pvhs.org/body.cfm?id=1545

For Secondary Students

Colorado Legacy Foundation, "Take a Break! Teacher Toolbox – Physical Activity Breaks in the Secondary Classroom."
<http://colegacy.org/resource/movemore/>

Action for Healthy Kids® partners with teachers, students, parents, school wellness experts and more to fight childhood obesity, undernourishment and physical inactivity by helping schools become healthier places so kids can live healthier lives. Our programs, tools and resources make it possible for everyone to play their part in ending the nation's childhood obesity epidemic.

www.ActionforHealthyKids.org

The websites listed in this document are provided as a service only to identify potentially useful ideas and resources for creating healthier school cultures. Action for Healthy Kids is not responsible for maintaining these external websites, nor does the listing of these sites constitute or imply endorsement of their content.

¹National Association for Sport and Physical Education. Integrating Physical Activity into the Complete School Day.

<http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/publications/teachingTools/upload/PA-During-School-Day.pdf>

²<http://www.yoga4classrooms.com/benefits-of-yoga-in-schools>

³http://dailybruin.com/2011/01/03/ucla_health_services_professor_antronette_vancey_created_instant_recess_program_for_10minute_exercis/

⁴Physical Activity in Schools, Resources and Case Studies to Implement HB11-1069." LiveWell Colorado Webinar – August 16, 2011

⁵J.B. Madigan. "Action-Based Learning: Building Better Brains through Movement." <http://abllab.com/wp-content/themes/abl/doc/abl-handout.pdf>

⁶Alliance for a Healthier Generation. https://schools.healthiergeneration.org/_asset/48dfmv/11-2659_SWToolkitHigh.pdf

⁷Adapted from Alliance for a Healthier Generation,

https://schools.healthiergeneration.org/_asset/48dfmv/11-2659_SWToolkitHigh.pdf

& Colorado Legacy Foundation, "Move More, Learn More:

Physical Activity at the Secondary Level," Webinar, September, 2012

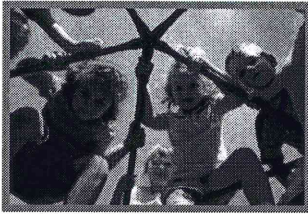
⁸Alliance for a Healthier Generation.

https://schools.healthiergeneration.org/_asset/48dfmv/11-2659_SWToolkitHigh.pdf



Alternative School Discipline Options to Withholding Recess

In a national survey of principals, more than three-quarters state that students in their schools are punished by withholding recess,¹ but evidence shows that this is the wrong tactic. Taking



physical activity away from children decreases their attention spans and ability to focus in the classroom and increases behavior problems and trips to the principal's office.^{2,3,4} Furthermore, with today's childhood obesity epidemic, it is more important than ever for children to be physically active throughout the school day. According to the CDC, children need 60 minutes of physical activity each day. Recess can help students reach that important health goal.^{5,6,7}

Benefits of Recess^{8,9,10}

- Improves attention and reduces fidgeting later in the school day
 - Over 80% of principals report that recess has a positive impact on academic achievement
 - Two-thirds of principals report that students listen better and are more focused in class after recess
 - 96% of principals believe recess has a positive impact on social development and 97% believe it has a positive impact on well-being¹
- Provides a mental and physical break from the academic challenges of the school day
- Allows students to be active and release energy
- Creates an opportunity for students to be social and use their imagination

Alternative Discipline Options

Below are some alternative disciplinary options to taking away recess. Disciplinary actions should be appropriate and match the level of misbehavior. They should be age appropriate and punishment should increase in severity over time with repeat offenses.

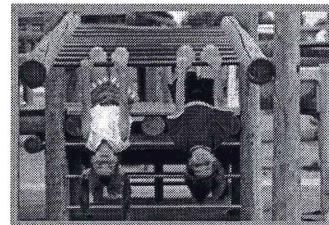


- Child gets a strike for each time he/she misbehaves. Have a different consequence for each strike (i.e., strike 1: warning, strike 2: parent receives a call from the teacher, strike 3: child is sent to the principal's office)
- Student must clean up the mess he/she made (pick up toys in the classroom, put away books in the library, or pick up trash outside while others play during recess)
- Student must write a letter of apology explaining what he/she did wrong
- Student must write an essay on what he/she did wrong and how to behave better next time (good for reflection and self-evaluation)
- Student is given extra homework
- Have the student and teacher call home together to report misbehavior to family
- Send a note about misbehavior home, have it signed by parent and return it the next school day (try to involve parents with improving student's behavior)
- Do community service
- Stay late after school/afterschool detention
- Have the student miss a class trip or school event if he/she cannot behave properly

Appendix F (cont.)

Other Tips to Manage Classroom Behavior

- Include students in establishing expectations and outcomes early in the year, and review those expectations and outcomes frequently
- Be consistent with enforcing behavioral expectations within the learning environment
- Reward compliance with rules
- Offer positive feedback and “catch” students doing things right
- Wait for students to be attentive before providing directions¹¹



Reinforce Positive Behavior

- Social rewards, such as positive attention, praise, a pat on the shoulder, or thanks, are often more highly valued by children than a toy or food and affirm a child’s self-worth
- Recognize student with a ribbon, certificate, announcement on the school-wide morning announcements or school website, a photo on a recognition board, or a note to student or note home to parents
- Reward student with special privileges (going first, choosing a class activity, helping the teacher, extra recess, eating lunch with teacher), stickers, stamps, small toys, trinkets, or school supplies
- Provide a sticker to students for good behavior. The student with the most stickers after a certain amount of time gets a prize (i.e. extra recess time, small toy, special classroom privileges, a homework pass)
- Students receive tickets for good behavior. Teacher puts all tickets in a basket and pulls out a ticket at the end of each week, as in a lottery. The student whose ticket is pulled receives a small prize
- Reward the whole class by placing a marble in a jar when the class behaves well. Once the marbles reach a certain point in the jar, the class gets a reward (e.g., extra recess, a movie, free time, no homework over the weekend)

See http://cspinet.org/new/pdf/constructive_classroom_rewards.pdf for more ideas for healthy rewards for classes and individual students.

For more information, contact the Center for Science in the Public Interest
nutritionpolicy@cspinet.org, (202) 777-8352

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- ³ Turner L, Chaloupka FJ, Chiqui JF and Sandoval A. *School Policies and Practices to Improve Health and Prevent Obesity: National Elementary School Survey Results*. Princeton, NJ: Bridging the Gap, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2010. <http://www.rwjf.org/files/research/bridgingthegap20101123monographrevised.pdf>
- ⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *State-Level School Health Policies and Programs Study (SHPPS)*, Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2006.
- ⁵ Shore SM, Sachs ML, Lidicker JR, et al. (2008). Decreased Scholastic Achievement in Overweight Middle School Students. *Obesity*, vol. 16, pp. 1535-1538.
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- ⁸ Jarrett OS, et al (1998). Impact of Recess on Classroom Behavior: Group effects and individual differences. *Journal of Educational Research*, vol. 92, pp. 121-126.
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- ¹⁰ Pellegrini AD, Bohn CM. (2005). The Role of Recess in Children’s Cognitive Performance and School Adjustment. *Educational Researcher*, vol. 34, pp.13-19.
- ¹¹ National Association for Sport and Physical Education. *Position Statement: Physical Activity used as Punishment and/or Behavior Management*. Reston, VA: NASPE, Association of the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 2009. <http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/standards/upload/Physical-Activity-as-Punishment-to-Board-12-10.pdf>