

NEW Recess Legislation Enacted in 2005–2007

In 2007, state legislation regarding recess was enacted in Oklahoma, a recess resolution was adopted in Arkansas, and recess legislation or resolutions were considered in Connecticut, Illinois, Kentucky, Massachusetts, New York, South Carolina, Texas and Virginia. All recess legislation enacted from 2005 through 2007 is summarized below.

Arkansas

AR HR 1023 (2007, resolution adopted) – Urges school districts to provide a mid-morning and mid-afternoon recess of at least ten minutes to all students in kindergarten through grade six. Recognizes that recess creates a supportive environment for children and allows them to incorporate regular physical activity into their daily lives; recess provides children with discretionary time and opportunities to engage in physical activities that lead to healthy bodies and enjoyment of movement; recess results in enhanced cognitive abilities and facilitates improved attention in the classroom; recess is an essential component in the development of interpersonal communication skills, as it provides an unstructured environment in which children can interact with one another; and recess is an avenue for creativity which in turn leads to the ability to think "outside the box" and develop stronger thinking skills.

Connecticut

CT Senate Substitute Bill 204, (2006, enacted, Public Act 06–44) – Requires the Connecticut department of education to develop guidelines for addressing the physical health needs of students that include, among other things, plans for engaging students in daily physical exercise during regular school hours. (Note – the bill doesn't use the word "recess" or specify a certain number of minutes.)

Indiana

IN SB 111 (2006, enacted, Public Law 54) – Beginning with the 2006–2007 school year, requires the governing body of each school corporation to provide daily physical activity for students in elementary school. The physical activity must be consistent with the curriculum and programs developed under IC 20–19–3–6 and may include the use of recess. On a day when there is inclement weather

or unplanned circumstances have shortened the school day, the school corporation may provide physical activity alternatives or elect not to provide physical activity.

Oklahoma

OK HB 1601 (2007, enacted – OS 70–11–103.9) – Creates the "Fit Kids Physical Education Task Force" regarding school physical education. Also strongly encourages school districts to incorporate physical activity into the school day by providing to students in full-day kindergarten and grades one through five at least a twenty-minute daily recess, which shall be in addition to the 60 minutes of required physical education, and by allowing all students brief physical activity breaks throughout the day, physical activity clubs, and special events.

South Carolina

HB 3499 (2005, enacted, Act 102) – As part of bill phasing in physical education standards statewide, provides that each elementary school shall designate a physical education teacher to serve as its physical education activity director. The physical education activity director shall plan and coordinate opportunities for additional physical activity for students that exceed the designated weekly student physical education instruction times that may include, but not be limited to, before, during, and after school dance instruction, fitness trail programs, intramural programs, bicycling programs, walking programs, recess, and activities designed to promote physical activity opportunities in the classroom.

Texas

SB 42 (2005, enacted) – Encourages school districts to promote physical activity for children through classroom curricula for health and physical education. Allows the state board of education, by rule, to require students in kindergarten to grade nine to participate in up to 30 minutes of daily physical activity as part of a school district's physical education curriculum, through structured activity or during a school's daily recess. Provides for consultation with educators, parents, and medical professionals to develop physical activity requirements.