

The Recess Plan

1. SCHEDULING

Determine who will be on duty during recess and what their role is while supervising students. Determine the ratio of students to staff.

2. PLAYGROUND ORGANIZATION

Ensure the outdoor play area has explicit boundaries for different types of play, socialization, and rest. Consider well equipped areas for free play, areas for guided activities, and areas for quieter and less physical activities (e.g. chalking).

3. INCLEMENT WEATHER AND INDOOR RECESS

Thought and planning should be given to the use of the gymnasium and classrooms to accommodate indoor active activities such as Zumba and dance. The library and classrooms can be used for indoor unity activities such as a Pokemon Club, Coding Club, Magic Club, and Craft Club.

4. EQUIPMENT PURCHASING AND MANAGEMENT

Purchase equipment and create a system to manage it. Rotate equipment every few months to keep interest, engagement, and physical activity at higher levels – which, in turn, will prevent boredom and social conflict.

5. JUNIOR RECESS LEADERS

Identify, train, and oversee older students to be Junior Recess Leaders. Provide leaders with a hat or vest so that they are easily identified. Junior Recess Leaders support with running activities and resolving conflict.

6. AWARENESS

Good communication and an overall awareness of new recess practices are essential to establish sustainable change. New roles, new rules, and new routines will become a “new normal.” Create a calendar of events and activities and post it where it is visible to staff and students. Make regular announcements. Discuss recess at staff meetings. Send letters home to parents. Find ways to spread the word and keep it going.

7. COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Reshaping the social landscape of recess is a shared responsibility. This means leveraging the help of variety of local partners across sectors including public, private, and non-profit. These partners might include local universities, regional health departments, community foundations, corporate foundations, and not-for-profit organizations that focus on health and physical activity. Consider volunteers to run occasional clubs such as yoga, dance, coding, crafts, martial arts, and so on. Local instructors for activities such as yoga, Zumba, and martial arts are often willing to volunteer their time to run programs.

