

January 20, 2023

**SUBJECT: RECESS FOR ALL! - HF271/SF183**

Dear Chair Pryor and Education Policy Committee Members,

We are writing to express our strong support for legislation addressing the practice of withholding recess as a form of punishment. As you will note in the attached letters, we have heard from numerous parents throughout the state with stories of how this practice is being used and the detriment to our children.

We feel that withholding recess is one area where our practice has not kept up with science of education and child development. We know that:

- Children are more attentive and more productive in the classroom when they receive regular breaks for recess.<sup>1 2</sup>
- Recess promotes not only physical health and social development but also cognitive performance.<sup>3</sup>
- A student's ability to refocus is stimulated by breaks from the classroom.<sup>4</sup>
- Recess promotes social and emotional learning by offering time to engage in unstructured peer interactions.<sup>5</sup>
- Recess offers children valuable opportunities to learn communication skills, negotiation, cooperation, sharing, and problem solving skills.<sup>6</sup>
- Recess offers children a necessary means for managing stress.<sup>7</sup>

We have worked closely with a wide range of stakeholders to find language that was amenable to all and this is reflected in the legislation brought forward by Representative Edelson in the House and Senator Maye Quade in the Senate. We believe this to be a common sense provision that recognizes the evolving science of child development, and it is time that our school discipline practices evolve to reflect that new knowledge.

We are grateful for your leadership and your commitment to our children, and we ask you that you pass legislation to address the practice of withholding recess.

Sincerely,

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<sup>1</sup>[Recess Rules: Why the Undervalued Playtime May Be America's Best Investment for Healthy Kids and Healthy Schools | Research briefs | Features](#)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00220679809597584>

<sup>3</sup> <https://journals.humankinetics.com/view/journals/pes/15/3/article-p243.xml>

<sup>4</sup> [ERIC - ED463047 - Recess and the Importance of Play. A Position Statement on Young Children and Recess., 2001](#)

<sup>5</sup> [\(PDF\) Physical Play and Cognitive Development: Integrating Activity, Cognition, and Education](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Active Healthy Living: Prevention of Childhood Obesity Through Increased Physical Activity | Pediatrics](#)

<sup>7</sup> [\(PDF\) Physical Play and Cognitive Development: Integrating Activity, Cognition, and Education](#)

The Arc Minnesota  
 Proof Alliance  
 MidMinnesota Legal Aid  
 Multicultural Autism Action Network  
 National Parents Union  
 Autism Society of Minnesota  
 Solutions Not Suspensions  
 Down Syndrome Association of Minnesota  
 Minnesota Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities  
 Ed Allies  
 Coalition for Children with Disabilities  
 Institute on Community Integration  
 PACER Center

