

Physical Exercise and Student Discipline

The Board of Education (Board) recognizes that a positive approach toward exercise and physical activity is important to the health and well-being of students. The Board requires that each student in elementary school shall have not less than twenty minutes daily in total devoted to physical exercise, except that a Planning and Placement Team may alter such schedule for a child requiring special education and related services. Further, the Board permits, in its elementary schools, including an additional amount of time, beyond the required twenty minutes for physical exercise, devoted to undirected play during the regular school day, subject to the approval of the building administration.

All aspects of the school experience should encourage students to have a healthy attitude toward exercise and promote the life-long enjoyment of physical activity. Therefore, when school employees impose disciplinary consequences for student misconduct during the regular day, the following restrictions shall apply:

1. Loss of Recess as Disciplinary Consequence

Except as provided below, school employees may NOT prevent a student in elementary school from participating in the entire time devoted to physical exercise or undirected play in the regular school day as a form of discipline. Recess and other physically active learning opportunities may include movement-oriented learning activities in the academic environment, physical activity breaks, and regularly scheduled school wide routines and events that engage students in physical activity that is the time devoted each day (at least 20 minutes) to physical exercise in the District's elementary schools.

School employees may prevent or restrict recess when

- a. a student poses a danger to the health or safety of other students or school personnel or
- b. it is limited to the shorter recess period if there are two or more recess periods in the school day, so long as the student is allowed to participate in at least 20 minutes of physical activity during the school day.

Recess prevention or restriction may be imposed only once during a school week, unless the student is a danger to the health or safety of other students or school personnel. Recess prevention or restriction is not allowed for a student's failure to complete their work on time or for the student's academic performance. Discipline

may be imposed before recess begins and/or imposed during recess. Appropriate interventions shall be used to redirect a student's behavior during recess.

2. Physical Activity as Punishment

School employees may NOT require students enrolled in grades K-12, inclusive, to engage in physical activity as a form of discipline during the school day.

3. Wellness Instruction

School employees shall not prevent students from participating in physical exercise or undirected play during wellness instruction as a form of discipline.

This restriction does not apply to brief periods of respite/time-outs, referrals to the building administrator, or for safety reasons.

At no time shall an entire class be prevented from participating in wellness instruction or physical exercise activity as a disciplinary consequence.

The Superintendent of Schools is authorized to develop guidelines to implement this policy.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent a school employee from acting in accordance with an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) developed by the student's Planning and Placement Team (PPT).

For the purposes of this policy, a "school employee" is defined as (1) a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional or coach employed by the Board or working in the North Canaan Elementary School, or (2) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in the district schools pursuant to a contract with the Board.

Disciplinary Action for Failure to Follow Policy:

Any employee who fails to comply with the requirements of this policy may be subject to discipline, up to and including termination of employment. Any contracted individual who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in the North Canaan Elementary School and who fails to comply with the requirements of this policy may be subject to having his/her contract for services suspended by the district.

(cf. [6142.10](#) – Health Education Program)

(cf. [6142.101](#) – Wellness)

(cf. [6142.61](#) – Physical Activity)

(cf. [6142.6](#) – Physical Education)

Legal Reference: Connecticut General Statutes

10-221o Lunch periods. Recess

10-221u Boards to adopt policies addressing the use of physical activity as discipline.

PA 22-81 An Act Expanding Preschool and Mental and Behavioral Services for Children.

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NORTH CANAAN BOARD OF EDUCATION
North Canaan, Connecticut