

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

D.C. Code § 38-824.02. Physical and health education requirements

Effective April 11, 2019

D.C. Code § 38-824.03. Additional Requirements

Effective March 13, 2019

The scorecard was created as part of a policy toolkit that supports advancing recess in schools through state laws. It was developed by the research team, with input from the advisory board, to provide a starting point for advocates and policymakers seeking to improve recess legislation. A score of “0” indicates that the law requires further development. We recommend first incorporating all essential best practices, followed by any enhanced best practices that are appropriate for your state.

D.C. has a recess law that notably includes grades 6 through 8, however, the law uses the weaker language of “it shall be the goal”.

BEST PRACTICE	LANGUAGE IN LAW	SCORE
ESSENTIAL BEST PRACTICES		
A. Mandates a time requirement of at least 20 minutes of daily recess	For students in kindergarten through 5, <u>it shall be the goal of all schools to provide</u> an average of 150 minutes of physical education per week, and at least one recess of at <u>least 20 minutes per day.</u> <i>Note: Weak language</i>	1
B. Inclusive of all students in grades kindergarten-8	For students in <u>kindergarten through 5,</u> it shall be the goal of all schools to provide an average of 150 minutes of physical education per week, and at least one recess of at least 20 minutes per day. For students in <u>grades 6 through 8,</u> it shall be the goal of all schools to provide an average of 225 minutes of physical education per week, and at least one recess of at least 20 minutes per day.	1
C. Prohibits schools from withholding recess	<u>Requiring or withholding physical activity shall not be used to punish students;</u> provided, that students who are not wearing appropriate athletic clothing may be prohibited from participating in physical activity until properly dressed. <i>Note: Given that this is a PE and recess law, it is unclear if this provision is related to PE or recess or both</i>	1
D. Prohibits schools from using recess to fulfil state mandated physical education requirements	N/A	0
E. Includes specific language on compliance	N/A	0

BEST PRACTICE	LANGUAGE IN LAW	SCORE
ENHANCED PRACTICES		
F. Transition time does not count toward minimum time	N/A	0
G. Requires recess be provided on shortened school days	N/A	0
H. Requires recess to be inclusive for all students	N/A	0
I. Requires recess to be held outdoors	N/A	0
J. If recess is indoors, the law requires there to be adequate space for students to be physically active	N/A	0
K. Prohibits the use of personal electronic devices during recess	N/A	0
L. Requires schools to provide annual professional development opportunities for staff members who lead or supervise recess	The Office of the State Superintendent of Education <u>shall provide and coordinate annual professional-development sessions</u> for school personnel, provided by a certified instructor and based on nationally recognized standards, related to incorporating physical activity into classroom instruction, classroom instruction breaks, and active recess.	2
M. Requires schools to schedule recess before lunch	N/A	0
N. Requires schools to provide age-appropriate equipment	N/A	0
O. Requires all recess equipment and facilities to meet or exceed safety standards	N/A	0