

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.

Illinois defines recess as “supervised, unstructured, child-directed play.”

BEST PRACTICE	LANGUAGE IN LAW	SCORE
ESSENTIAL BEST PRACTICES		
A. Mandates a time requirement of at least 20 minutes of daily recess	For any school day 5 clock hours or longer in length, the <u>total time allotted for play</u> for students in kindergarten through grade five <u>must be at least 30 minutes.</u>	2
B. Inclusive of all students in grades kindergarten-8	All public schools shall provide daily time for supervised, unstructured, child-directed play for all <u>students in kindergarten through grade five.</u> <i>Note: Does not include grades 6-8</i>	1
C. Prohibits schools from withholding recess	All public schools <u>shall prohibit the withholding of play time</u> as a disciplinary or punitive action, except when a student’s participation in play time poses an immediate threat to the safety of the student or others.	2
D. Prohibits schools from using recess to fulfil state mandated physical education requirements	<u>Play time shall not count as a course of physical education</u> that fulfills the requirements of Section 27-6, not shall time spent in a course of physical education count towards the daily time for play.	2
E. Includes specific language on compliance	N/A	0

BEST PRACTICE	LANGUAGE IN LAW	SCORE
ENHANCED BEST PRACTICES		
F. Transition time does not count toward minimum time	<u>Time spent dressing or undressing</u> for outdoor play time <u>shall not count towards the daily time for play.</u>	2
G. Requires recess be provided on shortened school days	<u>For any school day less than 5 clock hours in length, the total time allotted for play each school day must be at least one-tenth of a day of attendance for the student pursuant to Section 10-19.05.</u>	2
H. Requires recess to be inclusive for all students	<u>For students with disabilities, play time shall comply with a student's applicable individualized education program (IEP)</u> or federal Section 504 plan.	2
I. Requires recess to be held outdoors	Schools are <u>encouraged to provide play time outdoors</u> , but it may be held indoors. <i>Note: Weak language</i>	1
J. If recess is indoors, the law requires there to be adequate space for students to be physically active	If <u>play time is held indoors</u> , schools are <u>encouraged</u> to provide it in a <u>space that promotes physical activity.</u> <i>Note: Weak language</i>	1
K. Prohibits the use of personal electronic devices during recess	<u>Play time</u> must allow unstructured play, and may include organized games, but <u>shall not include the use of computers, tablets, phones, or videos.</u>	2
L. Requires schools to provide annual professional development opportunities for staff members who lead or supervise recess	N/A	0
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