

ONTEORA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

BOARD OF EDUCATION
BOICEVILLE, NEW YORK 12412

OPEN FORUM ON RECESS

4:00 p.m.

THURSDAY , MAY 28, 2015

Middle School/High School

MINUTES

Present Trustee Fletcher, Trustee Kurnit, Trustee Moor, Trustee Davis, Trustee Schnell

Not Present: Trustee Osmond Trustee McGillicuddy

Comments made:

As parent and teacher, I like to be able to utilize recess to help students, sometimes just 15 min for them to get the work

Student government at Bennett not happy – their meetings are during recess- they want to be able to stay in

Bennett students wrote letters:

Jazz band during recess – achieved gold and advanced gold

Recess is only convenient time for student council to meet so they can get involved

Many go outside and sit - why make us go out?

Like to get homework done during recess

Understand the idea of physical activity, but want choice

This has also been raised by the Health & Wellness committee- may need a larger conversation about restructuring the school day

When you walk around Bennett during recess, students and teachers are engaged - playing a game, or getting teacher help- students are not working alone

Some students have difficulty completing work at home and recess is an opportunity to get help from teachers

Have offered additional classes during recess in Organizational Skills – very successful

Students complete community service projects- such as helping in the art room or library

Students like to use recess to spend time with their trusted adults

Teachers should have discretion of using as a punishment

If students need the recess outside, teacher are aware and it is handled – such as 10 min in, then out

Hate to see it dictated by policy

Health and Wellness committee looked at research of schools that did not offer recess time

Letter read from 2nd grade teacher who wanted students to have a choice

Recess provides energy release, interactive play, in some classrooms students can earn extra recess time but sometimes need to limit recess as a behavioral reset – take time to talk with the students and teach them about getting along with others – can't do while teaching

Imposing a policy will severely impact the ability to use recess as teaching tool

Trust teachers to make decisions on recess

No one on school board wants to get rid of extra things done during recess
Support students to the fullest as whole beings– all factors coming to school – recess is part of it – it is an essential planned rest from school tasks
With rigorous common core standards, APPR, and maintaining classroom behavior, difficult to include music, etc. during the day
Despite all evidence of the benefits of recess, it is the default area which teachers turn when needing time for play rehearsal, create news program – no time in schedule so turn to recess - makes recess expendable
No guidelines as to when recess should be pulled
No indoor recess physical activities
Losing much needed opportunity to go out and play
Perhaps stress is due to lack of recess - fidgety students need recess
Intermediate school had a great deal of recess taken due to incomplete assignments - look at why assignments were incomplete instead of punishing students
Classroom infractions – taking away recess is counter active
If recess was protected by policy, administration would find other times to accomplish things done during recess
CDC – 20 min recess for all students, need daily recess in addition to PE
American Academy of Pediatrics says– recess is important time of day – child's personal time – should not be withheld for punishment
Department of Health - Recess is essential time of day - Protect recess as part of whole child's day – find other consequences and schedule activities elsewhere in the day

Supporting social growth can be with recess or with teacher - why do we need a policy and not use at professional discretion?

Raised because parents felt that recess was being withheld a great deal as punishment

Child need extra time but has ADHD – extra help needed – but very upset missing recess
Maybe ask students if they want to say in not to be told they have to

Several instances where student has stayed on to do homework because of other commitments after school – better use of time
Blanket board policy makes it not an option – parents will send in letter that work was not done at home
Children should have the option to use recess as see fit
If needs consequence to behavior – trust teachers to make decisions
Does not miss entire recess, but 15 min – consequences need to be valuable to change behavior

Children choose to stay in for recess if they have work to do, or need help, or is too cold or too hot
Honored to join Jazz Ensemble – making good choices are important for children
Support that children are held in as consequence – no extreme reason for missing recess
Students get outside after school and during PE
Trust principals and staff to use recess properly
Reconfiguration changed school to an Intermediate School, need to raise the bar and make kids accountable

Best memory of being in school is having teacher stay with them during recess to teach French
Need to give students choices especially as they get older and need to learn to make good choices

If children have to choose between outside and homework, will choose outside
Upset that recess is not always happening – children need to get outside and build physical strength – all the enrichment does no good if you don't rest the brain and stretch the body

Using recess as consequence should be an option but poor choice- some children need the recess

Should be last resort

Not good to keep in to finish classwork - they need a break – that is punishing them just because they work slowly and depriving those students that need recess the most – the children who don't do as well

Offer children to stay in and get extra help

Parents needs to know that classwork is not happening in a timely way

Object to forcing children to play outside when they don't want to -reasons they may not want to go outside include: Forgot their hat, wet snow boots, not feeling well

Recess is a good time for extra-curricular – especially when they can't stay after school

Needs to be in the best interest of the child – Board needs to stay out of it – no policy – don't micromanage and limit choices

Reasons to keep in from recess include bullying, name calling and excluding – why excluding?
Children should be able to choose who they play with

OAA concerned about a recess policy - don't understand why it is warranted – policy will impact climate and culture of buildings and the managing of buildings

Potential limit of options for teachers

If there is an issue with teachers or administrators overusing recess of a consequence it needs to be brought to their attention

The policy is way too specific – can't be so black and white – behavior and consequence of every child is different

Teachers are not trying to torture students - teachers know that students need to go out for recess – the policy not required by state regulations and is a mistake

If there is a problem, let's address it, but don't see a problem

Students are being kept in days without parents knowing

Parents should be child's best advocate – teacher, principal, superintendent- need to have dialogue with educators

Mandate to offer students to go out for recess or not

Not all parents have investment in child- to go through channels

During Art children have 40 min to complete a project. In ceramics, for example, it may not be enough time to be satisfied with project - offer that if you don't like what you made can come back during lunch or recess

Value recess as time students can come in and fix or finish their project

There is homework club after school at Bennett

A policy that does not allow recess as a consequence means that administration and teachers are also going to have to come up with other consequences

Kindergarteners cannot make choice- the teacher takes a few minutes of recess to discuss bad behavior, then lets them out

Recess policy is inherent in classrooms and buildings, not necessary at this point
Have another forum when parents can come – majority of people here are teachers Give all parents in District an opportunity to speak

Perhaps use PTA meetings to come to speak about recess
PTAs can put it on an agenda and have a discussion

Give students as much opportunity to choose what to do with their down time- provide more choices

Trying to come up with a balance to today's kids wanting to stay in and play video games

Children who have no computers at home, want to stay in and get a computer to use – Use discretion – every child is different

Will be discussed at the next Board meeting

Teachers have a bias on what they want to teach – who looks out for the other side of the students life? Advocate for students being outside

Students are encouraged to be outdoors – do not keep in un-necessarily – students were happy to stay in, happy to learn – some are not comfortable raising their hand during class Teachers would prefer them out too!

Parents are responsible for children being outside when they go home
No one else should parent students but the parents – it is not up to the school

Students ask music teachers if they will work with them at recess because no time for 1 on 1 during lessons

Students are excited to be there during recess – music lets them socialize, and have fun with orchestra and chorus during recess- they ask for extra help

There were 10 rehearsals during the year at recess time

Teacher is doing their job when working with students during recess

Students should not lose option

Behavior management- teaching academics and caring for children's safety is paramount. If there is an incident on the playground, keeping the student in is a good consequence - consistent behavior plan and keeping kids safe

Some students have excessive absences and cannot complete work at home due to lack of support so student looks to teacher to give support during recess

Difficult to find time of day to go over work

Perhaps add a second 20 min recess to the day that will not be taken away – give more breathing space – may need a longer day

If longer day to have another recess, have recess at home- job is to teach children
Concerned about recess policy taking away what can be done as educators for children
Is time to help students, don't take away from teachers
Physical activity built into day – 5 min here and there

Perhaps look at restructuring day before having the policy – to allow for more recess
Rely on educators and administrators to make recess a last resort

Sometimes missing recess for infractions is the only consequence– there must be other consequences besides recess- other ways to positively discipline students
There is a reason these health companies are giving this information
What do teachers need to give one on one time outside of recess time?
Taking away the one part of day to free their mind

Recommendation by CDC is that students have 20 min a day, recess is 30 min right now, each teachers has 10 min each day to help students

Leadership needed to figure out something that is equitable
Many parents are not as proactive as others with their children
Public school is different today – more responsibility for students

Board does not know about the alternative consequences given today
Recess is often last resort, phone call to parent, behavior plan, take 5 (time out), walk pass to get energy out for 5 min
Recess is not the go-to consequence

Minutes Recorded By:
Fern Amster



Board of Education: Tony Fletcher, Rob Kurnit, Laurie Osmond, Ann McGillicuddy, Gideon Moor, Tanya Davis, Barbara Schnell