

To: Senate Education Committee
From: Dana Hepper, Children's Institute
Date: Thursday, March 27, 2025
Re: SB 1126 – requiring daily recess

Chair Frederick, Vice-Chair Weber, and members of the Committee,

My name is Dana Hepper, and I am the Director of Policy & Advocacy at the Children's Institute. Our mission is to make Oregon the best place to be a kid. Adequate time for recess and play is absolutely in alignment with that mission, and we are proud to support SB 1126.

As an organization that has spent years translating research to action in early childhood, I can confidently say that access to recess is strongly grounded in research. The [American Academy of Pediatrics policy statement](#) highlights the cognitive, physical, emotional, and social benefits of daily recess. Based on a thorough review of the research, the AAP opposes withholding recess for punitive or academic reasons. Similarly, the [Centers for Disease Control](#) finds recess improves physical activity, memory, attention, concentration, on-task time, behavior, and social-emotional development.

Teachers will also tell you that recess is essential. I asked my colleagues who work with educators every day what they thought of this legislation. Here's what they said:

"If a child is struggling in the classroom, one thing that really helps is participating in organized playtime with their peers. Recess activities help kids build the skills they need."

“A lot of kids are still dealing with the fallout of the pandemic in terms of learning group games and social skills. Recess is a huge place where these skills are being restored.”

Finally, if you still have any doubt, just ask children. Adults often laugh when we ask children what they like most about school and they answer “Recess!” But what if we listened to them? Their answer is likely honestly communicating to us that recess is giving them things their rapidly developing brains and bodies desperately need.

By supporting SB 1126, you’re listening to the research, educators, and young children. Thank you.