

# Recess Guidelines for Garland ISD Elementary Campuses

Recess serves as essential unstructured playtime during which children engage in choice-driven, imaginative activities, establish social rules for play, and release physical energy and emotional stress. It is a critical part of child development and supports both academic and behavioral success.

---

Garland ISD elementary schools should implement daily schedules that include a minimum of 30 minutes of supervised recess for all students in grades Pre-Kindergarten through Fifth Grade. This recess time should be distinct from and not replace physical education classes.

In the event of inclement weather, screen-based activities (e.g., movies, tablets) should be used only as a last resort. When possible, alternative forms of interactive or physical indoor play should be provided to preserve the developmental benefits of recess.

Recess should be recognized as a necessary educational support, not a reward. **Under no circumstances** should recess be withheld for disciplinary reasons, academic interventions (such as tutoring), or other competing priorities.

---

To ensure that recess is a safe, engaging, and beneficial experience, Garland ISD should provide:

- Appropriate facilities and equipment
  - Adequate supervision by trained staff
  - Ongoing support and training to maintain high standards for recess quality and safety
- 

Whenever scheduling permits, recess should be held before lunch. Research indicates that scheduling recess before lunch contributes to:

- A calmer, more orderly cafeteria environment
  - Fewer behavioral issues in the classroom
  - More time on academic tasks
  - Increased consumption of milk, vegetables, and main entrees by students
- 

By adopting these practices, Garland ISD will be promoting a healthier, more balanced, and developmentally appropriate learning environment for all elementary students.