



**GOVERNING BOARD AGENDA ITEM  
AMPHITHEATER UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 10**

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**DATE OF MEETING:**            November 16, 2010

**TITLE:**                    **Consideration of Whether to Adopt a Policy Mandating Thirty Minutes of Structured Recess for Elementary Schools**

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**BACKGROUND:** During last year's legislative session, House Bill 2725 created A.R.S. § 15-108 to require the governing board of each Arizona school district providing instruction for elementary school students to hold a public meeting not later than January 1, 2011 for the purpose of considering adoption of a policy that would require 30 minutes of structured recess per day for all students in Kindergarten through Fifth Grade.

This item is presented for the Board's consideration of whether to potentially adopt a policy mandating structured recess. The new law requires that parents be notified of the Board's meeting to consider this item. Notice has consequently been issued by email and will also be forwarded by flyers sent home. Parents must have the opportunity to comment on the policy issue, and our call to the audience will provide that opportunity.

The parents of the students enrolled in the district **MUST** be invited and given the opportunity to comment on a proposed policy to provide students with daily recess that totals at least thirty minutes.

Significantly, the law prescribes that if a policy requiring recess is adopted:

- The recess requirements shall consist of structured physical activity outside or inside the classroom.
- Physical education classes may be used to satisfy the recess requirement.
- Unstructured recess time that occurs immediately after lunch periods does not satisfy the recess requirement.

Some members of the Board will recall that the Board adopted a Student Wellness policy and regulations in 2006 that was much broader in scope than recess requirements and which certainly encompassed opportunities for physical activity – obviously the aim of a recess policy, if adopted. A copy of the wellness documents is attached. If a policy were adopted to mandate structured recess, it would be the administration's recommendation that such terms be added to the wellness policy documents.

It is important to note that the District does provide physical education programs at the elementary level – not available in many other districts. PE, of course, provides a structured and instructionally based opportunity for physical activity.

Current opportunities for physical activity at the elementary schools in the district, including physical education classes and structured recess, are detailed in the attached chart. What is not reflected, however, is the additional time provided for unstructured recess after lunch (because this time would not meet the requirements of statute). Educationally, the administration believes that this traditional "free" recess time is vital for socialization, relaxation and development of imagination.

The current instructional schedule and curriculum requirements under state education standards do not afford additional time within current school schedules for additional recess time. The addition of recess time would, therefore, generally require extension of the school day.

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**RECOMMENDATION:** This item is presented for study and direction at this time only. Following Board study, if the Board is inclined to adopt new policy terms dictating additional structured recess time, a draft will be presented at a future Board meeting for finalization in accordance with that direction.

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**INITIATED BY:**



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Todd A. Jaeger, Associate to the Superintendent

Date: November 8, 2010



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Vicki Balentine, Ph.D., Superintendent