PASS BILL SB654

THE RIGHT TO PLAY EVERY DAY

30 MINUTES OF DAILY PLAY FOR K-5TH GRADES

CHIEF SPONSORS: SENATOR ROBERT PETERS AND REPRESENTATIVE AARÓN ORTÍZ

WHAT DOES THIS BILL DO?

- Schools must provide one hour of play time, i.e. time for self-directed, self-chosen, screen-free activities, for grades K-5 every day. The 30 minutes can be broken into periods as short as 15 minutes at the schools' discretion.
- Schools determine when and where to hold play time. Outdoor play is strongly encouraged.
- Children cannot be excluded from play time as punishment.
- Physical education class cannot be substituted for play time and vice versa.
- Students with disabilities must be provided with accommodations needed to participate in play.
- Play is integral to the educational experience; play time counts for purposes of instructional day length.

"a virtually no-cost, low-tech intervention that can sharply boost children's learning and healthy development"

--Sahlberg and Doyle. *Let the Children Play* (2019)

RESEARCH SHOWS BENEFITS OF PLAY:

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

Play develops social skills--teaching children how to organize, cooperate, resolve conflict, share and lead. Play provides the freedom to choose what to do and who to interact with not found at other times during school. Play can mitigate anxiety, depression and stress. Regular breaks from structured instructional time improve behavior.

COGNITIVE

Play gives children the freedom to be creative and explore. Breaks for play increase attention and on-task behavior and decrease fidgeting during academic time without a decrease in academic performance. Benefits of play time are even greater for children diagnosed with hyperactivity.

PHYSICAL

Children are most physically activity during free play, even compared to physical education classes. Children are more active after school on days with recess and movement in school. Physical activity has mental and physical health benefits.

WHY DO WE NEED THIS BILL?

- In **2012 the ILGA-established IL Recess in Schools Task Force** recommended **30 minutes/day of play for K-8**.
- Districts aren't allocating sufficient time to play. **Time for recess and play has dropped drastically** in last 30 years as federal government rolled out high-stakes, test-based accountability; and schools in stated with laws requiring recess are significantly more likely to have 20+ minutes of recess.
- **Eight US states now have laws requiring daily recess time**: Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Florida, Missouri, Rhode Island, Virginia and West Virginia
- Outside of school, many children have few opportunities for free play. And **poor and low-income children and children of color** are less likely to have time for play at school and **more likely to have play time withheld as punishment**.
- Play is a major part of the school day in around the world: Turkey, Finland, Uganda, Singapore, Japan and the UK. **196 countries recognized play time as a human right** by ratifying the Convention of the Rights of the Child.
- In the US, large-scale pilots adding an hour of play time per day in Texas, Oklahoma and Long Island have seen **increased academic performance** and fewer behavior problems.
- Play can **help dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline** driven by inappropriately punitive responses to minor misbehavior.

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SB654, the Right to Play Every Day, is an initiative of Illinois Families for Public Schools and has the endorsement of: Access Living, Campaign for a Commercial Free Childhood, Chicago Teachers Union, Community Organizing and Family Issues (COFI), Defending the Early Years, Illinois Association for the Education of Young Children, Illinois Federation of Teachers, Illinois Optometric Association, Legal Council for Health Justice, National Association of Social Workers - IL Chapter, Northern Illinois Nature Preschool Association, Northside Action for Justice, Parents 4 Teachers, POWER-PAC IL, Raise Your Hand for Illinois Public Education and the Sierra Club - IL Chapter

ILLINOIS FAMILIES FOR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

ACCESS LIVING

ccfc campaign for a commercial-free childhood

CHICAGO TEACHERS UNION

COFI Community Organizing and Family Issues

DEY Defending the Early Years

ilaeyc

IOA ILLINOIS OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION

IFT

LEGAL COUNCIL FOR HEALTH JUSTICE

NASW National Association of Social Workers ILLINOIS CHAPTER

NINPA Northern Illinois Nature Preschool Association "Promoting Nature-Based Early Childhood Education For All"

Housing NA4J Education & Jobs NORTHSIDE ACTION FOR JUSTICE

POWER·PAC·IL Plug into the power of parents

P4T PARENTS 4 TEACHERS

RAISE YOUR HAND for ILLINOIS PUBLIC EDUCATION

SIERRA CLUB ILLINOIS CHAPTER

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