

SENATE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Patrick M. O'Connor

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act relative to recess for elementary and middle school students.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Patrick M. O'Connor

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

First Plymouth and Norfolk

SENATE No.

[Pin Slip]

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the One Hundred and Ninety-Fourth General Court
(2025-2026)

An Act relative to recess for elementary and middle school students.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Chapter 71 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting after section 3 the
2 following new section:-

3 Section 3A. (a) Except as otherwise herein provided, all students in grades kindergarten
4 through eight attending a public or charter school in the commonwealth shall receive at least
5 thirty consecutive minutes of supervised, safe, and unstructured free-play recess per school day
6 which shall be held outdoors whenever the weather and air quality permits. If recess is held
7 indoors due to weather or air quality, a public or charter school shall use an appropriate space
8 that promotes physical activity. As used herein, the term "free-play recess" shall mean an
9 unstructured environment that is supervised by appropriate school personnel or staff.

10 (b) No public or charter school serving students in grades kindergarten through eight
11 shall decrease the amount of time it allots and provides to students for free-play recess as a result
12 of any changes in standards or curriculum that the school is required to or chooses to adopt and
13 shall not withhold recess for the purposes of providing academic or other services under an

14 individualized education plan, 504 or other student support service, including the completion of
15 ordinary classroom work. The department shall not exclude recess from structured learning time
16 requirements for students in grades kindergarten through eight and shall not increase the total
17 number of hours required in the school year to meet the provisions of this section.

18 (c) A public or charter school serving students in grades kindergarten through eight may
19 provide less than thirty consecutive minutes of free-play recess on school days with delayed
20 openings, early dismissals or other schedule changes that result in a school day that is shorter
21 than a standard day in said public or charter school. The requirements of this section shall not
22 apply to school days in which there is a field trip.