
6. New Hampshire School Spotlight: Recess Activities

A. Buddy Benches

On the playground at South Range Elementary School, “buddy benches” have been added to include students who might be feeling left out and/or unsure what to do, and to help facilitate a playground environment where students have the opportunity to interact and play with different classmates. The idea behind the “buddy benches” is that kids can go and sit on the benches if they don’t have anyone to play with at recess. When a student is sitting on the bench, it’s a signal to the other kids to ask him or her to play.

Besides keeping kids active, the benches can also help children with prosocial behaviors such as inclusion, empathy, sharing, compassion, and conflict resolution. Confidence levels are also enabled for students who ask other students sitting on the bench to play with them and/or join their group of friends. According to Connection for Kids, buddy benches help kids identify a problem and then work together to solve it. The benches have been very well received and have kept kids playing more actively and more happily during recess.

For more information, view the presentation on Buddy Benches at the following link:

https://docs.google.com/a/sau10.org/presentation/d/16teXbkyTJjbVD0I7ucsynKvZhENMCV3FPy_lqRKQnQM/edit?usp=sharing

Story submitted by: Jake Filip, Physical Education Teacher and Susan Linehan, RN, BSN

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School: South Range Elementary School (K-5)

Number of Students: 337

School District: Derry Cooperative School District

B. Recess Mileage Club

First grade students are given the option at recess to participate in the “mileage club.” Parent volunteers staff a square path that is 1/8th of a mile long. Each time a student completes a lap of the course, one of the parent volunteers gives them a craft stick. When they are all done, they show the sticks to the parent volunteer and count them together. The parent volunteers record daily progress on clipboards that they have at recess and once every week or so this progress is recorded in the gym. Once each student reaches 40 sticks, they are given a token to add to a chain. The tokens are awarded during physical education classes to promote the program and to recognize the students who have achieved their token.

Story submitted by: Dee Blanchard, Physical Education Teacher

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School: Jacques Memorial Elementary School (1st Grade)

Number of Students: 170

School District: Milford School District

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