SAY YES TO RECESS NEVADA

In Their Own Words: Recess in Nevada Schools

A sampling of 2026 reports from Nevada parents, teachers and students, from a brief search of public comments at school-board meetings and reports shared with the Washoe Parent Coalition (WPC). Most come from Washoe County, where WPC is based, along with Carson City and elsewhere in Nevada.

Comments appear as written or transcribed, with school names replaced by [elementary school]. Two entries are school documents. Public comments link to the meeting record; reports shared with WPC are dated by month only, to protect the families who shared them.

KINDERGARTENER CAME HOME CRYING

"My daughter came home crying because her teacher took away 5 minutes of recess because she was distracted in class. She's in kindergarten. This was during her second week of school"

WCSD parent, shared with WPC, September 2026

SCHOOL BEHAVIOR CARD TAKES AWAY RECESS MINUTES

"2 marks: loss of 5 minutes of recess … 3 marks: loss of 15 minutes of recess … 4 marks or more: lose of 15 minutes of recess …"

WCSD elementary school, Weekly Citizenship Card, week of August 10, 2026. See document

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STUDENT DESCRIBES HOW LOSING A BREAK FELT

"When I was in fourth grade, our morning recess was taken away so we could have more class time. It did not help me learn more. I felt more tired and exhausted and I felt more pressure because I was not used to going all morning without a break. I started falling behind in my grades.

Recess helped because it gave me time to get other things off my mind and see my friends, who weren't in my class anymore. After taking a break, it was easier to go back to class and focus. Spending more time in class didn't mean I was learning more. I actually think I learned less because I was more stressed."

Student, written comment to WCSD Board of Trustees, July 28, 2026 meeting, p. 26

CHILD WITH AN IEP HELD IN FROM RECESS

"Child on IEP held in from recess against IEP orders"

WCSD parent, report as recorded by WPC, September 2026

NEVADA TEACHER DESCRIBES PRESSURE TO REDUCE RECESS

"My admin in NV pushed HARD to take away as much recess as possible telling us that 'kids need to be in the classroom learning and cutting recess cuts down on discipline issues.' I advocated for my kids and my class was the only one allowed to go out for afternoon recess. I was also labeled as a problem teacher. My student[s] did great though."

Nevada teacher, shared with WPC, October 2026

ENTIRE CLASS LOSES RECESS FOR ONE OR TWO CHILDREN

"I strongly support implementing dedicated, protected time for recess. My child has shared on multiple occasions her entire class getting punished by withholding recess due to the behavior of one or two other children. This is never acceptable."

Parent, written comment to WCSD Board of Trustees, July 28, 2026 meeting, p. 59

PARENT QUESTIONS A DISTRICT PROPOSAL TO CUT RECESS

"Why are we proposing to reduce recess time? There are 410 minutes in each school day. What is the justification to reduce recess from 45 minutes to 30 minutes each day? What are we trying to accomplish? And if the answer does not provide a benefit to the students' overall well-being, then we are doing a disservice to them."

Parent, spoken comment at Carson City School Board, March 24, 2026 meeting (automatic transcript)

WHOLE FOURTH GRADE LOSES RECESS FOR NOISE IN LINE

"We just found out they are taking whole recesses away from the entire 4th grade when they are too loud in line."

WCSD parent, shared with WPC, September 2026

RECESS REDUCED FOR TEST PREP

"Currently, recess time can vary widely by site, and in some cases, it is reduced in favor of increased testing preparation or data-driven instructional blocks."

Teacher, written comment to WCSD Board of Trustees, April 14, 2026 meeting, p. 15

RECESS OFTEN TAKEN FOR CLASSWORK

"the kids get two 15-minute recess periods within each school day, one of which is OFTEN taken away to complete class work during an indoor 'study hall.' We also have no standard outdoor movement time for PE as we do not have a dedicated PE teacher."

Parent, written comment to WCSD Board of Trustees, April 14, 2026 meeting, p. 2

TEACHER EXPLAINS RECESS CUTS AND WITHHOLDING

"Students get 30 minutes of recess per school day, 15 minutes after lunch and 15 minutes in the afternoon. On … early release they only have one 15-minute recess.

Study hall takes place during afternoon recess in the Quad. [redacted] are with the students while they work independently on their assignments. When students finish their assignments, they will check with one of the staff members in the quad and then are dismissed to recess."

WCSD 3rd-grade teacher, email to a parent, February 23, 2026. See document, page 2

MORNING RECESS CUT FOR YOUNGER CHILDREN

"Administration has also continued to cut recess down to the bare minimum of 30 minutes, sparking a student-led petition and then a strong effort by parents to claw back some of that time. Administration promised to review the schedule to maximize recess while meeting instructional minutes and duty requirements and then reneged on that promise, cutting morning recess from primary students six and seven years old for the first time in decades."

Parent, spoken comment at WCSD Board of Trustees, February 10, 2026 meeting (automatic transcript)

TWO 10-MINUTE RECESSES FOR KINDERGARTEN THROUGH FIFTH GRADE

"The 2 recesses per grade level K-5 @ [elementary school] are 10 minutes each!"

WCSD parent, shared with WPC, September 2026

FIFTEEN MINUTES OF RECESS TAKEN AWAY FOR LUNCHROOM NOISE

"Taking away 15 minutes of outside time running around and playing because they are being 'too loud' while eating is madness. This is the only time during their school day that they can let out some energy so they can re-focus after lunch. They need this time to create, explore, and socialize with their friends. These are not best practices, and we need to protect recess time, so it's not used as a punishment. Our kids deserve better!"

Parent, written comment to WCSD Board of Trustees, July 28, 2026 meeting, p. 7

RECESS CUT TO FIVE MINUTES OVER AN UNFINISHED WORKSHEET

"Lunch recess for 2nd grade only 5 min bc class couldn't finish a worksheet"

WCSD parent, report as recorded by WPC, September 2026

NOT ENOUGH TIME TO EAT OR PLAY

“it's not uncommon that my kids come home from school having not eaten their lunch and not had enough time to play, and that's with adequate breaks or semi-adequate breaks right now. So, I urge you guys, please do not take recess away from kids.”

Parent, spoken comment at Carson City School Board, March 24, 2026 meeting (automatic transcript)

CHILD SAYS RECESS MINUTES KEEP BEING TAKEN AWAY

“My son says they keep taking minutes away from their 15 min lunch recess at [elementary school] for being loud. Hes usually very sad when they do that. Mostly cause he follows he rules”

WCSD parent, report as recorded by WPC, October 2026

RECESS TREATED AS A DISCIPLINARY TOOL

“As a parent of a child at [elementary school], I can share that recess time can be reduced or taken away as a disciplinary measure, and I would respectfully ask the board to consider adopting a district-wide policy that protects recess as non-negotiable — regardless of behavior.”

Parent, written comment to WCSD Board of Trustees, April 14, 2026 meeting, p. 3

BEFORE-SCHOOL PLAY MAY NOT REACH EVERY CHILD

“Problem is, the ‘recess before school starts’ in the morning is being counted as part of the total recess time. Many students do not come that early, several do not participate during that time and many are eating breakfast in the MPR [multipurpose room] before school. It is unfair to count that time as ‘recess’, IMO.”

WCSD parent, shared with WPC, September 2026

PARENT RECALLS BEFORE-SCHOOL PLAY BEING COUNTED AS RECESS

“We had a principal change at [elementary school] which we had three recesses instituted and the new principal knocked it down to two and he counted that morning recess before instruction started as a third recess.”

Parent, spoken comment at Carson City School Board, March 24, 2026 meeting (automatic transcript)

FOUR MINUTES LEFT AFTER WAITING FOR QUIET

“Second graders held in after lunch recess for not quieting down, only got 4 minutes”

WCSD parent, report as recorded by WPC, August 2026

LOSING RECESS MINUTES WHEN SOMEONE ELSE MISBEHAVES

"She loses minutes of recess regularly (2nd grade) when her class as a whole does not behave well even though it's not her misbehaving"

WCSD parent, shared with WPC, November 2026

RUSHING LUNCH TO HAVE TIME OUTSIDE

"I also in favor of longer recesses, 2 15-min recesses are ridiculous for 6-hour school day. If there was a longer lunch recess, the kids would not need to scarf down their lunches in order to spend more time outside."

Community member, written comment to WCSD Board of Trustees, April 14, 2026 meeting, p. 43

RECESS REPLACED WITH INDOOR CATCH-UP TIME

"my child in 2nd grade at [elementary school] has their last recess taken out in place of indoor educational games and extra one on one time with students who didn't get their work done during the day. I don't think the whole class should stay in because some students need extra time with the teacher. Recess is so important!"

WCSD parent, shared with WPC, September 2026

LUNCH RECESS DELAYED UNTIL EVERYONE FINISHES EATING

"Kids must all be done eating and quietly lined up before they can go out to lunch recess, cutting in to already limited time to play"

WCSD parent, report as recorded by WPC, September 2026

PARENT OPPOSES A PROPOSED RECESS REDUCTION

"I am the parent of a second grade student at [elementary school]. I am writing to express my concern about the proposal to reduce lunch and afternoon recess."

Parent, written comment to WCSD Board of Trustees, August 25, 2026 meeting, p. 3

THREE RECESSES AT ONE SCHOOL AND ONE AT ANOTHER

"And how one school in washoe county can have 3 recess for a grade level and then you go to another school and there is 1 recess. Consistently would be nice and equal access to programs for all of washoe county."

WCSD teacher, shared with WPC, July 2026

Recess policies vary widely by school district. Douglas County elementary schools range from 30 to 55 minutes a day, Carson City gives 45, and one Clark County school we called reports just 15. See sources

washoeparents.org/say-yes-to-recess-nevada