

By: Villarreal

H.C.R. No. 24

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1           WHEREAS, The importance of recess in the school day cannot be  
2 overstated, as it plays a valuable role in three major areas of a  
3 child's development: learning, socialization, and health; and

4           WHEREAS, Play is an active form of learning that unites the  
5 mind, body, and spirit; until at least the age of nine, children's  
6 learning occurs best when the whole self is involved; and

7           WHEREAS, Play reduces the tension that often comes with  
8 having to achieve or needing to learn; in play, adults do not  
9 interfere, and children relax; and

10           WHEREAS, Children express and work out emotional aspects of  
11 everyday experiences through unstructured play; and

12           WHEREAS, The development of children's perceptual abilities  
13 may suffer when so much of their experience is gained through  
14 television, computers, books, work sheets, and media that require  
15 only two senses; however, the senses of smell and touch and the  
16 sense of motion through space are powerful avenues to learning as  
17 well; and

18           WHEREAS, Children who are less restricted in their access to  
19 the outdoors gain competence in moving through the larger world;  
20 developmentally, they should gain the ability to navigate their  
21 immediate environs in safety and lay the foundation for the courage  
22 that will enable them eventually to lead their own lives; and

23           WHEREAS, Research suggests that children's participation in  
24 vigorous physical activity in the schoolyard surpasses that which

1 occurs during structured physical education classes; this activity  
2 can thwart the onset of cardiovascular disease and diabetes to  
3 which overweight children become prone as adults; and

4 WHEREAS, It is on the playground where children develop and  
5 experiment with social strategies; sharing, cooperation, problem  
6 solving, self-control, and conflict resolution--all skills  
7 necessary for successful living--are rehearsed and modified during  
8 daily intervals of unstructured play; and

9 WHEREAS, Research on the human brain informs us that  
10 excessive or unrelieved periods of instruction can, in fact, impair  
11 our ability to learn and retain material; and

12 WHEREAS, Despite these findings, children in many schools  
13 across the state are seeing their recess period reduced or even  
14 eliminated from the school day, and sadly, this phenomenon of the  
15 disappearing recess is more likely to occur in low-income  
16 communities where educators worry that children who start with  
17 fewer advantages need more class time or where parents are least  
18 likely to object; now, therefore, be it

19 RESOLVED, That the 80th Legislature of the State of Texas  
20 hereby request all public school districts to consult local  
21 stakeholders, including educators, parents, and students, and  
22 establish a recess policy for elementary schools that reflects  
23 research findings on the importance of play and meets local needs;  
24 and, be it further

25 RESOLVED, That the secretary of state forward official copies  
26 of this resolution to the commissioner of education and the chair of  
27 the State Board of Education.