



## Recess & Lunch

### FAQ's

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**Q: What are the “Top Ten” things a volunteer should know before going in for lunch and recess duty?**

1. Sign in at the office upon arrival. Put on your badge/recess ranger penny.
2. Check in with a Recess Teacher to see if they need extra help in a particular area.
3. Play and have fun at recess! Encourage students to make the most of their outdoor time by moving and having fun.
4. Watch all children in your area and monitor for safe play.
5. Encourage children to resolve their own conflicts, but step in immediately if the encounter is physical. Seek guidance from Recess Teacher if questions arise.
6. Use your judgment to limit bathroom and water fountain visits during recess. Ensure that students have permission and a pass before entering the building.
7. Help pick up the recess equipment and make sure it all goes back into the closet.
8. At lunch, assist any child needing help with opening food items (children will raise their hands).
9. After your volunteer time is over, please return to office and sign out. Return penny/badge if needed.
10. Have fun!

**Q: Some children seem unable to find something fun to do during recess. Are there games or activities volunteers can suggest to those children looking for something to do?**

**A:** Ms. Thai (PE Teacher) teaches some recess games during PE. You can suggest students think about those but it really can be as simple as picking up a ball and passing back and forth or running laps around the field! Be creative! We encourage volunteers to play, referee and interact with all students to help keep them moving and having fun at recess!

**Q: When volunteering for lunch and recess, where should volunteers go first, should they check in with the aides, is there a way to help children get more involved in playing with other children, etc.?**

**A:** Volunteers should first sign in at the office when arriving at school. Next, they should go to the playground for recess unless it's an indoor recess day and the office will direct you to the room where they need your assistance. Volunteers should introduce themselves to at least one of the Recess teachers and ask what type of help is needed. At the end of your Recess Period, follow that group to the lunch room to assist during the lunch period.

**Q: There seems to be an unending need for parent volunteers to help cover lunch and recess. Why aren't teachers available to watch the children, at least during recess?**

**A:** MCPS teachers have a contract with the school system. According to their contract they may not be assigned to provide coverage for lunch and recess. MCPS staffs lunch and recess aides at significantly higher ratio than what is assigned for classroom teachers. Parent volunteers are a way to provide extra coverage for lunch and recess. By volunteering, parents provide additional adult supervision of the children, which is particularly helpful during recess when the children tend to go all over the fields and play areas. By reducing the adult to child ratio, we can ensure that the children are receiving the adult supervision they need.

**Q: How many volunteers are needed for each grade? Do we have enough volunteers providing coverage?**

**A:** The goal is to have at least 2 parent volunteers every day for each grade but we will take more! Some grades meet this goal on most days, other grades rarely meet this goal. We definitely need more help with grades K-3 as they are younger and need more assistance at times.

**Q: What happens during an indoor recess period (i.e.: when inclement weather does not allow students from not going outside)?**

**A:** At Westbrook we are very fortunate to have 3 indoor recess classrooms on a rotating schedule for all grades. Each of the indoor recess rooms has a slightly different set up. As needed, grades take turns rotating through the indoor recess rooms, so they all get an opportunity to experience each room. Our goal when creating these rooms was to give students more opportunity for free play while indoors. Each room has a variety of games, books, arts & crafts, creative play for all grade levels. Volunteers should encourage students to be creative and have fun while using these rooms. Students must still use indoor voices and behave in safe and friendly ways while participating in indoor recess.

**Q: Are there specific rules about bathroom usage, such as how many students may go at one time?**

**A:** The children are encouraged to use the bathroom before the lunch and recess break. No more than three children per gender should be permitted to use the restroom at the same time. When a child asks to use the bathroom, the child should be directed to a staff member who has the restroom passes. This way, in the case of an emergency if children need to be assembled, it will be easier to locate unaccounted for children. During recess, students must enter the building

through the doors at the top of the stairs by the Gym. These are the same bathrooms used during the lunch period.

**Q: What should a volunteer do if he/she witnesses inappropriate behavior by a student during lunch or recess?**

**A:** Depending on the circumstances and the severity of the situation, the volunteer should consider reporting the incident to a staff member. Lunch and Recess teachers have a form that they can complete to convey important information to teachers about their students' behavior at lunch/recess – please inform a Recess or Lunch Teacher if you would like something conveyed to a student's teacher.

**Q: What should a volunteer do if students have forgotten their coats for recess and it is cold outside or their lunchboxes?**

**A:** The lunch and recess period goes by quickly. While a volunteer or a staff member may take children back to their classrooms to retrieve their coats and/or lunchboxes, students should be reminded to bring what they need to lunch or recess in the future.

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**Regular Recess/Lunch Schedule**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Recess Time</b>	<b>Lunch Time</b>
2/3	10:45-11:25	11:25-11:55
K/1	11:30-12:10	12:10-12:40
4/5	12:15-12:55	12:55-1:25