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LD 156

Senators, representatives, and members of the committee, my name is Elliana Labree of Glenburn, Maine, and I am here to support LD 156: An Act to Require Outdoor Recess Time for Students from Grade 6 to Grade 8.

I haven't had a proper recess since 2020—fifth grade. Ever since then, I've just had to rely on the chance that our teacher is in the mood to go outside, and that the temperature is up to their standards. Usually, during our free period, we just sit on our computers, play video games, or do homework, since our teacher doesn't even like us getting out of our seats for unnecessary reasons. Sure, we go outside for gym, but we only have that class every other day, and we must do whatever the activity in the unit is, which is never that enjoyable. This leads to a class full of rowdy teenagers, not able to put their energy anywhere, which leads to no one being able to focus on their tasks in class.

Mandatory outside recess would allow students to have a way to disperse their pent-up energy from the first half of the school day. The American Academy of Pediatrics says that even minor movement during recess counterbalances sedentary time at school and at home and helps the child achieve the recommended 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous activity per day, a standard strongly supported by the American Academy of Pediatrics policy, which can help lower risk of obesity! Especially in America, where obesity is especially a big problem, recess can be a great way to start habits for kids of exercising every day!

When we can go outside and play any way we want, that isn't decided by teachers, it also lets us interact with our friends! For me, I have some friends who I don't see all day, since I don't have any classes with them, so recess with all of the grades together, would make me have even stronger connections with my friends! This is also a key part of developing kids' social skills! If one kid barely interacts with any other kids in their class, recess can be a great time for them to meet new people and make lifelong friendships!

Physician activity also increases blood flow, and therefore sends oxygen to the brain. That process boosts neural connectivity and the growth of nerve cells in the learning and memory areas of the brain, which leads to improved attention and increased memory span, according to Edutopia. This shows how if we have outdoor recess, then it will lead to a much better way of learning for kids and will have them be much more productive once they have outdoor physical activity!

In conclusion, having outdoor recess would lead to a much better school environment and better school days, with kids' energy being released, gaining more social skills, and more blood flow in our brains and everyone will be much happier with our newly found freedom.

Thank you for listening to my testimony. I really appreciate your consideration of this important matter.