

Play ROCs in the Rochester City School District

Supporting the physical, social & emotional health of all kids in the district

Why is Play Important?



Play supports the physical health of a child

Daily recess and active learning supports the physical health and development of a child by:

- ▶ Promoting a healthy weight;
- ▶ Preventing chronic diseases;
- ▶ Creating positive lifelong healthy habits;
- ▶ Supporting the development of healthy bones & muscles.



Play supports the social emotional health of a child

Daily recess, active learning, and social emotional programs support the social emotional health of a child by:

- ▶ Gaining skills of collaboration, critical thinking & conflict resolution;
- ▶ Providing an outlet to reduce feelings of depression & anxiety by allowing kids to be kids;
- ▶ Improving cognitive control & focus;
- ▶ Establishing positive relationships.

Where do your School Board Candidates Stand on Play?

Healthi Kids, the Rochester City School District Parent Advisory Council (PAC) & the Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI) engage parents as leaders and partners for change to support positive outcomes for all children.

Healthi Kids, PAC and PLTI parents care about the physical and social/emotional health of all students in the region. Play and social emotional learning are crucial components to support healthy children in our district.

In August 2015, we sent a questionnaire to the eight Rochester City School District (RCSD) School Board candidates to better understand their positions supporting children's health in the district.

The questionnaire had five questions and asked candidates about recess, social emotional learning and play in curriculum in the district. It also asked candidates to prioritize seven strategies that support students' development and learning.

Overall Results



Seven of the eight RCSD School Board candidates participated in our questionnaire.

Overall results show a disconnect between community-based expectations of School Board members and candidate's perceptions of what their role and responsibilities would be as an RCSD School Board member.

The survey also revealed that candidates' perceived they had a limited role in creating accountability to ensure district policies are enforced and implemented.

On Accountability

Candidates said the implementation, oversight, and evaluation of RCSD policies regarding daily recess & recess being taken away as a punishment tool was the responsibility of:

Parent organizations;
Teachers;
Administrators;
School Board committees; and
New York State level review.

On Implementation & Evaluation

The majority of candidates expressed a willingness to observe, check in with and connect with their liaison schools about recess. Only two candidates offered ways to ensure accountability and ongoing evaluation at both the school and Board level.

Some candidates said the ultimate responsibility for recess lies outside of the School Board. One candidate suggested the implementation of the recess policy should be left to "paid staff members".



On Setting Priorities



5 of the 7 candidates said they strongly support asking schools for a written plan on how they will dedicate a minimum of 20 minutes a day for recess.



All seven candidates said they will strongly support adequate funding levels to ensure recess supplies are in every school.



All seven candidates said they strongly support professional development to provide teachers with innovative approaches to implement recess.



5 of the 7 candidates said they strongly support asking school leaders to develop a shared vision for their students' physical, social, emotional & academic development.



All seven candidates said they strongly support staff members having initial and on-going professional development to implement programming that supports social emotional learning.



All seven candidates said they will strongly support adequate funding levels to ensure all students have access to programming that supports social emotional learning.



All seven candidates said they strongly support ongoing evaluation of staffing levels in RCSD schools to support the social emotional needs of schools

On Prioritizing Strategies to support the physical, social & emotional health of all RCSD kids:

Not one single candidate committed to prioritizing strategies that support student development and learning.

Candidates overwhelmingly, with one exception, rated every strategy as highly supported and did not elect to share their priorities, or their plan for implementing them.

The “across the board” strategy taken to strongly agree with all strategies taken by the majority of candidates was particularly disappointing for all three organizations that created the survey.

About the Organizations:

The Greater Rochester Parent Leadership Training Institute supports and trains parents to become leading advocates for children. The PLTI Alumni group seeks to improve the lifelong health, safety, and learning of children through systems change by supporting parents who lead in the Greater Rochester community.

The RCSD Parent Advisory Council is responsible for sharing, promoting and communicating information to District parents. PAC's mission is to interact effectively with all constituencies, the District staff, the Superintendent's office, and the Board of Education for the benefit of all of the city school district's children. PAC supports the involvement of parents in all aspects of decision-making.

Healthi Kids is a community-based coalition advocating for healthier kids in Monroe County. Our change agenda advocates for better school food, safer play areas, food standards at childcare centers, at least 60 minutes of in-school physical activity and policies that support breastfeeding.

**For full results of the Rochester City School District
School Board Candidate Questionnaire visit:
www.healthikids.org**



@HealthiKids



/HealthiKids



info@healthikids.org

