**A Principal’s Cheat Sheet on**

**Recess Before Lunch Implementation**

**Exploring Trending Educational Programs**

Before any major change such as scheduling, it is often advised that a principal “seed” the benefits of a proposed program at least six months in advance.

Present the notion that we are exploring programs that enhance learning and student health so as to become more informed on current educational trends.

**Educate Staff Members**

Begin talking about Recess Before Lunch (RBL) with key staff members. Ask a couple of respected staff members to research the program and present their findings at a future staff meeting.

Put a couple of articles on Recess Before Lunch in teachers’ boxes for reading, a couple of weeks apart, or leave a couple of articles lying on the staff room table available for reading.

**Educate Parents**

Begin talking about Recess Before Lunch with parents and community members. Mention it to PTA and schedule the topic for an upcoming monthly PTA agenda. Perhaps the Staff PTA representative can make a short presentation and answer questions as they arise in a monthly meeting.

Add a couple of small articles on the benefits of Recess Before Lunch in the monthly school newsletter. (Check the RBL Toolbox)

**Form a Committee to Explore Recess Before Lunch Implementation**

Meet with all staff members to discuss the committee’s findings on RBL. Ask the committee to make a presentation to the staff as a whole regarding their findings as to the likelihood of successful implementation of Recess Before Lunch in your school.

Have a committee member present the Recess Before Lunch PowerPoint presentation on Recess Before Lunch to staff members at a staff meeting. (RBL Toolkit)

**Stumbling Blocks to Implementation**

Principals have identified some stumbling blocks to expect when implementing Recess Before Lunch. These include: objections to schedule changes, hand washing, a delayed lunch for younger children, and “Why change? What we are doing is working just fine.”

1. **Scheduling**

Significant thought and input should be given to the schedule as it has been identified as the point of most contention over the change. Put together a proposed schedule and pilot it for a two week period prior to implementing. Test the schedule in the later part of the school year if possible in anticipation of implementing RBL in the next school year.

1. **Hand washing**

Hand washing is both a food safety issue and a hygiene issue. After playing on the playground, students should wash their hands before eating. Hand sanitizers are to be used in combination with soap and water prior to eating. Exploring methods and hand washing options should be considered and solved prior to implementing RBL.

1. **Delayed lunch time**

This can be addressed with a morning shake in conjunction with recess. Additionally, serving breakfast will eliminate this concern.

 4. **Staff buy-in**

One of the single best indicators of successful implementation of RBL is staff buy in. Although most teachers adjust to the schedule and see the benefits of a positive change in student behavior on playground, classroom, and lunchroom, initially some may be resistant.