March 5, 2019

Dear Education Committee:

I write this letter in support of HB7250 AN ACT CONCERNING THE IMPROVEMENT OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PLAY.

We at Patchogue-Medford School District in New York increased recess every day from 20 minutes to 40 minutes as part of its journey to educate the whole child. I believe recess lets children develop important skills such as communication, critical thinking, collaboration and creativity. It is on the playground that children learn problem solving by figuring out how to share space or decide how to choose who participates in a game. Physical growth via recess is just as important as academic teaching and in fact is integral to maximizing academic success and improving student health.

Since implementing a whole child and mindfulness approach to include increased recess in our school district, teachers and administrators have noticed more joy in our classrooms. Parents have shared with me that their children are less stressed and more focused both in and outside of school.

We would be remiss if we focused exclusively on academics without looking at students' psychological needs as well. It is why I encourage you to support this important legislation. Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,

Michael J. Hynes, Ed. D.
Superintendent of Schools

The Patchogue-Medford School Community's Mission is to provide diverse pathways and varied enrichment opportunities that will lead to meaningful learning experiences for all students.