

# Physical Education & Recess

Dear Parents,

An extremely high priority at school is the safety of all students. Recess and Physical Education both provide opportunities for physical play outside the classroom. However, they are not the same. During recess, children play without restraint. During an average school recess, more than 100 children could be climbing, sliding, swinging and running on the playground.

Students at Traphagen School have, in the past, been allowed to refrain from participation in physical education class for a myriad of reasons. Most of the time these excuses are valid, however, there are times that excused PE students are seen shortly later in the day playing football at lunch recess. Because it is difficult for a child who is only “slightly injured” to refrain from joining a game with friends at lunch recess, we are implementing a new policy on this topic.

Students may be excused from Physical Education and/or recess if a physician, licensed practitioner, or parent/guardian provides written documentation that the student is not in proper condition to participate. Such excuses shall state the period of time the excuse is valid. Verbal excuses by the student will not be accepted. A student with a cast, splint, sling, brace, sutures, or wheelchair is not permitted to participate in any Physical Education activity. **Those students unable to fully participate in Physical Education will also be limited in their recess activities.**

With the rising concern over childhood obesity, we are most anxious to help our students become the most physically active that they can safely be. In this same spirit, we ask for your cooperation in encouraging honest evaluations before exempting your child from gym class. Thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Amy Biswurm, R.N., B.S.N., N.J.-C.S.N.  
School Nurse

Please see the Physical Education Excuse Guidelines below.

# Julia A. Traphagen School

## Physical Education Excuse Guidelines

Students with special health problems, such as asthma, will participate in Physical Education as much as their physical condition allows. We don't always feel our best all the time, but, since a student is in school, (s)he is expected to participate.

**A student with a cast, splint, sling, brace, sutures (stitches), crutches, or wheelchair require a doctor's note stating the need for the use of these assistive devices while in school. If a student has sutures(stitches) they will be excluded from gym and recess until the stitches are removed by the health care provider.**

### Excuse Procedure

1. A note from a parent/guardian to be reviewed by the Nurse is required each time a student is unable to participate in a Physical Education class.
2. Documentation from a primary health care provider is required for a student to be excused for more than one school day from a Physical Education class due to illness or injury. The documentation must include the diagnosis and the amount of time the student is to be excused. If a child is excused medically from gym, they will also be required to sit out of recess.
3. Verbal excuses by the student will not be accepted.
4. All students needing an excuse from Physical Education must come through the Nurse's office--even if the excuse is just for one day.
5. Excuse notes will be cleared by the Nurse. A copy will be given to the Physical Education teacher and/or the homeroom teacher.
6. If illness or injury occurs during the school day prior to Physical Education, the student should see the Nurse for a possible gym excuse for that day.
7. A student with a cast, splint, sling, brace, sutures (stitches), crutches, or wheelchair is not permitted to participate in any Physical Education activity.
8. The Nurse will keep a copy of the Physical Education excuse on file.

Thank you for your cooperation in helping our students stay safe while recovering from an illness or injury.

Sincerely,

*Amy Biswurm, R.N., B.S.N.*

*NJ Certified School Nurse*