

Recess Rocks comes to Southington's Strong School

By Kimberly Primicerio, Record-Journal staff | Posted: Thursday, January 5, 2012 6:09 pm

SOUTHINGTON - Instead of staying in the classroom playing board games and computer games during the winter months, students at Strong School will experience Recess Rocks.

For 10 sessions, an instructor from the Community Health Center in Middletown will go to Strong and get children excited for a recess program that involves music and movement. The program was brought to Strong Principal Linda Lackner's attention by a student's mother and Lackner decided the activity could be fun for the young people.

"We try to do things to keep the students physically fit," Lackner said.

During the winter months, young people don't go outside because of harsh conditions. Having the program offers an alternative to sitting inside in front of the computer, she said.

"They'll move around in a supervised setting," Lackner said. "They'll do different exercises and gain health awareness. Hopefully they'll develop a desire for fitness and physical conduct and come back to class with more energy."

Recess Rocks started in Middletown in 2004, when employees of the Community Health Center realized students weren't having recess during the snowy and blustery winter months, said Recess Rocks program coordinator Lisa Rozo. A movement class was developed for young people, she said.

"It's not hard or competitive," Rozo said. "It's something all kids can do. Music kids recognize is played and they move to the routines."

The musical routines or movements aren't referred to as dance steps, Rozo said. Sometimes the boys in the group are turned off by the word "dancing," she said. Recently, voices and making sounds have been added to the activities, and the children, including the boys, really enjoy that, Rozo said. The older the age group, the more complex the routine.

Teachers are usually happy with the results of Recess Rocks, as after some physical activity children are more apt to sit down and learn, Rozo said.

No equipment is needed for the exercise class, which typically lasts 20 minutes, she said. Young people in kindergarten through third grade interested in the recess program pay \$1 for each session.