



## Sports4Kids Transforming a San Francisco School

Lance Tagomori, Principal at Paul Revere Elementary School, located in the Bernal Heights neighborhood of San Francisco, admits that his school had a problem.

“We have two separate campuses and four schoolyards, so before we got Sports4Kids there was sheer chaos,” Tagomori said. “There was no organization, and the games were free-for-alls.”

Through word of mouth, and a brief experience with Sports4Kids at Cesar Chavez Elementary, where he worked for 12 years as a principal before taking his current position at Paul Revere this year, Tagomori changed the entire culture of his playground when he applied for, and received a Sports4Kids Site

Coordinator, Coach Perci Dela Cruz.

“When Coach Perci came on board he made an instantaneous difference,” Tagomori said. “Many of the challenges we had on our yard, from fighting and injuries, to basic safety concerns were resolved once Perci came.”

Perci, a California native who has been working with kids for over five years at various programs throughout the Bay Area, said logistics presented the biggest challenge in organizing the yards at Paul Revere.

“The fact that there are two campuses made organizing the yard tricky because I had to go back and forth between each site,” he said.

**See SAN FRANCISCO, page 3**

## The National Dialogue – Recess is a Hot Topic



BRANDON JOSEPH BAKER

Sports4Kids has been organizing active play during recess for more than 10 years. Our experience with kids and schools demonstrates that providing opportunities for play and physical activity during recess is an effective strategy for getting kids moving while decreasing fights and conflicts on the playground.

Our vision extends well beyond the 114 schools we currently serve. We hope that one day, every child will have the chance to play at school in a healthy and safe environment, with the guidance and support of a trained, caring adult.

During the past year, the media has begun highlighting the value of recess and many other organizations have joined in this national conversation about the benefits of play for children’s health and well-being.

**See RECESS, page 3**



Coach Perci starts a game on the playground at Paul Revere Elementary in San Francisco.

### We’re Hiring – Must Love Kickball

Go to [www.sports4kids.org](http://www.sports4kids.org) and click on “Join Our Team” to see current openings in the Bay Area, Baltimore, Boston & Washington, DC.

## Minute Moves in Baltimore

When Sports4Kids opened in Baltimore last year, we faced the new challenge of coordinating activities when snow keeps kids indoors. Since many elementary schools don't have a gymnasium, large-scale games are nearly impossible. As a result, Baltimore staff developed a new component of the Sports4Kids program called "Minute Moves."

This winter, several Baltimore schools are piloting Minute Moves, where a Site Coordinator leads students in short activities (3 to 10 minutes) with low-intensity physical movement right in the classroom. Aside from being a great opportunity for rapport-building, students and teachers both get a quick break from classroom instruction to get their blood flowing and enhance classroom readiness.

Janese Jennings, a fifth-grade teacher at Mt. Royal Elementary/Middle School remarks, "I like how Coach (Brad Hunter) comes in and gives the students a chance to get out of their seats. They need that exercise, and they love it." She also reports that following Minute Moves, her students are "better focused, and ready to work...it's just great!"

Colleen Harvey, Site Coordinator at John Ruhrah Elementary School, says, "Minute Moves is a great Sports4Kids strategy that helps me connect with certain classes that may not have the availability in their weekly schedule for a Class Game Time slot. It not only gets the students out of their seats for a bit, but also improves their awareness for the rest of the class period without interrupting their schedule for the day. The students and teachers always look forward to it!"

Sports4Kids hopes to use this creative solution in more cities next year to meet the needs of additional students. Great job Baltimore!!



ROGER TULLY

## GROWING UP WITH SPORTS4KIDS

*Yong Fou, a seventh-grader in Oakland, has been a "Sports4Kids Kid" for six years. Here he shares a few of his experiences with Sports4Kids*

"I've been participating in Sports4Kids since I was in second grade at International Community School in Oakland. My very first coach, Amy Jones, taught me a lot of games and I taught them to other kids. Sports4Kids was great because it gave me the confidence to play new sports and make new friends. Sports4Kids also helped me do better in school.

Before Sports4Kids came to my school there were more boys playing sports than girls. After Sports4Kids came, the girls started to play sports, too.

I also joined a lot of teams because of Sports4Kids. The first team I joined was soccer when I was in fourth grade. We had lots of fun and I even got a jersey that said Sports4Kids. After that, I joined lots of teams. I played volleyball, flag football, basketball, and even dodgeball.

When I was in middle school at Urban Promise Academy, I became a Junior Coach (or Assistant Coach as they call it at U.P.A.). Being a Junior Coach helped me develop the



qualities to be a good role model and a good leader. I got to teach sports and games and pass on my experience to the younger kids at school.

I've been in the Sports4Kids after-school program for six years straight, and it's a lot of fun. I get to make new friends, play sports, go on field trips — all kinds of stuff!

If a younger student asked me about joining Sports4Kids, I would say do it. You will be more open-minded and gain great leadership qualities that can help you in the future. Best of all you will learn games and have fun!"

## RECESS, from front page

At issue is the challenge principals and teachers face with pressure to increase student test scores — by squeezing recess time out of the school day. Some examples of how America is responding include the following:

- In October 2006, the Wall Street Journal published an article entitled "Rethinking Recess" that described both the trend in some school districts to decrease or eliminate recess and the response to this trend. The article referenced a 2006 report released by the American Academy of Pediatrics citing scientific evidence in support of play and the benefits for children. Similar articles about recess have appeared in major national newspapers in recent months.
- The Cartoon Network has launched a national public awareness campaign called "Rescuing Recess" aimed at inspiring kids,

parents, and teachers alike to support allocation of school time toward recess. Rescuing Recess is a partnership effort involving the National PTA and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, among others.

- In an effort to extend our reach, Sports4Kids has joined the Partnership for Play Every Day, a national collaboration including the YMCA, National Parks and Recreation Association, and the National Association for Sport and Physical Education calling for an increase in the opportunities for children to play every day. It is our vision that recess will be a productive and active part of every child's day. Sports4Kids is working hard to connect with organizations and policy-makers who support the idea that playing every day is indeed critical to the cognitive, emotional, and physical health of children.

## SAN FRANCISCO, from front page

"One thing I did was start basketball and wallball tournaments at lunchtime. The students were enthusiastic about these tournaments. They began practicing and running drills on their own. Some teams even selected other students to be head coaches for their teams."

Perci said that it also helped that he was born and raised in San Francisco. "The kids bought into me because I was born here. They don't see me as a teacher, but rather as a mentor and a big brother."

Perci said he has more work to do, but believes the Sports4Kids structure and his enthusiasm to work with kids is helping make Paul Revere Elementary another of many Sports4Kids' great success stories. "I'm going to refine my programs and get my lunch recess tournaments cracking. I've bought into Sports4Kids. I just dig it!"



BRANDON JOSEPH BAKER

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**Tickets**  
Register online at [www.sports4kids.org](http://www.sports4kids.org)  
by April 25, \$75  
at the door, \$90  
*\$40 of each ticket is tax-deductible. S4K tax ID #: 94-3251867*

**Information and Tickets**  
Mariko Highsmith  
[mariko@sports4kids.org](mailto:mariko@sports4kids.org)  
510.893.4180, ext. 305

# Sports4Kids

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*"When I was first introduced to the Sports4Kids concept, I knew it was a no-brainer for us at Community Academy Public Charter School (CAPCS). We desperately needed help with our recess and after-school programs. I can honestly say that the results that Coach Mike and the Sports4Kids program produced have exceeded my expectations. As a school administrator, Sports4Kids has helped relieve the stress and concern surrounding these portions of the day."*

Kyle Williams, Principal, Community Academy PCS – Amos 1 Campus, Washington, D.C.



## Come see Sports4Kids in action!

Get a glimpse into the power of play and how Sports4Kids is changing the lives of students on schoolyards every day by visiting a school. To schedule a visit, contact:

**Baltimore:** Ayanna Rutherford, [ayanna@sports4kids.org](mailto:ayanna@sports4kids.org), (202) 822-0097

**Boston:** Eunice Dunham, [eunice@sports4kids.org](mailto:eunice@sports4kids.org), (617) 373-8937

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