EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR

If your child has an Individualized Education Program (IEP), you may have heard about Extended School Year (ESY) services.

Despite the name, ESY is not just for summer. ESY services may be provided during any long break from school, including Summer break, Winter break, Spring break and track-out periods at year-round schools.

The purpose of ESY is not to provide additional instruction or teach new skills. Instead, ESY is provided when the IEP Team determines that continued services during an extended break are necessary for the student to receive a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). The IEP Team may determine that ESY is needed if the data show that your child loses important skills during long school breaks and takes an unusually long time to regain them, or is learning an important new skill that could be lost without continued instruction.

How is ESY decided?

The IEP Team decides every year whether a child needs ESY services. The decision must be based on your child's individual needs and the information (data) collected throughout the school year.

ESY is not the same as summer school.

Many parents think ESY is simply summer school. It isn't. Summer school is often designed to help students improve academically or make up missed work.

ESY has a different purpose. It is designed to:

- prevent the loss of important skills during long school breaks, or
- help a child continue learning a critical skill that is just beginning to develop.

Not every student with an IEP qualifies for ESY.

Eligibility is based on your child's individual needs, not on their disability category or availability of programs. To decide if ESY is needed, the IEP Team considers questions like these:

- *Does your child lose important skills during long school breaks and require an unusually long time to regain those skills?*
- *Would your child lose meaningful progress if instruction stopped during an extended break?*
- *Is your child learning an important new skill that could be lost without continued instruction?*

What information should the IEP Team review?

The IEP Team should use objective information collected throughout the school year, such as:

- Work samples
- Progress monitoring data
- Assessments
- Teacher observations
- Behavior data

Parents can also share helpful information from home, including observations,work samples, photos, or videos.

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QUESTIONS

TO DISCUSS WITH YOUR IEP TEAM

Does your child lose important skills during long school breaks?

Most children lose some skills after a break. The IEP Team should consider whether your child's skill loss is significant and whether it takes an unusually long time to regain those skills.

Does the data show a pattern?

Has information collected before and after several school breaks shown that your child consistently loses important skills? Looking at patterns over time helps the IEP Team decide whether ESY may be needed.

Would stopping instruction cause your child significant harm?

Would an extended break make it harder for your child to continue receiving a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE)?

Is your child learning an important new skill?

Some children are very close to mastering a new skill. A long break in instruction may cause that skill to be lost before it is fully developed. The IEP Team should consider whether continued instruction is needed to help your child maintain or master that skill.

After consideration of applicable data the IEP Team must determineone of the following:

- ☐ The student is not eligible for ESY based on current data
- ☐ The student is eligible for Extended School Year (ESY) services
- ☐ Eligibility is under consideration and will be determined by __/__/___

If the decision is not being made at this meeting, the IEP team should determine the date the decision for extended school year services will be made.
It is recommended that the decision whether a child needs ESY services or not should occur closer to the time when extended school year services will be offered.

What Do ESY Services Look Like?

ESY services are individualized to meet each student's unique needs. The IEP Team determines the type, frequency, duration, location, and amount of services based on the student's data and what is necessary to provide a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE). A student may qualify for ESY in some areas but not others. For example, a student may need ESY to maintain an emerging math skill but not require ESY for reading or speech-language services. ESY services do not have to mirror the student's regular school-year schedule. Instead, they are based on the student's individual needs and the data reviewed by the IEP Team.

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