Clarification about Extended School Year (ESY)


The Virginia Department of Education Special Education Regulations describes ESY services in this way.

"Extended school year services" for the purposes of this chapter means special education and related services that: (34 CFR 300.106(b))
1. Are provided to a child with a disability:
   a. Beyond the normal school year of the local educational agency;
   b. In accordance with the child's individualized education program;
   c. At no cost to the parent(s) of the child; and
2. Meet the standards established by the Virginia Department of Education.

ESY is not a place it is a service. The design and duration of the service can be as varied as Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) are but the intent is to ensure that students are not denied a free appropriate public education. There are six factors that are to be considered by the IEP team when determining the need for ESY services for a student:

1. regression/recoupment
2. degrees of progress
3. emerging skills/breakthrough opportunities
4. interfering behaviors
5. the nature and/or severity of the disability
6. special circumstances or other factors


• the six factors to be considered when determining the need for ESY services,
• the types of inaccurate assumptions made about ESY,
• the legal overview of what formed the basis for the current VDOE “Technical Assistance Resource Document,”
• what the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Federal and Virginia regulations say about ESY,
• What procedures the IEP team should follow,
• Detailed explanations of the factors the IEP team should consider when making determining a student’s eligibility for ESY services,
• What questions should the IEP team consider in reviewing the factor of regression and recoupment?
• What can ESY services look like?
• What other factors should the IEP team consider?
• The meaning of some of the terms used within the VDOE document

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Clarification about Extended School Year (ESY) Continued

Here are some of the questions families are asking.

Q: My child is halfway through the current school year and I have requested an IEP meeting to discuss my child’s eligibility for ESY services. The school has told me that they would like to wait and see how my child progresses throughout the next few months and that we can plan to meet in late April to determine ESY eligibility. Can I ask them to meet sooner?

A: ESY is not a separate planning process since it is part of the IEP development however the IEP team needs enough time to gather the appropriate data to make an informed decision about the student’s need for ESY. Enough information might not be readily available in the late winter or early spring to make the correct determination. Additionally should a parent disagree with the IEP team decision and wishes to appeal the decision, adequate time must be available to ensure procedural steps can be followed.

Q: Can a school deny my child ESY based on a lack of funding and/or resources?

A: No. As any service that is determined by the IEP team to be necessary for a child to have access to the general education curriculum, the lack of funding and/or resources cannot be a reason for denial of such.

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Q: Once my child has been found eligible for ESY, does this mean that my child is eligible every year to receive ESY until the IEP team agrees to terminate the ESY services?

A: No. Eligibility for ESY services is determined each year. There are many pieces that need to be examined when determining if a child is eligible to receive ESY services, but the easiest way to understand ESY services is to ask the question, “Will the child be denied a Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) by NOT receiving these services?” If the answer is “Yes,” then the child is eligible for ESY services.

For more information regarding Extended School Year Services please visit the Virginia Department of Education website http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/regulations/federal/extended_schoolyear_services.pdf.

You may also call PEATC with questions. 703-923-0010 or 800-869-6782.


PEATC Workshops and Events - January 2014

Tuesday, January 14, 2014 – Pláticas con PEATC / PEATC Chats, Topic: “Extended School Year Service (ESY)”, 7pm-8:30pm, Location: PEATC Office, 100 N. Washington Street, Suite 234, Falls Church, VA 22046. Register by contacting PEATC at 703-923-0010 or ancalle@peatc.org or participate online by pre-registering at: https://cc.readytalk.com/r/juyunvpjnskg&com.

Tuesday, January 21, 2014 – “When the School Says No…How to Get the Yes!” workshop, 7:00-8:00 pm, sponsored by PEATC / Educational Learning and Training, LLC. Location: PEATC Office, 100 N. Washington Street, Suite 234, Falls Church, VA 22046. Register by contacting PEATC at 703-923-0010 or partners@peatc.org.

Wednesday, January 22, 2014 – “Friendship Building Strategies” workshop, 6:30-8:00 pm, sponsored by the Colonial Heights Public Schools, location: Colonial Heights Technical Center Building, 3451 Conduit Road, Colonial Heights, VA 23834. Register by contacting Tracy Lewis at (804) 524-3445 or Tracy_Lewis@colonialhts.net.

Friday, January 24, 2014 – PEATC Cafecito — Guest Speaker: Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, 10:30am-12:00pm, location: George Mason Regional Library, 7001 Little River Turnpike, Annandale, VA 22003. Register by contacting PEATC at 703-923-0010 or partners@peatc.org.

Wednesday, January 29, 2014 – “Bullying Prevention, Everyone’s Responsibility – What Parents Can Do!” workshop, 6:30-8:00 pm, sponsored by the Stafford Parent Resource Center, location at the Professional Development Center, 37 Stafford Ave., Stafford, VA 22554 Register by calling 540-658-6710.

Wednesday, January 29, 2014 – “Bullying Prevention” workshop, 5:30-7:00 pm, sponsored by the Fauquier County Public Schools Parent Resource Center, location at the FCPS Parent Resource Center, 430 E. Shirley Ave., Warrenston, VA 22186. Register by contacting Marilyn McCombe at (540) 422-7116 or pre@feps1.org.
January is the time to look forward to Extended School Year (ESY)!

Seize the Summer: Keep Kids Active & Engaged in Learning

Did you know? Students can experience learning loss when they do not engage in educational activities during the summer months. On average, students lose the equivalent of two months of math and reading skills during the summer months. More than half of the achievement gap between lower- and higher-income youth can be explained by unequal access to summer learning opportunities.

This summer, let’s work to change that. Together, parents, guardians, and community members can help give our children the best foundation for the upcoming school year.

Stay Engaged:

Encourage reading all summer long. This will help prevent the “summer slide” and provide benefits that can be seen year-round.

* Visit the local library and help your child put together a summer reading list. Celebrate each time he or she finishes a book, this will encourage them to complete the list by the time the summer ends.

Stay Active & Healthy:

In addition to academic risks, children can also be at an increased risk of weight gain when they are out of school during the summer months. Take advantage of the warmer weather and keep youth active outdoors.

* KidsHealth.org – How do you feed a picky eater or encourage a child to play outside? Learn how to keep your child healthy with the right foods and exercise.

* Let's Move! (http://www.letsmove.gov/get-active) – Opportunities for kids to be physically active, both in and out of school and create new opportunities for families to be moving together.

* USDA Summer Food Program (http://www.fns.usda.gov/sfsp/summer-food-service-program-sfsp) - This U.S. Department of Agriculture program provides free meals to all children 18 years old and under in areas with significant concentrations of low-income children.

For additional tips throughout the summer, follow @usedgov on Twitter, and check out the U.S. Department of Education Facebook page (https://www.facebook.com/ED.gov).

Kelsey Donohue works in the Office of Communication and Outreach at the U.S. Department of Education

Special Resources For Special Needs: Extended School Year (ESY) Services


Keep Your Kids Happy and Healthy: Summer Tips for Parents: http://www.ed.gov/blog/2013/07/keep-your-kids-happy-and-healthy-summer-tips-for-parents/

Reimagining Education through Summer Learning Partnerships: http://www.ed.gov/blog/2013/08/reimagining-education-through-summer-learning-partnerships/


Wrightslaw - Extended School Year Services (ESY): http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/esy.index.htm
Autism Behavior - Ways to Beat The Summer Blues!

Given the nature of autism behavior, summer can actually be more difficult for kids with autism than the school year. In fact, many children will experience an autism “break” during the school year. This can cause children with autism, or children with behavior challenges, to become more difficult to manage. Many school districts have summer programs for kids with autism, but it is often challenging to find enough programing for all the children who need it. A few tips for helping children with autism through the summer months:

1. **Establish Summer Camps**
   - Consider establishing summer camps specifically for children with autism. These camps should be designed with the needs of children with autism in mind. This might include specialized activities, such as social skills training, communication instruction, and behavior modification techniques.

2. **Engage in New Hobbies or Activities**
   - Encourage children with autism to try new hobbies or activities during the summer. This can help them develop new interests and improve their social skills.

3. **Utilize Technology**
   - Use technology to help children with autism during the summer. This could include apps, videos, or online resources that provide structured activities and support for children with autism.

4. **Stay Connected**
   - Keep in touch with your child’s educational team during the summer. Regular communication can help ensure that your child’s needs are being met.

5. **Plan for Breaks**
   - Plan for breaks in the middle of the day to allow for rest and relaxation. This can help prevent burnout and improve overall behavior.

By implementing these strategies, parents and caregivers can help children with autism enjoy a safe and successful summer.