

Extended School Year Services (ESY)

As the school year comes to a close, parents may want to know if their children are entitled to Extended School Year Services (ESY). These services are provided to children with special needs that the school feels may lose his/her knowledge of what they learned over the summer months unless they are given added services during this time. The need for ESY services must be determined on an individual basis by the admission, review, and dismissal (IEP) committee.

Some students with disabilities have difficulty retaining skills during long school holidays and/or summer. If a student requires a significant amount of time to recoup mastered skills, then the IEP committee should discuss whether the student needs extended educational and/or related services during school breaks.

The determination of whether a child will receive ESY services will be made by the IEP committee; and the individualized education program (IEP) developed for ESY must include goals and objectives.

This program of services is paid for by the district and is of no cost to parents. Because of the nature of such services, all cases are determined on an individual basis, since these services will not be required by all students with disabilities. Such services are given only when the child meets certain criteria outlined by law and district policy.

Any decision regarding needed ESY programming must take into account the child's history of significant regression and limited recoupment capability. In other words, the IEP Team must look backward and forward when considering the need for ESY programming.

In addition to significant regression (the significant loss of knowledge) and/or limited recoupment (the ability to gain back what is lost), courts have set forth other ESY criteria to be applied by a Team, as follows:

- 1.) the degree of the child's impairment
- 2.) the parents' ability to provide structure at home
- 3.) the child's rate of progress
- 4.) the child's specific behavior and/or physical problems
- 5.) the availability of alternative resources
- 6.) the child's ability to interact with non-disabled children

- 7.) the specific curricular areas in which the child needs continuing attention
- 8.) the vocational and transition needs of the child
- 9.) whether the service requested is "extraordinary" rather than usual in consideration of the child's condition.

Only when all factors are considered together by the child's Team can a determination be made as to how much service will be offered.

When there is no previous record of a child's substantial regression after a significant break in service, a Team should still consider the need for an ESY program if the following circumstances are present:

- 1.) there is lack of progress in meeting short-term objectives over two marking periods, resulting in little or no progress made over the school year
- 2.) there are significant regression/recoupment problems over short-term vacation periods or other breaks in the school year, and /or
- 3.) the unique nature of any specially designed instruction or related services due to the disability of the student requires such extended school year programming.

Since proposed ESY programming must take into account the probability of substantial regression, school districts should ensure that special education service providers maintain quantitative and qualitative data regarding the child, including anecdotal records on the rates of both learning and relearning, as well as a child's attainment of IEP goals and objectives.