

# PFA Tips

## Extended School Year (ESY)

### What is ESY?

Extended School Year (ESY) is the continuation of certain Individualized Education Program (IEP) goals related to critical life skills beyond the regular school year. ESY services will vary in intensity, location, inclusion of related services, and length of time, depending upon the student's needs. Some examples of ESY services include speech therapy, occupational therapy, and behavior management. The purpose is to maintain skills achieved during the school year not necessarily to improve skills.

Approximately 10% to 12% of the total number of kids who received special education and related services during the school year are determined eligible for Extended School Year services.

### Is ESY different from summer school?

ESY services are designed to meet specific goals included in a student's IEP. If those goals are jeopardized by the summer break, the student may be offered ESY. In contrast to ESY, summer school programs are optional and voluntary programs which provide enrichment or reinforcement activities. The provision of summer school is not ESY. Extended school year services can be provided in combination with existing summer school programs, if such programs are available.

### How does my child qualify?

A student may qualify for ESY based on any of the following criteria (each is considered equally and independently):

- The IEP team, including the parent(s) believe the child will regress in skills during the time school is on summer break and it would take longer for the student with disabilities to regain skills upon entering the new school year than it would for students

without disabilities.

- The student is beginning to make progress or be on the verge of a breakthrough and it is believed this progress would be halted with a disruption in services.
- Behaviors impact your child's ability to make educational progress.
- The severity of the disability impacts your child's ability to make educational progress.
- There are special circumstances such as school year absenteeism due to illness.

### Where will my child go for ESY?

Your child may have services provided at his or her home school, or at another school in the district. It is likely that program staff will not be the same as in the regular school year even in the home school.

### When will my child go?

ESY must be considered individually for each student. School districts might determine ESY to be a certain length over designated weeks. However, if a student needs more (or less) service, the district must provide the appropriate amount of services.

### What does it cost?

ESY is free of charge to the student and the student's family.

### Does it have to be listed in my IEP?

Yes. Goals to be worked on during ESY are chosen from the IEP in place during the school year. The IEP team will determine which goals are considered to be critical life skills. (There is no formal definition of critical life skills so be prepared to make your case). The decision for ESY must be based on data and other information. So it is critical that IEP goals be measurable.

### Who decides if my child needs ESY?

The IEP team, including the parent(s) will



decide if ESY services are necessary for your child.

### How will I be notified about the availability of ESY services?

It is the responsibility of your child's school to inform you about ESY services. You may also, at any time, request an IEP meeting to discuss the possibility of ESY.

### Can I waive ESY services?

Yes. Parents have the right to waive services. The school is responsible for demonstrating that they made ESY available and the parents declined. To accommodate summer schedules, some parents choose to waive ESY services and seek private services. Private services however will not be paid for by the school in lieu of ESY.

For more details about ESY, call the Maryland State Department of Education at 410-767-0100, or visit:

Disability Rights Maryland - Extended School Year Services Manual  
<https://disabilityrightsmd.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/ESY-manual-final.pdf>

Wrightslaw - Extended School Year Services  
<http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/esy.index.htm>

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