

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

## What are Critical Life Skills?

Critical Life Skills are skills that are essential for the promotion and maintenance of the student's self-sufficiency. Skills such as toileting and eating are essential for minimal independence; stable relationships, impulse control, and appropriate peer interactions are necessary for community living. Some communication skills are academic skills such as reading may be considered critical life skills for certain students.

## What if I disagree with the IEP Committee's decision?

Parents are a valued member of the IEP Committee and will be asked to participate fully regarding the ESY decision-making process for their son or daughter. If the committee does not identify a need for ESY services, and/or you are in disagreement with the services identified, a Notice of Refusal should be provided to you. Please see your Procedural Safeguards booklet for further details. If you disagree with the IEP Committee's decision regarding ESY services, you can appeal that decision by filing due process. A due process hearing will be held within 45 days.

## If my child qualifies for EST must he/she attend?

Participation is not mandatory. There are no legal consequences if a student does not attend ESY.

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# 2019 EXTENDED SCHOOL YEAR FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Broward County Public Schools provide extended school year (ESY) services to eligible students, ages 3-21, receiving special education services. These services are provided as part of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) for students and are provided in the summer. This brochure is intended to help you understand ESY.

## What is ESY?

ESY refers to services provided beyond the regular school year calendar that are related to specific goals included in a student's individual educational plan (IEP). ESY services will vary in type, intensity, location, and inclusion of related services and length of time depending upon the student's needs. While there is a legal obligation to determine ESY needs for every student with an IEP, not every student will need extended school year services. All children regress and need to regain skills after school breaks. For ESE students who regress and need more time to regain skills than their non-disabled classmates, ESY service may be needed. Examples of student's with needs that may require ESY services include:

- A 20-year-old student receiving services from a job coach who recently obtained paid supported employment in the community and would likely lose the position at this critical transition to adult services. ESY for this student may include continuation of the job coach services.
- A student who might significantly or substantially regress in behavior skills to remain in a regular school placement. ESY for this student may include a structured program aimed at maintaining the skills necessary to remain in a regular school placement.
- A student receiving OT/PT services for critical life skills who might significantly or substantially regress in independent functioning and/or activities for daily living. ESY for this student may include OT/PT services related to the goal(s) that would be significantly jeopardized.

## Who Makes the ESY Decisions?

The IEP committee determines whether there is a need for ESY services. The IEP team includes the student's parent(s), the student (if appropriate), the student's teachers or related service providers, the Local Educational Agency representative (usually the ESE Specialist), and others that parents or the school feel can be helpful to the process. The need for ESY services may be determined at the annual review IEP meeting held for the purpose of developing the next IEP if appropriate data have been collected to support the decision.

## How is the Need for ESY Determined?

During the IEP meeting, the IEP committee determines whether the student has critical life skills goal(s), behavior goals, and projected regression of the IEP goal(s)/related services in his/her IEP and reviews the student's progress toward these goals. The IEP committee determines the need for ESY services by responding to the following questions: Does the data and/or documentation show the likelihood:

- of significant or substantial regression of IEP goals/related services without extended school year?
- that emerging critical life skills will be significantly impacted without extended school year services?
- that behaviors related to the disability will be significantly impacted without extended school year services?
- that previously learned critical life skills/goals will be significantly impacted without extended school year services?

ESY services are provided if the response is "yes" to one or more of these criteria as determined by the IEP committee with the parent as an active member.

**TIP:** Parents should be prepared to discuss these issues. Bring any information that might be helpful in making the decision. Keeping a log of your child's performance after school breaks may be useful.

## How are ESY Services Provided?

If your child is in need of ESY services, the IEP committee will identify the specific services on the IEP-ESY form. As with all IEP determinations, consideration is given to the delivery of services in the least restrictive environment (LRE) for that child. If the district does not offer programs for general education students during the school break, the district is not obligated to create programs as a means of meeting this LRE requirement.

The IEP-ESY form will include:

- Specific goal(s) from the IEP that required ESY services.
- The type, amount and duration of special education and related services, including specialized transportation, needed to meet the identified IEP goal(s).

ESY programs will vary in type, intensity, location, and inclusion of related services and length of time depending upon the student's needs. ESY service may be provided in a variety of locations including typical school campuses, center schools, job sites, and through home packets. The IEP committee will determine the most appropriate ESY services and type of location for each student. The district will determine specific site locations and notify parents by June.