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### Spring greetings to all,

As the warm winds, spring flowers, and trees make their comeback in Central New York, students, parents, and educators are now counting the days to the end of another school year. For many families it is a wild mix of activities and events, including making sure services are in place for summer and next fall.

For parents with a child leaving school-age programs, planning for life after high school continues. Transition is work in progress, so take the time to revisit your child's transition plan to make sure it still aligns and supports your child's current plan as he or she gets ready for life after school, such as college, other vocational programs, more independent living and more. Over 150 people attended our transition conference in April, and we would like to take a moment to thank all the presenters and participants who shared information and made connections, building a network of support and a strong foundation for the children in their lives. The feedback was very positive, and since the information was essential, we are already planning another conference for next year!

With our new statewide Individualized Education Plan (IEP) form, parents and educators now have an opportunity to use a common, joint form to develop an effective plan. Every child's needs are different and they should be expected to change as progress is made. As the annual review process requires parents and educators to meet and evaluate a child's progress and decide if the plan continues to meet your child's specific needs, it may also result in recommendations for new services, different services, declassification, or additional evaluations to focus on a specific area of need. For some parents, because of their child's academic challenges, they may be deciding to initiate their first referral for special education services. The terms and process can be confusing and SUPAC can be a great resource for parents to help make the referral process and first CSE meeting easier.

What is common for all parents is the need to be informed, to gather the necessary information and related questions, and learn how to communicate your concerns with your child's teacher and the school administrators. We would like to congratulate the parents who completed our second Parent University Series, along with several school team members. They are now parent leaders and are a great resource for other parents in their communities. With knowledge, training and preparation comes confidence. This issue of our newsletter offers guidance to help you and your child successfully close the current year, provides a review of Extended School Year services, and suggests a few summer learning opportunities to use at home. We encourage you to contact us with your questions, suggestions, and invite you to our upcoming trainings, and to visit our website, <http://www.supac.org>, for updates, informational resources and tools.

Lisa Finnerty Coggi, Director

## Looking for SUPAC Trainings?

*Check our website for trainings in your area and online training.*

*We are currently scheduling trainings for Fall 2011 and Spring of 2012. If there is a training or topic you would like to know more about, please contact us. We can provide trainings at your location or ours.*

## Wrapping Up the School Year

Creating an effective partnership with school administrators and teachers is a year-long process. The end of the year offers one more opportunity to connect and engage school staff. It may offer valuable insight and understanding on the progress made, new opportunities or challenges.



Here are a few tips:

- **Communicate effectively: Listen with interest.** Your child's teacher(s) has spent nine months with your child. Let them know that you are interested in their opinion and ideas on what you could do during the summer and what could help your child the next school year.
- **Be Enthusiastic.** We all react positively to people who are enthusiastic and positive. We shy away from trouble and negative approaches.
- **Show Your Appreciation.** Recognize the work teachers and administrators have done. Be specific whenever possible on the positive impact on you or your child. If it has been a difficult year, acknowledge it in a positive way. "While we have had a difficult year, I appreciate all of the time and energy everyone spent to try to resolve our issues and concerns."
- **Add to your child's portfolio.** Save samples of class work, school projects and artwork: Find a flat box and carefully select examples of math, reading, writing work. Engage your child in this process whenever possible. These examples can be used as references for skills learned during the next school year, and if needed, establish a baseline at the start of the next school year. Special projects and art work can often be reminders to children of their past success, and demonstrations to teachers of skills that have already been gained.
- **Check the IEP for next year:** Take time to carefully read the new IEP to make sure it reflects the agreements from the annual review. If there are any issues that you do not understand you can contact the CSE Chairperson and resolve these.
- **Volunteer to share information with your child's new teacher.** Ask if the teacher would be able to share information with the teacher assigned to next year.

## What is Extended School Year (ESY)?

Extended School Year (ESY) refers to special education or related services that are provided beyond the typical public school year. They are only available to students classified under Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) who have had the service included in their Individualized Education Plan (IEP) approved by the Committee on Special Education (CSE). Extended school year services are provided at no cost to the family [Code of Federal Regulations: 34 CFR Part 300.309; NYSED Part 200 Regulations of the Commissioner of Education: 200.1(eee); 200.4(d)(2)(x); 200.6(k)].

The CSE team can discuss ESY services at any CSE meeting, but often they are included at the annual CSE meeting or a separate meeting in the spring. The CSE team can also discuss ESY services through an addendum to the annual IEP if necessary. Parents may request an IEP meeting to discuss only ESY services.

ESY services are necessary only when a student is in jeopardy of significant regression or negative impact on a student's skills. ESY services can vary in duration and type, and the CSE team makes sure that the ESY services are designed to meet the unique needs of the student. CSE teams identify specific goals and objectives for ESY services. Services are intended to address skills critical to a student's overall educational progress, and can include academics, social, emotional, behavior, and life skills. Reading, math, and language could be considered critical skills. This will be dependent on a student's IEP goals, age, needs, abilities and number of years in school.

The CSE must determine whether a student requires extended school year special education services in order to prevent substantial regression. Substantial regression would be indicated by a student's inability to maintain developmental levels due to a loss of skill, set of skill competencies or knowledge during the months of July and August. Students with highly intensive needs, multiple disabilities or other special factors or needs related to disability may need to be considered for twelve-month special services and/or programs to prevent substantial regression.

Both quantitative and qualitative information should be reviewed by the CSE to substantiate the need for providing such services and programs. A student is eligible for a twelve-month service or program when the period of review or reteaching required to recoup the skill or knowledge level attained by the end of the

prior school year is beyond the time ordinarily reserved for that purpose at the beginning of the school year. The typical period of review or reteaching ranges ***between 20 and 40 school days***. As a guideline for determining eligibility for an extended school year program, a review period ***of eight weeks or more*** would indicate that substantial regression has occurred.

In order to provide the specific programs and services to meet the student's needs, a variety of program options can be considered.

The IEP for ESY does not have to be the same as the IEP for the general school year. ESY services can also be provided in a location that differs from the general school year. The goal is to ensure that the IEP for ESY is appropriate for the student based on their needs and IEP goals. The IEP needs to ensure benefit for the student.

ESY half-day and full-day special class programs must operate for at least 30 days in the summer. Non special class programs and services can be less than 30 days in duration and would be determined by the CSE.

The goal of the CSE team is to determine whether an ESY program is necessary based on the specific needs and levels of performance for each student during the general school year. Also, a student who is eligible for 12 month programming one year may not be eligible the next year.

**Special Note on ESY and Transition:** For some students, ages 15-21, ESY transition services may be recommended to prevent substantial regression in transition skills. These services may include "instruction *community experiences, related services, preparation or employment, or other post-school living objectives, and, when appropriate, the acquisition of adult daily living skills or functional vocational evaluation.*"

If a student's IEP specifies that special education services must be provided in a setting with nondisabled peers in order for the student to benefit from the special education services to prevent substantial regression, and the school district operates summer programs for nondisabled students, then the school district must provide methods for meeting the least restrictive environment (LRE). However, if the school district does not operate summer programs for nondisabled students, then the school district must provide alternative methods for meeting LRE requirements.

Camping and recreational programs are not to be construed as extended school year special education programs and related services. While special education services identified on a student's IEP must be made available as part of a free appropriate public education (FAPE), school districts are not required to pay for the enrollment and other fees at summer recreational or nonapproved educational programs in which the parents have enrolled their school-aged child. FAPE is defined as special educational related services that are provided at public expense in conformity with a student's IEP.

## Preparing Your Child for the End of the School Year and the Transition to a New School Year

For some children, they are looking forward to summer. For others it will be a significant challenge. Preparation can lessen the stress and anxiety associated with change.



1. Plan accordingly . For some a week is sufficient. For others they need to know further ahead. Be prepared to answer your child's questions about summer and next school year. Create a calendar that identifies the planned activities for summer and the start of the next school year.
2. If your child will be attending a new school next year, plan to visit the school a few times during the summer months when there are no students there. Make arrangements with the school administrator, and whenever possible, ask for a locker to be assigned and a map of the school to further prepare your child.
3. Plan a meeting for you and your child to meet the new teacher for next year. Bring your portfolio of work from this year if possible.

## Planning for Summer Fun!

Now is a good time to start to develop a plan for summer fun and recreation. Here are a few ideas and resources to get you started:

### Ask key questions about your child to identify possible community recreation goals:

- What does your child enjoy doing?
- List current interests, hobbies, and talents? (music, art, technology, sports, dance)
- What does your child need to feel comfortable? (small group, one to one, short activities, indoors/outdoors)
- Learning preferences (e.g. reading, highly structured, flexible)
- Are there any new experiences that your child is ready for or asking to try?

### Prepare and ask your questions about each program, activity or event to see if it is a good fit based on your child's interests and needs:

- Ask how many children are in the program and age range.
- Check the ratio of adults to children.
- Review the activity schedule and scope and demands of activities.
- Ask questions on structure, flexibility, discipline and expectations.
- Ask questions on the program's values, philosophy, diversity of children, and opportunities for developing friendships in order to assess the capacity, commitment and level of acceptance of children with disabilities.



**Prepare a brief profile of your child** including learning preferences, needs and accommodations to share with staff and caregivers. Keep the profile simple and share information directly to the activities of the camp. Many times there may be youth counselors or college students, they will benefit greatly from your guidance and expertise about your child (see our website for sample profile forms).

**Create a calendar** or schedule for the summer break with your child. Depending on what works for your child, you can use a color code for types of activities, or create a list for each day or by the week.

**Include health, wellness and fitness goals** to choose from (yoga, meditation, exercise, swimming, outdoor activities).

**Check out free or low cost community-based summer activities**, mini-camps, and special events. Here are a few ideas to get you started in creating your community and regional map:

- Community recreational centers
- Parks and trails
- School district continuing education classes
- Museums and art galleries
- Public library's reading programs, story hours and special events
- Faith-based summer programs and children and youth activities
- Community festivals, community concerts, and parades
- Many private schools, colleges and universities offer mini and half day specialty camps
- Disability advocacy groups and organizations
- Community and neighborhood groups such as Boys and Girls Clubs, Scouting, etc.

**Set up a few home-based activities.** These are activities you and your child can do at home:

- Create a digital photo journal of summer travels and adventures.
- Start a small garden.
- Create a summer arts and crafts corner
- Create a multi sensory story corner.

### Resources:

**NYS Inclusive Recreation Resource Center (NYS IRRC):** Housed at SUNY Cortland, the NYS IRRC offers a resource center to find accessible recreational campgrounds and recreational facilities throughout NYS. For more information, visit their website at <http://www.nysirrc.org/>.

**Mapping Your Dreams: Recreation:** From the PACER Center in Minnesota, this article provides information on an important part of transition to adulthood: recreation and leisure. Visit <http://www.pacer.org/tatra/resources/MYD/recreation.asp>.

**Disability Exercises, Adaptive Recreation, and Fitness with Your Kids:** "people with disabilities need an outlet for their physical energy just as much as their able-bodied peers" Visit: <http://www.disaboom.com/children-with-disabilities/disability-exercises-adaptive-recreation-and-fitness-with-your-kids>.



## Summer: A Great Time to Learn at Home

Children benefit from opportunities to practice effective communication, time management, organization, self care, and other independent living skills. Developing a work ethic and personal responsibility are critical life-long positive attitudes and beliefs. Home can be a safe, comfortable place to start to gain these critical skills. Be creative and engage your child. Be flexible and responsive to your child's specific needs.

Chores and allowances can be very controversial. Even what is a chore can vary. What does appear to be a starting point of agreement is that children can benefit from both chores and an allowance.

- **Chores** can be effective ways to teach responsibility, work ethic and promote independence. Design a plan for success by choosing chores based on your child's skills, abilities and strengths.
- An **allowance** can help a child learn about the value of money, how to plan a budget and save for something they want. It can also teach personal responsibility, time-management, and organization. Allowances teach children critical money management skills. Money management is not an easy concept for many children, and again each child and family is different. Keep budgets simple and the timeframe reasonable based on age.

Whether we link chores and allowances together is a choice and there are different opinions for consideration. Whatever your decision, remember that each child is different and each family is different. There are a wide range of charts available on line that identify possible amounts to give as allowances, and this often depends on each family's resources. See References and Sources section starting on page 6.



## NYS Department of Education News

News that may have a direct impact on the supports and services in the future.

**State Education Commissioner Steiner leaving:** David Steiner, current state education commissioner since 2008, has announced his decision to leave the State Education Department later this year. He has said that he will work with the Regents to ensure a seamless transition.

**Change to Intellectual Disabilities:** The Board of Regents approved a change in the regulations to change the term "mental retardation" to intellectual disabilities, effective March 30, 2011 (amended sections 200.1 and 200.4 of the regulations).

**Common Core Standards:** In July 2010 the Regents adopted the national Common Core Standards, joining more than 40 other states in this new initiative to improve education in our nation. NYS signed onto this national effort with an understanding that the Regents would also identify additional specific K-12 expectations and pre-Kindergarten standards to complement and support the national standards. Now the goal is to align the agreed upon standards with curriculum and classroom instruction models.

**2009-2010 School Report Cards:** The report card contains data on standardized testing, school and district graduation rates, performance on Regents exams, and data results by subgroups, including students with disabilities. To see your school or district's report card, go to <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/irs/reportcard>.

**Mandate Relief:** Many of our state regulations require more than federal regulations. Now, because of economic constraints and more and more pressure from citizens for cost controls, these additional state regulations are being reviewed by the Regents, and in some cases, they are recommending legislative or policy changes to relieve districts of these additional state level mandates. The right of children to receive a free appropriate public education did not and will not change with any of these changes in state level mandates. The Individuals with Education Act (IDEA) is a federal legislation. However, it is important for parents to know that as state mandates are changed, parents need to advocate specifically for what their child needs. If changes in services are made, ask how the individual needs will be met. Two recent changes passed are the repeal of the requirement for minimum level of service for speech and language related services and for instruction for

students with autism. In both it was stressed that the CSE is expected to continue to determine the appropriate level of service for a student and that the goal is to allow more flexibility for districts, while protecting the rights of parents to obtain the services that their child needs. We will continue to keep you informed as mandate relief items are changed by the Regents.

**New IEP forms:** The new IEP is required for use for all IEPs developed in NYS beginning with the 2011-2012 school year which begins July 1, 2011. SUPAC continues to offer information and training in the use of the new IEP form.

**Reorganization within the State Education Department:** The Office of Vocational Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) included both school age and adult services for people with disabilities. VESID was eliminated in 2010. The school-age special education department is now a part of the **Office of P-12 Education**. The responsibility for adult education, workforce development, vocational rehabilitation, and proprietary schools was transferred to the Office of Adult Education and Workforce Development. This office has changed its name to the Office of Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCES).

**Introduction to the Adult Career and Continuing Education Services (ACCES), formerly VESID.** ACCES is comprised of three areas: Vocational Rehabilitation, including the administration of the Independent Living Centers, Adult Education, General Education Development (GED) testing, and Supervision of Proprietary Schools. For parents of children with special needs, the area of most interest is ACCES-Vocational Rehabilitation (ACCES-VR). The goal of this area is to ensure that the needs of adults, with and without disabilities, and out-of-school youth are met, and to promote and ensure access to employment, economic self-sufficiency, independence and inclusion and community integration. For more information on ACCES-VR, go to <http://www.acces.nysed.gov/>.

**Introduction to the NYS Client Assistance Program (CAP):** The Client Assistance Program (CAP) is a statewide network of skilled advocates that assist New York adults with disabilities in obtaining the training, equipment and services needed for employment. It can be a critical part of obtaining services from ACCES-VR. CAP is administered by the NYS Commission on Quality of Care. For more information on CAP, go to <http://www.acces.nysed.gov/vr/do/cap.htm>.

## REFERENCES AND SOURCES

**Special Note: Revisit our past newsletters for more tips for summer planning:** Our June 2010 Newsletter focused on parent-school partnerships, parents' summer homework, and preparing your child for summer camp. Our February 2010 Newsletter focused on the annual review. Both of these newsletters can be found on our website at [http://www.supac.org/resources/our\\_newsletter/](http://www.supac.org/resources/our_newsletter/).

### ***Extended School Year (ESY) and Wrapping Up the End of the Year:***

Code of Federal Regulations: 34 CFR Part 300. 300.309: [http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr\\_2002/julqtr/pdf/34cfr300.309.pdf](http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2002/julqtr/pdf/34cfr300.309.pdf); [http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr\\_2002/julqtr/34cfr300.309.htm](http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/cfr_2002/julqtr/34cfr300.309.htm)

NYS Part 200 Regulations of the Commissioner of Education - Parts 200 and 201, Extended school year (ESY) – 12 month services: 200.1(eee): <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/lawsregs/sect2001.htm>; 200.4(d)(2)(x): <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/lawsregs/sect2004.htm>; 200.6(k): <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/lawsregs/sect2006.htm>

“Wrapping Up the School Year – Celebrate accomplishments and ease separation anxieties,” <http://www.scholastic.com/resources/article/wrapping-up-the-school-year>

“Bringing the School Year to a Strong Finish”, by Mike Anderson, Written from the perspective of a teacher-- <http://www.responsiveclassroom.org/article/bringing-school-year-strong-finish>

“Ten People to Thank for a Good School Year” by Terri Mauro, About.com Guide, <http://specialchildren.about.com/od/specialeducation/tp/schoolgifts.htm>

NYS Education Department Q & A on ESY: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/finance/extendedschoolyearinfo.htm> or <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/finance/2011QA.pdf>

Wrights Law offers a very good introduction to Extended School Year services, and key legal rulings--<http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/esy.index.htm>

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## **Acronyms, Terms, and Definitions in This Issue**

Parents often learn new things as they come up in their child's life. The following is a list of terms used in this newsletter. SUPAC also offers a comprehensive list of acronyms on their website, <http://www.supac.org/resources/parent-advocacy-handouts/>.

Annual Review	An evaluation, conducted at least annually by the CSE, detailing the status of each student with a disability and each student thought to have a disability who resides within the school district for the purpose of recommending the continuation, modification, or termination of special education programs and services.
CSE	Committee on Special Education. Defined as Part 200.3: "Committee on special education or CSE means a committee on special education, subcommittee on special education, or other multidisciplinary team established in accordance with Education Law section 4402 or, in the case of a preschool student with a disability, the committee on preschool special education."
ESY	Extended School Year. Per Part 200.1(eee): "Twelve-month special service and/or program means a special education service and/or program provided on a year-round basis, for students determined to be eligible in accordance with sections 200.6(k)(1) and 200.16(i)(3) (v) of this Part whose disabilities require a structured learning environment of up to 12 months duration to prevent substantial regression. A special service and/or program shall operate for at least 30 school days during the months of July and August, inclusive of legal holidays, except that a program consisting solely of related service(s) shall be provided with the frequency and duration specified in the student's individualized education program." Please visit the resource section for more information on ESY.
IEP	Individualized Education Program. Per Part 200.1(y): "Individualized education program means a written statement, developed, reviewed and revised in accordance with section 200.4 of this Part, which includes the components specified in section 200.4(d)(2) of this Part to be provided to meet the unique educational needs of a student with a disability."
Least Restrictive Environment (LRE)	LRE placement shall provide the special education needed by the student; with other students who do not have disabilities; and be as close as possible to the student's home. Removal from the regular educational environment occurs only when the nature or severity of the disability is such that even with the use of supplementary aids and services, education cannot be satisfactorily achieved.
Mandate Relief	Reviews the need for current mandates (required laws and regulations) that represent the greatest challenges to districts in terms of financial burden and required time/human capital to determine what mandates, if any, may be relieved or eliminated for school districts (and others), thereby reducing costs but having the least negative impact on students.
Regression	Where a student's progress in receiving educational benefit from his or her regular school year will be significantly jeopardized if not maintained with ESY services. See page 3 of this newsletter for more information.

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"What IEP Teams Should Know About Extended School Year Services (ESY), A Practical Resource Booklet for Families and Educators, Parents Reaching Out, Your One Stop Resource for a Stronger Family, Spring 2008--  
<http://www.parentsreachingout.org/resources/publications/specialed/seesy.pdf>

"Extended School Year Services (ESY) – What the Courts Have Said," by Rose Kraft, Future Reflections, Winter/Spring 2000, Vol. 19, No 1--<http://www.nfb.org/images/nfb/Publications/fr/fr19/Issue1/f190119.htm>

### **Chores and Allowances**

"Should Your Child Get an Allowance?" by Rachel Von Nida—[http://www.sparksavings.com/savings\\_article.asp?id=1416](http://www.sparksavings.com/savings_article.asp?id=1416)

"Children and Chores"—<http://www.parenting-ed.org/handouts/chores.pdf>

"Should You Tie Allowance to Chores?", 11/4/2010, by Eileen Gunn, with comments from Steven Siebold, author of *How Rich People Think*, and Dr. Susan S. Bartell, a NY parenting psychologist, and author of *The Top 50 Questions Kids Ask*—<http://blog.threejars.com/2010/11/should-you-tie-allowance-to-chores.html>

**Chores and Checklists**—<http://www.choresandchecklists.com/>

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The Syracuse University Parent Advocacy Center (SUPAC) is a university-based center in New York State bringing together faculty, students, and staff with members of the local community to provide parents of children with disabilities with information, resources, expertise, training, and support necessary to promote meaningful involvement in their children's education.

The SUPAC is funded by a grant from the New York State Office of Special Education and is a project of the SU Center on Human Policy, Law, and Disability Studies and is located on the Syracuse University campus.

SUPAC covers the following BOCES regions: Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego; Madison-Oneida; Oneida-Herkimer-Madison; Oswego County; Onondaga-Cortland-Madison; Tompkins-Seneca-Tioga; Cayuga-Onondaga and Syracuse City.

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**Children and Chores**--No matter what your child's disability, he or she can still help around the house by Kimberly Sullivan—<http://www.mdausa.org/publications/Quest/q123chores.html>

**The Allowance Rules: Teaching Money Skills to ADHD Kids** by Peter Jaska, MD—<http://www.additudemag.com/adhd/article/719.html>

**How to Teach Community Life Skills to Kids With Disabilities** (talks about money and allowances along with other important life skills)--<http://www.livestrong.com/article/228498-how-to-teach-community-life-skills-to-kids-with-disabilities/#ixzz1OE0VXXRu>

#### **Resources on the New IEP Forms:**

To access the most recent updates and answers to questions posted with the training materials on the IEP and the changes in notification:

- IEP: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/formsnotices/IEP/home.html>
- Prior Written Notice: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/formsnotices/PWN/home.html>
- Meeting Notice: <http://www.p12.nysed.gov/specialed/formsnotices/meetingnotice/home.html>

#### **NYS Common Core Standards:**

Approval of recommended additions to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts & Literacy and CCSS for Mathematics and approval of new Prekindergarten Learning Standards-- <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2011Meetings/January2011/111p12swa1.html>.

To learn more about the Common Core Standards initiative, history and proposed timeline for implementing the standards, curriculum and assessments, go to: [http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/common\\_core\\_standards/](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/ciai/common_core_standards/).

For an introduction to the national Common Core Standards, go to <http://www.corestandards.org>

#### **Mandate Relief**

For the most recent information on mandate relief, here is a link to information from NYS Board of Regents: <http://www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/2011Meetings/May2011/511p12saa1.pdf> or visit the home page of the NYS Mandate Relief Team--<http://www.governor.ny.gov/mandaterelief>.