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## *DPS Extended Day Program Frequently Asked Questions*

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*Updated May 2025 (New from top to bottom)*

### **Program Overview**

In an attempt to bridge the childcare gap for DPS families and support the District's focus on providing intentional academic opportunities beyond the school day, DPS is collaborating with DEA and DFTA to develop a program that supports district students and provides a childcare option for working families. **Registration for the 2025 - 26 Extended Day program** will begin on **July 1, 2025**. Extended Day programming dates will mirror the DPS School calendar with the first day of programming on Wednesday, August 13 and end on the last day of the school year in May 2026.

The extended day program has three required elements: (1) providing a safe, secure and supportive environment for students that includes a snack, (2) academic assistance with homework; and (3) enrichment and physical activities. The academic assistance with homework must provide support for students and be in alignment with the school day academic program requirements, a standards-aligned curriculum, and instructional materials.

**Below are frequently asked questions about the Extended Day Program.**

**Q: Will Extended Day begin on the first day of the 2025-26 school year?**

A: Yes, Extended Day will begin at all sites on August 13, 2025 the first day of school.

**Q: Will Extended Day offer Open Houses before school starts?**

A: Yes. Extended Day site will participate in their building's Open House event.

Please watch for information to be shared via emails and the district website.

**Q: If I registered my child(ren) for ED last year, do I need to register them again??**

A: Yes, you will need to register your child(ren) again. This does not require setting up a new account, only accessing the one previously created. You may click on the EZChildtrack link anytime on or after July 1, 2025 to register your child(ren).

**Q: Is Extended Day operating during the summer?**

A: No, Extended Day is a before and after school program operating during the school year only.

**Q: Is Extended Day operating during Spring Break?**

A: No, Extended Day will not operate during holiday breaks (Thanksgiving, Winter, Spring Break). Extended Day will follow the district calendar for students.

**Q: Can I register my student at any time?**

A: Yes, registration for the 2025-26 school year opens on July 1, 2025 and will be on-going until the end of the school year! However, there may be a waitlist as we want to make sure we are providing a quality, safe environment for our students. Extended Day staff will closely monitor the applications and continue to hire additional staffing to open the waitlist. Sharae Bond (Program Coordinator) will communicate via email with the parents as they register if there is a current wait list. Recruitment and placement of staff continues to be at the forefront of our tasks. A safe, fun, learning environment remains the goal and Extended Day will not jeopardize the safety of our students and staff.

**Q: Once I enroll my child(ren), will I need to schedule them weekly?**

A: Yes. You will need to remember to log into the EZ Child Track Parent Portal <https://www.ezchildtrack.com/dpsextendedday/parent> to schedule up to two weeks of programming at a time for each child. **This must be completed by the end of the day on Thursdays, to guarantee your student has a spot the following week of AM and/or PM programming.** Any late attendance declarations will require authorization from the Site-Coordinator and will not be guaranteed a spot for the following week's programming. **If you're at all interested in using the Extended Day Before and After School program, even for a short time, you will still have to register your students only for the days you will need.**

**Q: Why can't I schedule for longer than two weeks?**

A: Student enrollment directly impacts the scheduling of our staff and meal count, therefore, two weeks at a time is required to ensure accuracy.

**Q: Is transportation provided?**

A: No. Parents are solely responsible for pick-up and drop-off.

**Q: Who should I contact to ask and answer questions about the Extended Day Program?**

A: Questions should be directed to Sharae Bond, Extended Day Program Coordinator by email [Smbond@dps61.org](mailto:Smbond@dps61.org) or by phone at 217-362-3063.

Leslie Risby, Innovative Programs Supervisor for Decatur Public Schools by email [LRisby@dps61.org](mailto:LRisby@dps61.org) or by phone at 217- 362-3064.

\*During the school year your first point of contact will be the Site Coordinator at your designated site. Each site has a phone number that can be used for communication as well as pick up and drop off alerts.

**Q: How does my child qualify to enroll in the program and attend for free?**

A: Students Pre-K through 8th grade, at designated sites, are eligible to attend the program at no cost. The Extended Day Program is being offered at no cost and does not require any eligibility through CCRS or other state subsidy programs.

**Q: What grade levels are eligible to enroll in the program?**

A: Available for Pre-K through 8th grade students enrolled in DPS at designated sites.

**Q: How does this work if my child is a half day Pre-K student?**

A: AM enrolled Pre-K students may attend the AM program before school until the start of school and PM enrolled Pre-K students may attend the PM program after dismissal until the 5:30 p.m. end of the Extended Day Program. The Extended Day Program is a before and after school program. There is **no** programming during the day. **Parents must secure other childcare for their child during the school day.**

**Q: What buildings will offer an Extended Day Program?**

A: 11 site locations across the District: Baum, Dennis Lab, Ellsworth Dansby Jr. Magnet, Franklin Grove, Hope, Johns Hill, Montessori, Muffley, Parsons, Pershing, South Shores.

**Q: What is the cost of the program?**

A: The Extended Day program is offered to district students that enroll **free** of charge.

**Q: Are meals provided?**

A: An afternoon snack will be offered at no cost for students enrolled in the Extended Day program through the District's CACFP Program.

**Q: What are the Extended Day Program days/hours?**

A: The program will operate in the morning and afternoon Monday - Friday during the school year. Program hours will vary depending on the Tier of each building. The program will open at 6:00 a.m. and dismiss when the am bell rings and the afternoon program hours will begin after school dismisses until 5:30 p.m.

**Q: Will the Extended Day Program operate on half days, when school is not in session, and during holiday breaks?**

A: Yes. On half days the program will operate from school dismissal time until 5:30 p.m. Extended Day will follow the district's holiday break schedule for students **(NO Programming will be provided)**.

**Q: Can parents register their child for morning or afternoon only?**

A: Yes. Parents have the flexibility to register their child(ren) based on their weekly needs, but will need to enroll their child prior to Thursday of each week. This will ensure that the Site Coordinator has the proper planning time for the upcoming week's staffing and activities.

**Q: What will my child(ren) be doing in the Extended Day program?**

A: The Extended Day program will first and foremost, provide a safe, secure and supportive environment for students; academic assistance with homework will be provided, and enrichment and physical activities are incorporated into the program. Including but not limited to: Project based learning, Art, Music, Physical Fitness, Recreational camps, Character education, and STEAM activities. Each building's Extended Day staff will work with Administration to determine their site's focus, schedule, and activities.

**Q: What will the staffing structure look like?**

A: There will be a Program Coordinator that manages all aspects of the program district-wide. Each building will have a Site Coordinator to manage the site, Certified DPS teachers, Non-Certified DPS Staff (TA's, Parent Liaisons etc.) and high school and college students interested in the field of education. Each staff will go through the District hiring process and complete a background check. Staff can be requested and needed as enrollment increases, to abide by the staff:student ratio, or to meet the needs of a Special Education student's IEP. Safety is first and foremost.

**Q: When does registration open?**

A: **Jul 1, 2025** Please click on the link below to complete registration:

[EZ Child Track Parent Portal](#)