

### Instruction

#### **INDEPENDENT STUDY PROGRAM**

Educational opportunities offered through independent study may include, but are not limited to those listed in Education Code 51745. The District will develop and implement a program consistent with Education Code that provides synchronous and asynchronous instruction providing independent study to meet the needs of our students and community.

In addition, when requested by a parent/guardian due to an emergency, vacation, or illness, independent study may be used on a short-term basis to ensure that the student is able to maintain academic progress in his/her regular classes.

### Equivalency

The District's independent study option must be substantially equivalent in quality and quantity to classroom instruction, thus enabling students enrolled in independent study to complete the District's adopted course of study within the customary timeframe. Students in independent study shall have access to the same services and resources that are available to the other students in the school and shall have equal rights and privileges. (5 CCR 11700, 11701.5)

No course required for high school graduation shall be offered exclusively through independent study. (Education Code 51745)

### Eligibility for Independent Study

The Superintendent/designee may approve the participation of a student who demonstrates the motivation, commitment, organizational skills, and academic skills necessary to work independently. A student whose academic performance is not at grade level may participate in independent study only if the program is able to provide appropriate support, such as supplemental instruction, tutoring, counseling, ongoing diagnostic assessments, and/or differentiated materials, to enable the student to be successful. For an elementary student, the Superintendent/designee may consider the parent/guardian's level of commitment to assist the student. Independent study entails a commitment by both the parent/guardian and the student. Independent study shall be offered only to students who can be successful working independently.

A student participating in independent study must be a resident of the county or an adjacent county. Full-time independent study shall not be available to students whose district residency status is based on their parent/guardian's employment within District boundaries pursuant to Education Code 48204. (Education Code 46300.2, 51747.3)

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For a student with disabilities, as defined in Education Code 56026, participation in independent study shall be approved only if his/her individualized education program specifically provides for such participation. (Education Code 51745)

A temporarily disabled student shall not receive individual instruction pursuant to Education Code 48206.3 by means of independent study. (Education Code 51745)

Students age 21 or older, and students age 19 or older who have not been continuously enrolled in school since their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, may participate in independent study only through the adult education program for the purpose of enrolling in courses required for high school diploma by Education Code 51225.3 or the Board. (Education Code 46300.1, 46300.4)

No more than 10 percent of the students enrolled in a continuation high school or opportunity school or program not including pregnant students and parenting students who are primary caregivers for one or more of their children, shall be enrolled in independent study. (Education Code 51745)

Written Agreement

An independent study written agreement shall be developed and implemented for each student participating in independent study for five or more consecutive school days. (Education Code 46300, 51747; 5 CCR 11703)

The agreement shall include general student data, including the student's name, address, grade level, birth date, school of enrollment, and program placement.

The independent study agreement for each participating student also shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following: (Education Code 51747; 5 CCR 11700, 11702)

1. The manner, time, frequency, and location for submitting the student's assignments and for reporting his/her progress.
2. The objectives and methods of study for the student's work and the methods by which the student's work will be evaluated.

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3. The specific resources, including materials and staff, which will be made available to the student.
4. A statement of the Board's policy detailing the maximum length of time allowed between an assignment and its completion and the number of missed assignments, by grade level and type of program, which will trigger an evaluation of whether the student should be allowed to continue in independent study.
5. The duration of the independent study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates for the student's participation in independent study under the agreement, with a maximum of one school year.
6. A statement of appropriate measures of academic accomplishment by the student upon completion.
7. A statement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate.
8. When a student fails to complete an independent study agreement, the District may deny future independent study.
9. In the case of a suspended or expelled student who is referred or assigned to any school, class, or program pursuant to Education Code 48915 or 48917, a statement that instruction may be provided through independent study only if the student is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.
10. Signatures of the student, the parent/guardian or caregiver of the student if the student is under age 18 years, the certificated employee responsible for the general supervision of independent study, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the student.

The parent/guardian's signature on the agreement shall constitute permission for the student to receive instruction through independent study.

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Monitoring Student Progress

The independent study administrator and/or assigned teacher shall promptly and directly address any failure by the student to meet the terms of his/her written agreement. The following supportive strategies may be used:

1. A letter to the student and parent/guardian.
2. A meeting between the student, parent/guardian and the teacher.
3. Initiate meeting with Student Success Team or Multi-Tiered System of Supports.
4. A meeting between the student and the independent study administrator, including the parent/guardian.
5. An increase in the amount of time the student works under direct supervision.

When the student has missed the number of assignments specified in the written agreement as requiring an evaluation, the Superintendent/designee shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether or not independent study is appropriate for the student. This evaluation may result in termination of the independent study agreement and the student's return to the regular classroom program or other alternative program.

A written record of the findings of any such evaluation shall be treated as a mandatory interim student record which shall be maintained for three years from the date of the evaluation. (Education Code 51747)

Independent study students who are late, miss scheduled conferences, or do not submit assigned work on time shall not be reported as tardy or truant.

Assignment and Responsibilities of Independent Study Teacher

Each student's independent study shall be coordinated, evaluated, and carried out under the general supervision of a certificated employee who consents to the assignment. (Education Code 44865, 51747.5; 5 CCR 11700)

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The ratio of student average daily attendance for independent study students age 18 years or younger to full-time equivalent certificated employees responsible for independent study shall not exceed the equivalent ratio for all other education programs in the District, unless a new higher or lower ratio for all other educational programs offered is negotiated in a collective bargaining agreement or the District enters into a memorandum of understanding that indicates an existing collective bargaining agreement contains an alternative ratio. (Education Code 51745.6)

The Superintendent/designee shall ensure that independent study teachers have access to professional development and support comparable to classroom-based teachers.

Records

The Superintendent/designee shall ensure that records are maintained for audit purposes. These records shall include, but not be limited to: (Education Code 51748; 5 CCR 11703)

1. A copy of the Board Policy, Administrative Regulation, and other procedures related to independent study.
2. A listing of the students, by grade level, program, and school, who have participated in independent study, along with the units of the curriculum attempted and completed by students in Grades K-8 and the course credits attempted by and awarded to students in Grades 9-12.
3. A file of all agreements, with representative samples of each student's work products bearing the assigned teacher's notations indicating that he/she has personally evaluated the work or that he/she has personally reviewed the evaluations made by another certificated teachers.
4. As appropriate to the program in which the students are participating, a daily or hourly attendance register that is separate from classroom attendance records, maintained on a current basis as time values of student work products judged by a certificated teachers, and reviewed by the assigned teacher if they are two different persons.

The Superintendent/designee also shall maintain a record of grades and other evaluations issued to each student for independent study assignments.

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The signed, dated agreement, any supplemental agreement, assignment records, work samples, and attendance records may be maintained on file electronically. (Education Code 51747)

Procedures for Implementing Independent Study in the Event of Illness, Short-Term Disability or Travel Only

1. Participation in the independent study program is voluntary on the part of bargaining unit members. The District may designate a resource person to assist teachers or to carry out teacher responsibilities in the event the classroom teacher chooses not to participate. If the resource person is a member of the bargaining unit, services will be provided on a voluntary basis.
2. Responsibility for managing independent study agreements will be delegated to one person at each site. Typically, this person is responsible for maintenance of normal attendance records.
3. When a teacher or the school office becomes aware of a proposed independent study, the School Attendance Secretary/Health Specialist will complete the top portion of the independent study agreement and forward it to the appropriate classroom teacher or designated resource person.
4. The School Attendance Secretary/Health Specialist will maintain a log of the agreements issued and the number of students involved so that the completed agreements can be filed in a timely manner.
5. The School Attendance Secretary/Health Specialist will obtain required signatures of the student, parent/guardian, teacher (or designated resource person), and principal (or designee) prior to the independent study term.
6. Upon completion of the agreement, the School Attendance Secretary/Health Specialist in the school office will adjust the Attendance Report to reflect the number of days completed.
7. The school will retain one copy of the agreement in the student's file (cum). One copy of the agreement will be sent to the Business Office (attendance accounting), and one copy will be given to the student.

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Completion of the Independent Study Agreement in the Event of Illness,  
Short-Term Disability or Travel Only

1. The agreement is self-explanatory. Information regarding the type of agreement, objectives, and method of evaluation are completed by checking the appropriate boxes. The specific details of the study assignment(s) and/or task(s) to be performed by the student will be written on, or attached to, the agreement by the teacher. An assignment sheet may also be attached to the agreement, if necessary and/or desired.
2. Assignments are due upon the student's return to school. The required work will be verified either by the classroom teacher or the designated resource person.
3. The amount of time required to perform or complete the off-campus assignment shall equal or exceed the required daily instructional minutes for the student (Kindergarten, 200 minutes; Grades 1-3, 280 minutes; Grades 4-6, 300 minutes.)

The amount of work performed must correlate to these minimums for each day of absence. (Work performed over several days may be prorated; e.g., three days of work completed during a five-day agreement would be recorded as three days of completed independent study and two days of incomplete independent study.) The student and parent/guardian are responsible for verifying time requirements.

4. Following verification of assignment completion, the teacher will retain the completed assignment, a sample, or samples of completed student work. The agreement will be returned to the office.
5. School shall be allocated 50 percent of revenues generated through this program. Expenditures of these funds shall be determined at the school site with consultation of the school staff.

Regulation

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CHULA VISTA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT  
Chula Vista, California