

INDEPENDENT STUDY

Educational Opportunities

Educational opportunities offered through independent study may include, but are not limited to:
(Education Code 51745)

1. Individualized study in a particular area of interest or in a subject not currently available in the regular school curriculum
2. Individualized education designed to teach the knowledge and skills of the core curriculum, but not provided as an alternative curriculum
3. Continuing and special study during travel

(cf. 5112.3 - Student Leave of Absence)
(cf. 6181 - Alternative Schools/Programs of Choice)

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 their regular classes.

(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)

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

(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)

Equivalency

The district's independent study option shall be substantially equivalent in quality and quantity to classroom instruction to enable participating students to complete the district's adopted course of

study within the customary time frame. Students in independent study shall have access to the same services and resources that are available to other students in the school and shall have equal rights and privileges. (5 CCR 11700, 11701.5)

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(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)

The district shall not provide independent study students and their parents/guardians with funds or items of value that are not provided for other students and their parents/guardians. (Education Code 46300.6, 51747.3)

Eligibility for Independent Study

Provided that experienced certificated staff are available to effectively supervise students in independent study, the Superintendent or designee may approve the participation of a student who demonstrates the motivation, commitment, organizational skills, and academic skills necessary to work independently. The superintendent will ensure adequate staffing is available to effectively supervise students in independent study. 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 or designee may consider the parent/guardian's level of commitment to assist the student.

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)

(cf. 5111.1 - District Residency)

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

(cf. 6159 - Individualized Education Program)

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

(cf. 6183 - Home and Hospital Instruction)

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

(cf. 6200 - Adult Education)

No more than 10 percent of the students enrolled in a continuation high school, 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)

(cf. 5146 - Married/Pregnant/Parenting Students)

(cf. 6184 - Continuation Education)

Master Agreement

A 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) For the 2021-2022 School Year only, the minimum period of time for an independent study option shall be three or more consecutive school days. (Education Code 51747)

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 place for submitting the student's assignments and for reporting their progress
2. The objectives and methods of study for the student's work and the methods used to evaluate that work
3. The specific resources, including materials and personnel, that 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

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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 the number of course credits or, for an elementary student, other measures of academic accomplishment appropriate to the agreement, to be earned 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. 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

(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)

9. 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.

Monitoring Student Progress

The independent study administrator and/or supervising teacher shall promptly and directly address any failure by the student to meet the terms of their written agreement which may include missing weekly assignments, missed appointments with their teacher and not making satisfactory educational progress as determined by:

1. The student's achievement and engagement in the independent study program, as indicated by the student's performance on applicable student-level measures of the student achievement and engagement specified in Education Code 52060
2. The completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that evidence that the student is working on assignments
3. Learning required concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher
4. Progress towards successful completion of the course of study or individual course as determined by the supervising teacher.

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The following supportive tiered re-engagement strategies may be used:

1. A written correspondence to the student and/or parent/guardian
2. A meeting between the student and the teacher to develop a plan for the student to address the lack of satisfactory progress
3. A meeting between the student, teacher and parent/guardian to develop a plan for the parent to monitor the student more closely
4. A meeting between the student and the independent study administrator, including the parent/guardian if appropriate
5. An increase in the amount of time the student works under direct supervision

When the student has missed 3 weekly assignments specified in the written agreement as requiring an evaluation and has not improved after implementation of re-engagement strategies, the Superintendent or 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.

Responsibilities of Independent Study Administrator

The responsibilities of the independent study administrator include, but are not limited to:

1. Recommending certificated staff to be assigned as independent study teachers and supervising staff assigned to independent study functions who are not regularly supervised by another administrator
2. Coordinating an independent study orientation for families interested in independent **study**
3. Approving or denying the participation of students requesting independent study
4. Facilitating the completion of written independent study agreements

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5. Ensuring a smooth transition for students into and out of the independent study mode of instruction, prioritized based on student's needs. For students participating in an independent study program for 15 school days or more during the 2021-2022 school year, expeditiously transition students whose families request to return to in-person instruction within five instructional days from the request (Education Code 51747)
6. Approving all credits earned through independent study
7. Completing or coordinating the preparation of all records and reports required by law, Board policy, or administrative regulation

Assignment and Responsibilities of Independent Study Teachers

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)

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 responsibilities of the supervising teacher shall include, but are not limited to:

1. Completing designated portions of the written independent study agreement
2. Supervising and approving coursework and assignments
3. Maintaining records of student assignments showing the date the assignment is given and the date the assignment is due
4. Maintaining a daily or hourly attendance register in accordance with item #4 in the section on "Records" below
5. Providing direct instruction and counsel as necessary for individual student success
6. Regularly meeting with the student to discuss the student's progress
7. Determining the time value of assigned work or work products completed and submitted by the student

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8. Assessing student work and assigning grades or other approved measures of achievement
9. Providing opportunities for synchronous instruction and live interaction to students who participate in independent study for 15 school days or more in the 2021-2022 school year only (Education Code 51747):
 - For students in grades transitional kindergarten, kindergarten and grades 1-3, opportunities for daily synchronous instruction
 - For students in grades 4-8, opportunities for both daily live interaction and at least weekly synchronous instruction
 - For students in grades 9-12, opportunities for at least weekly synchronous instruction

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

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

Records

The Superintendent or 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 and adult education
3. A file of all agreements, with representative samples of each student's work products bearing the supervising teacher's notations indicating that they have personally evaluated the work or that they have personally reviewed the evaluations made by another certificated teacher
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 teacher, and reviewed by the supervising teacher if they are two different persons

(cf. 3580 - District Records)

The Superintendent or 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)

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Regulation

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Regulation

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CULVER CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Culver City, California