

INDEPENDENT STUDY

The Governing Board authorizes independent study as an optional alternative instructional strategy for eligible students whose needs may be best met through study outside of the regular classroom setting. Independent study shall offer a means of individualizing the educational plan to serve students who desire a more challenging educational experience, whose health or other personal circumstances make classroom attendance difficult, who are unable to access course(s) due to scheduling problems, and/or who need to make up credits or fill gaps in their learning. As necessary to meet student needs, independent study may be offered on a full-time basis or on a part-time basis in conjunction with part- or full-time classroom study.

(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)
(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)
(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)
(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)
(cf. 6146.11 - Alternative Credits Toward Graduation)
(cf. 6172 - Gifted and Talented Student Program)
(cf. 6200 - Adult Education)

The Superintendent or designee may provide a variety of independent study opportunities, including, but not limited to, through a program or class within a comprehensive school, an alternative school or program of choice, a home-based format, and an online course.

(cf. 6181 - Alternative Schools/Programs of Choice)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that students participating in independent study are provided with content aligned to grade level standards at a level of quality and rigor substantially equivalent to classroom instruction. For high school, this shall include access to all courses required by the District for graduation and approved by the University of California or California State University as creditable under A-G admissions criteria. (Education Code 51747)

For the 2021-2022 School Year, the Superintendent or designee shall ensure that students participating in independent study for 15 school days or more receive the following throughout the year: (Education Code 51747)

1. For students in grades transitional kindergarten, kindergarten and grades 1-3, opportunities for daily synchronous instruction
2. For students in grades 4-8, opportunities for both daily live interaction and at least weekly synchronous instruction
3. For students in grades 9-12, opportunities for at least weekly synchronous instruction

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A student's participation in independent study shall be voluntary. Students participating in independent study shall have the right, at any time, to enter or return to the regular classroom mode of instruction. (Education Code 51747; 5 CCR 11700)

The Superintendent or designee shall design a plan to transition students whose families request to return to in-person instruction from independent study expeditiously, no later than five instructional days. This requirement only applies to students participating in an independent study program for 15 school days or more during the 2021-2022 school year. (Education Code 51747)

Parents/guardians of students who are interested in independent study shall contact the Superintendent or designee. Before making a decision about independent study, the district shall conduct an orientation meeting during which the student, parent/guardian or their advocate may ask questions about the educational options, including which curriculum offerings and nonacademic supports will be available to the student in independent study. (Education Code 51747) The Superintendent or designee shall approve independent study for an individual student only upon determining that the student is prepared to meet the district's requirements for independent study and is likely to succeed in independent study as well as or better than they would in the regular classroom setting.

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

Written Agreements

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that a written master agreement exist for each participating student as prescribed by law. (Education Code 51747, 51749.5)

The master agreement shall specify the length of time in which each independent study assignment must be completed. Because excessive leniency in the duration of independent study assignments may result in a student falling behind their peers and increase the risk of dropping out of school, independent study assignments shall be no more than one week for all grade levels and types of program. However, when necessary based on the specific circumstances of the student's approved program, the Superintendent or designee may allow for a longer period of time between the date an assignment is made and when it is due, up to the termination date of the agreement.

An evaluation shall be conducted to determine whether it is in a student's best interest to remain in independent study whenever the student fails to make satisfactory educational progress, and/or misses appointments with the supervising teacher without valid reasons, and/or misses three weekly assignments, unless the student's written agreement specifies a lower or higher number of

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missed assignments based on the nature of the assignments, the total number of assignments, and/or other unique circumstances. Prior to the evaluation, the supervising teacher shall implement tiered re-engagement strategies.

Home-Based Independent Study

The Superintendent or designee shall encourage parents/guardians desiring to teach their children at home to have their children participate in independent study. Such participation allows continued contact and cooperation between the school system and the home-based student and ensures that the student will be offered a standards-based education substantially equivalent in quality and quantity to the district's classroom instruction.

Program Evaluation

The Superintendent or designee shall annually report to the Board the number of district students participating in independent study, the average daily attendance generated for apportionment purposes, student performance as measured by standard indicators and in comparison to students in classroom-based instruction, and the number and proportion of independent study students who graduate or successfully complete independent study. Based on the program evaluation, the Board and Superintendent shall determine areas for program improvement as needed.

(cf. 0500 - Accountability)
(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)
(cf. 6162.5 - Student Assessment)
(cf. 6162.51 - State Academic Achievement Tests)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

17289 Exemption for facilities
41976.2 Independent study programs; adult education funding
42238 Revenue limits
42238.05 Local control funding formula; average daily attendance
44865 Qualifications for home teachers and teachers in special classes and schools
46200-46208 Instructional day and year
46300-46307.1 Methods of Computing
average daily attendance
47612.5 Independent study in charter schools
48204 Residency
48206.3 Home or hospital instruction; students with temporary disabilities
48220 Classes of children exempted

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48340 Improvement of pupil attendance
48915 Expulsion; particular circumstances
48916.1 Educational program requirements for expelled students
48917 Suspension of expulsion order
49011 Student fees
51225.3 Requirements for High School graduation
51745 - 51749.6 Independent study programs
52522 Adult education alternative instructional delivery
52523 Adult education as supplement to high school curriculum; criteria
56026 Individual with exceptional needs
58500-58512 Alternative schools and programs of choice
FAMILY CODE
6550 Authorization affidavits

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

11703 Independent study
19819 State audit compliance

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

6301 Highly qualified teachers

COURT DECISIONS

Modesto City Schools v. Education Audits Appeal Panel, (2004) 123 Cal.App.4th 1365

EDUCATION AUDIT APPEALS PANEL DECISIONS

Lucerne Valley Unified School District, Case No. 03-02 (2005)

Management Resources:

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

Elements of Exemplary Independent Study

WEB SITES

California Consortium for Independent Study: <http://www.ccis.org>

California Department of Education, Independent Study: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/eo/is>

Education Audit Appeals Panel: <http://www.eaap.ca.gov>

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CULVER CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Culver City, California

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