



Educational Board Approved Policies

A8: Independent Study

Rationale

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 and enabling students to reach curriculum objectives and fulfill graduation requirements through a differentiated experience. Curriculum provided during independent study shall be substantially equivalent to in-person instruction.

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. Due to an emergency circumstance or illness, independent study may also be used on a short-term basis to ensure that the student is able to maintain academic progress in their regular classes.

(cf. [0420.4](#)- Charter Schools)

(cf. [6011](#)- Academic Standards)

(cf. [6143](#)- Courses of Study)

(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)

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

(cf. 6200 - Adult Education)

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](#))

Parents/guardians of students who are interested in independent study shall contact the Superintendent or designee. The Superintendent or designee shall approve independent study for an individual student only upon determining that



the student is prepared to meet the LEA's requirements for independent study and is likely to succeed in independent study in a manner comparable to or better than they would in the regular classroom.

The minimum period of time for any independent study option shall be five consecutive school days. The requirements for daily/weekly synchronous instruction and live interaction as set forth in Education Code section 51747(d) – (f), shall not apply to pupils participating in an independent study program for fewer than 15 school days in a given school year.

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

Instruction

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))

Satisfactory educational progress shall be determined by the student's supervising instructor based on criteria which includes but is not limited to: performance and engagement under Education Code 52060, work completion, learned concepts, and progress toward completion of a course of study or individual course. (Education Code 51747(b)(2)(A)-(D).)

For students in transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1 to 3, inclusive, the written agreement shall designate opportunities for daily synchronous instruction throughout the school year.

For students in grades 4 to 8, inclusive, the written agreement shall designate a plan to provide opportunities for both daily live interaction and at least weekly synchronous instruction throughout the school year.

For students in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, the written agreement shall designate a plan to provide opportunities for at least weekly synchronous instruction throughout the school year.

The LEA shall conduct an investigation to determine whether it is in a student's best interest to remain in independent study whenever the student is determined



to be failing to make satisfactory educational progress, as determined by their achievement and engagement in the independent study program, completion of assignments, assessments or other indicators of student participation/work, acquisition of concept knowledge, and progress towards successful completion of required course(s) of study, and/or misses three assignments, unless the student's written agreement specifies a lower or higher number of missed assignments based on the nature of the assignments, the total number of assignments and/or other unique circumstances suggest otherwise. Such evaluation is intended as one component of the tiered re-engagement strategies applicable to all students who are not generating attendance for more than three school days or 60 percent of the instructional days in a school week, or who are in violation of the students' written agreement. (Education Code 515747 (g).)

Rights and Access

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) The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that procedures for student enrollment, disenrollment, and re-enrollment in the LEA's independent study program are developed and communicated to parents/guardians, which shall include the right of any student participating in independent study to return to the regular in-person instructional program within five school days.

For a student with disabilities, as defined in Education Code 56026, participation in independent study shall be approved only if the student's 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)

Written Agreement

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that a written independent study agreement, as prescribed by law, exists for each participating student, and is maintained in the student's education file. (Education Code [51747](#))



The Superintendent or designee shall annually report to the Board of Trustees the number of students participating in independent study, the average daily attendance generated for apportionment purposes, the quality of these students' work as measured by standard indicators, 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.

BOARD APPROVED POLICY

Approved and Adopted: 08/10/2021

Revised: [date]