

Independent Study Program

Program Handbook for 2019-2020

Orcutt Academy Independent Study

3491 Point Sal Road
Casmalia, CA 93429
(805) 937-6515

Joe Dana, Director of Charter Programs
Dana Alford, Office Manager

Orcutt Academy Independent Study

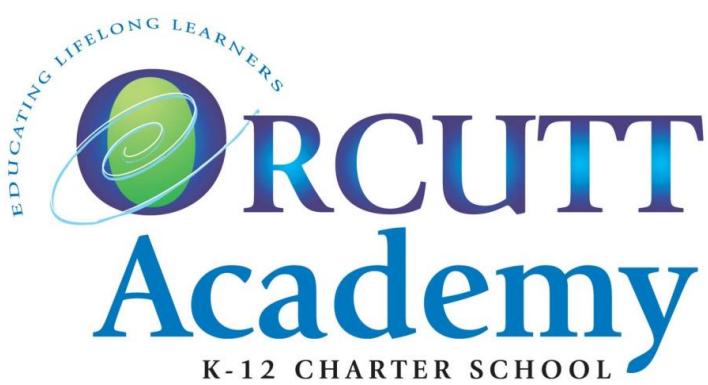
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Office: (805) 937-6515

Staff Directory:

- **Mrs. Dana Alford**, office manager (dalford@orcutt-schools.net), 937-6515
- **Mrs. Tiffany Barr**, blended program, grades K, 1, and 2, and home study (tbarr@orcutt-schools.net)
- **Mr. Joe Dana**, director (district office, 938-8934, jdana@orcutt-schools.net)
- **Mrs. Cary Mason**, blended program, grades 6, 7, and 8 (cmason@orcutt-schools.net)
- **Mrs. Diana Sherer**, blended program, grades 3, 4, and 5 (dsherer@orcutt-schools.net)

2018-2019 Schedule and Calendar

- The schedule for blended classes will be as follows:
 - All grades: Tu-W-Th, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
- Blended classes will begin the week of Monday, August 26
- Home study appointments will be mutually agreed on by the teacher and family
- Office schedule: 7:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Monday through Friday
- Please refer to Orcutt Union School District TK-8 School Calendar for specific dates for minimum days and holidays.



Independent Study Program Rights and Responsibilities

Welcome to Orcutt Academy Independent Study!

The purpose of this program is to provide activities that are consistent with the district's course of study. The OA Independent Study Program is NOT homework. Parents, please understand that **when your child is enrolled in independent study, he/she is making a commitment to complete a full day's schoolwork for each day that he/she is enrolled in the program and you are making the commitment to supervise this.** Please review the following:

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

I understand that:

- Independent study is a form of education that I have voluntarily chosen. I will always have a classroom seat available, although it may not be in the same classroom or at the same school.
- I am entitled to textbooks and supplies, supervision by a certificated teacher, and all the services and resources received by other children enrolled in my grade.
- I must follow the discipline code and behavior guidelines of the school, in accordance with district policy.

I agree to:

- Meet with my teacher as specified in the agreement.
- Complete my assigned work by its due date, as explained by my teacher and described in my written assignments. Failure to do so will result in an evaluation to determine if I should remain in independent study or be immediately returned to a classroom seat.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

I understand that independent study is an optional educational alternative for my child that I have voluntarily selected. I agree to the conditions listed under "Student." I also understand that:

- Learning objectives are consistent with and evaluated in the same manner that they would be if my child were enrolled in a traditional school program.
- If my child has an individualized educational program (IEP), the IEP must specifically provide for his/her enrollment in independent study.
- Unless otherwise indicated, the supervising teacher who signs this agreement will meet with my child on a regular basis as specified on Page 1 of this agreement. The purpose is to direct the child's study and measure progress toward the objectives in this agreement. It is my responsibility to promptly reschedule any appointment missed because of any emergency.
- I am responsible for supervising my child while he/she is completing the assigned work and for ensuring the submission of all completed assignments necessary for evaluation by dates due.
- I am liable for the cost of replacement for damaged books and/or other property checked out to my child.
- It is my responsibility to provide any needed transportation for my child as covered by this agreement.
- I need to provide proof that I reside in Santa Barbara County or an adjacent county.

SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Orcutt Academy will provide the teacher services, instructional materials, and other necessary items and resources as specified for each assignment.
- Unless otherwise indicated, one of the teachers who sign the agreement will meet with the student as specified in the agreement to direct the child's study, and will evaluate the assigned work.

I understand and commit to meeting my responsibilities as described here.

Student:	Date:
Parent/Guardian/Caregiver:	Date:
Supervising Teacher:	Date:

Parent Meetings

For both home study and the blended program, attendance at parent meetings will take place every other week. **Parent attendance is REQUIRED.** If you cannot make the meeting, you must send someone in your place or make arrangements in advance.

In our blended program, teachers will meet with parents as a group (in grades 4 and up, students also will be included in the meeting). Meetings are scheduled for approximately 30-45 minutes. It is important that your focus be on the information discussed. Please be prepared ahead of time to turn in your child's lessons and assignments. This procedure will be explained at the first parent meeting.

All parents should maintain an accordion folder or binder in which to file their child's work. You will ultimately be responsible for turning in assignments, and sometimes it is easier to keep all work in the accordion folder or binder so it does not get lost.

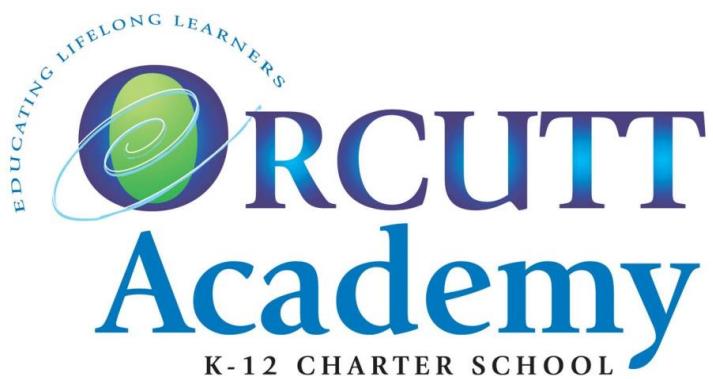
Parent meetings are not only for returning work but more importantly for you and the teacher to discuss issues, assignment ideas, enrichment activities, field trips, etc. Parent meetings in the blended program also can be a place where parents network with each other to facilitate group activities, field trips, play dates, etc.

Advice for Parents

In independent study programs like ours, parents play a crucial role. Whether your child is with us for our blended program or for home study only, you are functioning as your child's teacher. Accordingly, here are some tips for parents on how to do the best possible job of educating their children:

- 1. Be an active listener and participant at teacher meetings.** Pay close attention to the assignments given by teachers as well as any input on the assignments they may have. If something needs clarifying, don't hesitate to ask.
- 2. Establish a regular schedule for assignments.** Students do best when they have a set routine for doing schoolwork. It doesn't matter whether they have more of a "morning" schedule for completing work or more of an "afternoon" schedule – what matters is that they have a structured, predictable routine.
- 3. Give feedback on the work your child does at home.** Carefully review your child's work so you can communicate what he/she is doing well and what he/she can improve on. It also helps to give feedback as your child is working. On independent work, for example, you can start assignments by having your child do a couple of equations or questions, then see you for feedback; doing a few more, then see you again for more feedback; and then do the rest on his/her own.
- 4. Be patient.** For many children, a new skill or concept doesn't "stick" until the child has practiced it multiple times. Children learn at different rates in different content areas; every child has his/her own learning profile.
- 5. Be resourceful.** Some children need to see the material presented in different ways. Other children need to practice the material in different ways. In this case, numerous websites and online videos can help. Some suggestions include our district's [web links page for students](#), our district's [web links page for teachers](#), and the [Khan Academy library](#) of free video clips for teaching and learning.
- 6. Be pro-active.** If your child is having difficulty, or if your child would benefit from enrichment and/or a faster pace of learning, please let your child's teacher know. One of the benefits of our program is the constant contact our parents have with teachers. Our teachers are here for you!

By and large, our parents do a terrific job of teaching their children and supporting their children's learning. At the same time, it helps to see some tips from time to time. Here's wishing all OA Independent Study parents the best as go about the vital work of being teachers for their children!



Independent Study Program

GENERAL CAMPUS RULES

The rules of the Orcutt Academy Independent Study Program are based on the life skill of **RESPECT**. Simply stated, students who go to school on the Casmalia campus are expected to show respect, courtesy, and concern to adults, fellow students, and their school. Rules must be followed for the safety and welfare of all students.

The following general rules should be followed at all times:

1. Students are to show respect to adults, including the property of adults.
2. Students are to show respect to fellow students, including the property of fellow students.
3. Students are to show respect to their school, including all school property. School property includes buildings, classrooms, restrooms, classroom furniture, textbooks, library books, school supplies, plants, and playground equipment.
4. Once on the school grounds, students may not leave campus without authorization from the office.
5. Once in the classroom, students may not leave the classroom without authorization from the teacher.
6. The following are **not** permissible:
 - Profanity and bad language
 - Verbal or physical harassment
 - Pushing or shoving
 - Fighting
 - Pre-fight behavior (e.g., threats and taunts)
 - Play-fighting or wrestling
 - Spitting or biting
 - Throwing rocks, dirt, or other objects
 - Weapons or other dangerous objects
 - Stealing
 - Yelling outside a classroom while class is in session
 - Climbing on trees, fences, roofs, etc.
 - Playing in or near restrooms
 - Littering
 - Gum
 - Electronic toys and devices
 - Cellphone use of any kind, during school hours

Student Dress

The general standard of appearance for students is that they be clean, neat and properly dressed. It is recommended that students wear athletic shoes to school. No baggy or gang-affiliated attire is allowed. Hats and hoods may be worn outside only, as protection from the sun. Hoods are not to be worn in classrooms. Shorts and skirts should be fingertip length or longer.

Student Responsibility

Students are responsible for their behavior to and from school if/when riding the school bus, at school and while attending school events.

Playground Rules

Students are expected to adhere to the general rules above while playing on the playground. Following are guidelines for play as well as guidelines for some specific areas and games:

- While playing, students need to be where they can be seen and supervised. Students must stay within the fenced area that includes play structures, sandboxes, blacktop, and field. Students may not play in areas outside of the large playground area. The areas behind Mrs. Degner's classroom and the ball wall are off limits.
- Students may not eat or drink while playing; snacks or meals must be consumed prior to going out on the playground.
- When the whistle is blown, students need to stop playing and begin walking to where their class lines up.
- No chasing or tag unless the game is organized and supervised by an adult.
- On the play structure:
 - No jumping off the play structure
 - No running on the structure
 - Students must remain seated when going down the slide
 - No climbing up the slide
- On the swings:
 - Students must remain seated while on the swings
 - Students should swing forward; no spinning or swinging to the side
 - Students swing under their own power; no pushing
 - No jumping off swings
 - No flipping on swings
 - If there is a wait, students can remain on the swing for a count of 100 (forward swings) before letting the next person go on
- In games:
 - No throwing at the head
 - No chasing or tag
 - No unsafe balls or sports equipment (i.e., baseballs or hard rubber balls)

- No tackle football
- Basketball games are limited to six-on-six for full court or four-on-four for half-court; if there are more players than the limit, players can rotate in

Lunchtime Rules

All students are expected to have lunch when they come to the blended program. Other lunchtime rules are as follows:

- For health and hygienic reasons, no trading or giving away food.
- All trash needs to be picked up before students go out to recess.
- Students need to follow the directions of teachers on duty.

School Bus Rules

Students who ride the school bus to and from the program are expected to follow all rules and procedures established by the school bus driver. These typically entail staying seated; keeping hands, feet, and objects to self; and refraining from doing anything (yelling, shouting, etc.) to distract the driver. The school bus driver and district Transportation Department have the ability to issue bus tickets to students as part of a system of progressive discipline that begins with a warning and ultimately can include suspension or loss of riding privileges.

Snacks

Students who bring snacks to school are strongly encouraged to bring nutritious snacks.

Responsibility for School Property

Except when caused by accident, students are to be held liable for damage to or loss of school property. Parents are liable for willful damage and for property loaned to pupils as set forth in California Education Code Section 10606.

Article 5, Section 44, Title 5 of the California Education Code provides for the governing board of each school district to prescribe and enforce rules for the care of textbooks, library books, and the collection of money in payment of “willful or negligent damage to or loss of state textbooks.”

Cell Phones/Electronic Devices

Students are discouraged from bringing cellphones to school and students are not permitted to use cell phones in any way on campus, during school hours. This applies to all cellphone functions, including photos, video, music, texting, email, social media and applications. Violations of the above policies will result in confiscation of the cell phone, with parents requested to pick up their child’s cell phone in the office. Students are not required and not

encouraged to bring personal electronic devices to school. If students do bring such devices to school, they are bringing them at their own risk. The school is not responsible for personal equipment.

Grounds for Suspension or Expulsion

Students may be suspended or expelled based on causes stipulated in the California Education Code. These include the following:

- Causing or attempting to cause physical injury to another person
- Possession of a firearm, knife, explosive or other dangerous object
- Possession of an imitation firearm
- Possession, use, or sale of alcohol, tobacco, or other controlled substance
- Causing or attempting to cause damage to school property or private property
- Theft of school property or private property
- Commission of an obscene act or habitual profanity or vulgarity
- Disruption of school activities or willful defiance of authority school staff
- Bullying, including bullying by an “electronic act” such as a phone call, text, email, social media post, or transmission of photographs
- Sexual harassment
- Threats or intimidation

Confidentiality

School disciplinary matters, including consequences administered, are kept confidential by school staff. They are not considered public information.

STUDENT SAFETY

Parents often ask about various issues concerning student safety. Here are some often-discussed topics:

Bullying and Threats

Mr. Dana and classroom teachers are firm and direct in handling bullying, threats, intimidation, and/or verbal harassment. They are very diligent about involving parents and applying appropriate consequences. They often remind students to let teachers or the supervising adult **know immediately** about any problems with threats or bullying.

Emergency Drills

Each month, the school conducts a fire drill. Earthquake drills are held four times a year. At least three times a year, the school practices shelter-in-place or lockdown procedures. Once a year, the district runs a school evacuation drill.

STUDENT SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Academic Support

If families have sufficient interest, teachers may offer some additional after-blended support in critical subject areas. In past years, our program has offered math support centers in which students can receive one-on-one assistance and/or extra practice from the blended teacher. If the extra support is offered, parents will be notified by the teacher.

Student Success Team

The Student Success Team is available to help students with any kind of issue or challenge: academic, behavioral, emotional, social, physical, or medical. Parents and/or teachers may refer a student to the team for discussion after interventions have already been utilized with no success or desired growth. Team members – who include Mr. Dana, the district psychologist, the Resource Specialist, the referring teacher, and other staff as needed – examine each student's situation, brainstorm ideas, and recommend next steps. Parents of referred students are invited to attend.

Psychological Services

Our district psychologist, Tamara Mau, is on-call all week to provide consultation and/or direct service as required. She attends Student Success Team meetings and is available to talk with parents about situations regarding their children.

Speech Therapy

A speech therapist is available to provide services to identified Speech students as determined by their IEPs. She works closely with teachers to screen students for speech issues. Parents and/or teachers also may request a speech assessment for students.

Resource Specialist

Students requiring special academic assistance may become eligible for our Resource program. Our Resource Specialist, Michelle Day, works with parents and teachers to assist students in overcoming learning problems.

PARENT/FAMILY INVOLVEMENT

Staff/Parent Group

All parents are invited to participate in the Staff/Parent Group, which meets monthly to plan enrichment activities, provide input on school programming and events, and organizing small fund-raisers for the school. Meetings will be publicized via the school email newsletter.

SOAAR

All families are invited and encouraged to contribute to the Supporting Orcutt Academy's Academic Resources (SOAAR) Foundation, which does fund development for academic programs at all three Orcutt Academy campuses. SOAAR is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) foundation. The foundation is composed entirely of volunteers and turns over 100 percent of its fund-raising proceeds to support the students and programs of OA. For more information on SOAAR, please contact Joe Dana at (805) 938-8934.

Field Trips

Students in OA Independent Study often take field trips. Some field trips are schoolwide; past destinations have included the MOXI Museum in Santa Barbara, the Santa Barbara Zoo, and the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Other field trips are classroom-based and are to destinations around the Central Coast. Parent transportation is needed for these field trips, as our program does not have access to district transportation.