

INDEPENDENT STUDY

The Board of Trustees authorizes independent study as an optional alternative instructional strategy for eligible 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. 6200 - Adult Education)

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

(cf. 0420.4 - Charter School Authorization)
(cf. 6181 - Alternative Schools/Programs of Choice)

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 district's requirements for independent study and is likely to succeed in independent study as well as or better than he/she would in the regular classroom setting.

The minimum period of time for any independent study option governed by Education Code shall be five consecutive school days (Charter Schools are not required to follow this timeline).

Written Agreements

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that a written master agreement and, as appropriate, a learning agreement for students participating in course-based independent study exist for each participating student as prescribed by law. (Education Code 51747, 51749.5)

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BP 6158(b)

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 his/her 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 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.

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.

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
46300-46300.6 Methods of computing ADA
47612.5 Independent study in charter schools
48204 Residency
48206.3 Home or hospital instruction; students with temporary disabilities
48220 Classes of children exempted
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
51745-51749.3 Independent study programs
56026 Individuals with exceptional needs

FAMILY CODE

6550 Authorization affidavits

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

11700-11703 Independent study

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BP 6158(c)

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:

CDE PUBLICATIONS

Elements of Exemplary Independent Study
Approaches to Satisfying No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 Teacher Requirements for Independent Study in Secondary Schools, January 28, 2010

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>

Policy Adopted: 09/09/2015

ORCUTT UNION SCHOOL DISTRICT
Orcutt, California