

InstructionIndependent Study Program

The Board of Education authorizes independent study as an optional alternative instructional strategy by which students in grades K-12 and adult education may reach curriculum objectives and fulfill graduation requirements. Independent study shall offer an educational plan for 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. 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 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, a home-based format, and an online course.

Independent study entails a commitment by both the parent/guardian and the student. As the student gets older, he/she assumes a greater portion of the responsibility involved. The Superintendent or designee shall determine that the prospective independent study 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. The minimum period of time for any independent study option shall be five consecutive days.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that a written independent study agreement, as prescribed by law, exists for each participating student. (Education Codes 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 his/her peers and increase the risk of dropping out of school, independent study assignments shall be no more than the following specified maximum length of time which may elapse before an independent study assignment is due.

1. Special assignment extending the content of regular courses of instruction:

Long-Term Independent Study:

Student in grades K-3: one week

Students in grades 4-8: two weeks

Students in grades 9-12: three weeks

2. Continuing and special study during travel:

Short-Term Independent Study:

Students in grades K-3: four weeks

Students in grades 4-8: six weeks

Students in grades 9-12: ten weeks

When any participating student in grades 9-12 fails to complete three consecutive independent study assignments in a period of 15 school days, or misses two appointments with his/her supervising teacher without valid reasons, an evaluation shall be conducted to determine whether it is in the student's best interest to remain in independent study.

A student with exceptional needs, as defined in Education Code section 56026, shall not participate in independent study unless his/her individualized education program specifically provides for that participation (Education Code section 51745).

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

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

52522 Adult Education alternative instructional delivery

52523 Adult Education as supplement to high school curriculum; criteria

56026 Individuals with exceptional needs

58500-58512 Alternative schools and programs of choice

FAMILY CODE

6550 Authorization affidavits

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

11700-11703 Independent study

19819 State audit compliance