INDEPENDENT STUDY

Eligibility

No student shall be required to participate in independent study. (Education Code 51747)

Full-time independent study shall not be available to students whose district residency status is based on their parent/guardian's employment within district boundaries pursuant to Education Code 48204. (Education Code 51747.3)

No individual with disabilities, as defined in Education Code 56026, may participate in independent study unless his/her Individualized Education Program specifically provides for such participation. (Education Code 51745)

No temporarily disabled student may receive individual instruction pursuant to Education Code 48206.3 by means of independent study. (Education Code 51745)

No more than 10% of the students enrolled in an opportunity school program may be in independent study at any given time. (Education Code 51745)

Criteria for Participation

The classroom teacher should be contacted if a student is interested in independent study program. Approval for participation shall be based on the following criteria:

1. Evidence that the student will work independently to complete the program

2. Availability of experienced certificated staff with adequate time to supervise the student effectively

Written Agreements and Assignments

The written independent study agreement for each participating student shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following: (Education Code 51747)

1. The manner, frequency, time and place for submitting the student's assignments and for reporting his/her progress.

2. The objectives and methods of study for the student's work, and the methods used to evaluate that work.

3. The specific resources, including materials and personnel, that will be made available to the student.

4. The district's independent study policy describing the maximum length of time allowed between an assignment and its completion and the number of missed assignments which will trigger an evaluation of whether the student should be allowed to continue in independent study.

5. The duration of the independent study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates for the student's participation in independent study under the agreement.

6. A description of the measures of academic accomplishment, appropriate to the agreement, to be earned by the student upon completion.

7. A statement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate. In the case of a student who is referred or assigned to any school, class or program pursuant to Education Code 48915 or 48917, the agreement shall also include the statement that instruction may be provided through independent study only if the student is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.

The curriculum and methods of study specified in the written agreement shall be consistent with the Board of Trustees' policies, administrative regulations and procedures for curriculum and instruction. (5 CCR 11702)

Before beginning the independent study, each written agreement shall be signed and dated by the student, the parent/guardian or caregiver of the student under 18 years of age, the certificated employee designated as responsible for the general supervision of independent study, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the student. (Education Code 51747)

The agreement shall state that the parent/guardian's signature confers his/her permission for the student's independent study as specified in the agreement.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Students participating in independent study shall have the right, continuously, to enter or return to the regular classroom mode of instruction.

Independent study students who are late, miss scheduled conferences or do not submit assigned work on time shall not be reported as tardy or truant. However, the independent study administrator shall promptly and directly address any failure by the student to meet the terms of his/her written agreement. The following supportive strategies may be used:

1. A letter to the student and/or parent/guardian, as appropriate

2. A special meeting between the student and the teacher and/or counselor

3. A meeting between the student and the administrator, including the parent/guardian if appropriate

4. An increase in the amount of time the student works under direct supervision

When the student has missed the number of assignments specified in Board policy as precipitating an evaluation, the Superintendent or designee shall conduct an evaluation which may result in termination of the independent study agreement, with the student's return to a regular classroom or alternative instructional program.

Administration of Independent Study

Each student's independent study shall be coordinated, evaluated and carried out under the general supervision of a certificated employee. (Education Code 51747.5)

The responsibilities of the independent study administrator shall be to:

1. Ensure that the district's independent study option is operated in accordance with law, Board policy and administrative regulation

2. Approve the participation of students requesting independent study for a period exceeding three school days

3. Facilitate the completion of independent study written agreements

4. Authorize the selection of staff who are assigned to supervise independent study

5. Establish and maintain in a systematic manner all records required by law, Board policy and administrative regulation

6. Monitor enrollment in independent study to stay within prescribed limits and to maximize income to the district without compromising the educational quality of independent study

7. Obtain and maintain current information and skills required for the operation of an independent study strategy that meets established standards for the district's educational programs

8. Prepare and submit reports as required by the Board or Superintendent

9. Assure a smooth transition into and out of the independent study mode of instruction

Supervising Teachers

The principal may recommend teachers or students for independent study. The teacher may be the student's regular classroom teacher.

Independent study teachers shall:

1. Complete designated portions of the written agreement and add additional information to the written agreement when appropriate

2. Supervise and approve coursework

3. Design all lesson plans

4. Write the assignments for students

5. Assess all student work

6. Personally judge the time value of assigned work or work products completed and submitted by the student

7. Select and save with each agreement representative samples of the student's completed and evaluated assignments on not less than a monthly basis, preferably biweekly

8. Sign and complete the agreement when the student has reached his/her objectives or the agreement is terminated

9. Maintain any required records and files on a current basis

When appropriate, independent study teachers shall determine and assign grades or other approved measures of achievement.

Records

District records shall identify all students participating in independent study and shall specify the grade level, program placement and school in which each of these students is enrolled. (Education Code 51748)

Each school shall maintain records for the students at that school.

Records shall be maintained for audit purposes and shall include the following: (5 CCR 11703)

1. A copy of the Board policy, administrative regulation, and procedures related to independent study

2. A separate listing of the students, by grade level, program and school, who have participated in independent study, identifying units of the curriculum attempted and units of the curriculum completed by students in grades K-8, as specified in their written agreements

3. A file of all agreements, with representative samples of each student's work products bearing signed or initialed and dated notations by the supervising teacher indicating that he/she has personally evaluated the work or that he/she has personally reviewed the evaluations made by another certificated teacher

4. A daily or hourly attendance register, as appropriate to the program in which the students are enrolled, separate from classroom attendance records, and maintained on a current basis as time values of student work products are personally judged by a certificated teacher.

First Reading: May 1, 2025
Second Reading:
Board Approved: