

Instruction

Independent Study

The district shall not provide independent study students and their parents/ guardians with funds or items of value that are not provided for other students and their parents/guardians. (Education Code 46300.6, 51747.3)

Eligibility

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

Students enrolling in independent study must be residents of the local county or an adjacent county. (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)

(cf. 6159 - Individualized Education Program)

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

(cf. 6183 - Home and Hospital Instruction)

Criteria for Participation

Parents who are interested in independent study for their students should contact their school principal. 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 should 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.

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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 statement of the number of course credits or, for the elementary grades, other 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.

(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)

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

(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)

The agreement also may include a schedule for achieving objectives and completing the agreement and a schedule of conferences between the student and supervising teacher.

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

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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 may 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.

(cf. 1312 - Complaints Concerning the Schools)
(cf. 1312.1 - Complaints Concerning District Employees)

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)

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Supervising Teachers

The Superintendent or designee shall approve the assignment of any teachers who directly supervise independent study on a regular basis. The principal may recommend teachers or students for independent study. The teacher may be the student's regular classroom teacher, particularly for elementary students.

Independent study teachers may:

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)

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Regulation Revised: January 10, 2005; September 26, 2005; February 27, 2006;