Board Policy
Independent Study

BP 6158
Instruction

The Board of Trustees authorizes independent study as an optional alternative instructional strategy for eligible 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 and enabling students to reach curriculum objectives and fulfill graduation requirements. 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. 0420.4 - Charter Schools)
(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)
(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)
(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)
(cf. 6181 - Alternative Schools/Programs of Choice)
(cf. 6200 - Adult Education)

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.

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that a written independent study agreement, as prescribed by law, exists for each participating student. (Education Code 51747) The written agreement shall specify the length of time in which each independent study assignment must be completed. 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. To foster each participating student's success in independent study, the Board establishes the following maximum lengths of time which may elapse between the date an assignment is made and the date by which the student must complete the assigned work:

Ten school days for students in grades K-3

Ten school days for students in grades 4-8

Fifteen school days for students in grades 9-12, continuation or adult education

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.

When a participating student misses three assignments, an evaluation shall be conducted to determine whether it is in the student's best interest to remain in independent study. However, a student's written agreement may specify a lower or higher number of missed assignments that will trigger an evaluation when the Superintendent or designee determines it appropriate based on the nature of the assignments, the total number of assignments, and/or other unique circumstances.

Supervising teachers should establish an appropriate schedule for student-teacher conferences in order to help identify students falling behind in their work or in danger of failing or dropping out of school. Except in unusual circumstances, it is expected that the supervising teacher will meet, either in person or by electronic means, with each participating student at least once a week to discuss the student's progress.

(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)

Missing appointments with the supervising teacher without valid reasons also may trigger an evaluation to determine whether the student should remain in independent study.

The Superintendent or designee shall annually report to the Board the number of students participating in independent study, the average daily attendance generated for apportionment purposes, the quality of these students' work as measured by standard indicators, and the number and proportion of independent study students who graduate or successfully complete independent study. Based on the program evaluation, the Board and Superintendent shall determine areas for program improvement as needed.

(cf. 0500 - Accountability)
(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)
(cf. 6162.5 - Student Assessment)

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 and ensures that the student will be offered a standards-based

education substantially equivalent in quality and quantity to the district's classroom instruction.

Legal Reference:
EDUCATION CODE
Exemption for facilities
Independent study programs; adult education funding
Revenue limits
Qualifications for home teachers and teachers in special classes and schools
-46307.1 Methods of computing average daily attendance
Independent study in charter schools
Residency based on parent employment
Home or hospital instruction; students with temporary disabilities
Classes of children exempted
Improvement of pupil attendance
Expulsion; particular circumstances
Educational program requirements for expelled students
Suspension of expulsion order
Requirements for high school graduation
-51749.3 Independent study programs
Adult education alternative instructional delivery
Adult education as supplement to high school curriculum; criteria
Individuals with exceptional needs
-58512 Alternative schools and programs of choice
FAMILY CODE
Authorization affidavits
CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5
-11703 Independent study
State audit compliance
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:
CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS
Independent Study Operations Manual, 2000 Edition
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 SAN LEANDRO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
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