

**Independent Study Program**

Educational opportunities offered through independent study may include, but shall not be limited to the following:

1. Special assignments extending the content of regular course instruction.
2. Individualized study in a particular area of interest or in a subject not currently available in the regular school curriculum.
3. Individualized alternative education designed to teach the knowledge and skills of the core curriculum.
4. Continuing and special study during travel.
5. Volunteer community service activities that support and strengthen student achievement.

Independent study may be offered in a school supervised by the principal or designee or at another district-designated location which meets the requirements of law.

No individual with exceptional needs, 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 more than 10% of the students enrolled in Continuation or Opportunity Education may be on independent study at any given time. (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)

*(cf. 6183 - Home/Hospital Instruction)*

All coursework offered to adults through independent study shall meet the requirements for a high school diploma. (Education Code 46300.4)

**Criteria for Participation**

Students who are interested in independent study should contact their school principal. Approval for participation shall be based on the following criteria:

1. An acceptable reason for requesting independent study.
2. Evidence that the student will work independently to complete the program.
3. Availability of experienced certificated staff with adequate time to supervise the student effectively.
4. A written statement indicating educational objectives, how the objectives will be accomplished, and how progress toward the objectives will be measured.
5. Approval of the SSTAR Committee for any continuously enrolled students 19 years or younger. The SSTAR Committee shall consist of the administrators of the student's school, Director of the Independent Study Program, Principal of Continuation High School, a representative of the Independent Study Staff and when appropriate, the student's parents and counselor.

**Written Agreements and Assignments**

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

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1. The manner, frequency, time and place for submitting the student's assignments and for reporting his/her progress.
2. The title and statement of the major objectives of the course of study to be undertaken.
3. The specific resources, including materials and staff, which will be made available to the student.
4. The method(s) by which the student's work will be evaluated.
5. A statement of the Board policies adopted pursuant to Education Code 51747 (a) and (b), 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.
6. The duration of the independent study agreement, not to exceed one semester, or one-half year for a school on a year-round calendar.
7. 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.
8. A statement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate.
9. A statement that the student agrees to be responsible for a minimum of 20 hours of regular work and agrees to meet with their teacher(s) at least one (1) hour each week to review work, answer questions, administer tests, make new assignments, etc.

Each written agreement shall be signed by the student, the parent/guardian 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 prior to the start of independent study by the student. (Education Code 51747)

The program's curriculum shall be consistent with the district's curriculum.

Evaluation shall be conducted as required by board policy to determine whether it is in a student's best interests to remain in independent study. Written evaluation findings shall be kept in the student's permanent record.

**Administration of Independent Study**

The Superintendent or designee shall:

1. Ensure that independent study is carried on in accordance with state law and district policy and regulation.
2. Approve the enrollment of all students and facilitate the completion of independent study contracts.
3. Approve all independent study credits and forward this information to appropriate school staff so that it becomes part of the student's permanent record.
4. Authorize independent study teachers and other staff involved with the program.
5. Complete or coordinate all necessary records and reports and submit enrollment and attendance information to the district's finance division.

**Independent Study Program**Independent Study Teachers

1. Independent study teachers shall be approved by the independent study administrator.
2. The principal of the school the student attends or last attended may recommend teachers and students for independent study. The teacher may be the student's regular classroom teacher. This is particularly appropriate at the elementary level.
3. The individual's independent study program must be under the primary and general supervision of a certificated staff member. Other activities may be supervised or supplemented by non-certificated personnel and community resources.
4. Independent study teachers shall complete designated portions of the contract, add additional information when appropriate, supervise and approve course work and sign the contract at program completion.
5. Independent study teachers shall determine and assign grades when appropriate.
6. Credit and grades will be issued by the teacher based on satisfactory completion of the contract including:
  - a. Having met with the supervising teacher as prescribed in the contract.
  - b. Having satisfactorily completed all required assignments.
  - c. Having passed all assigned tests.
7. A unit of high school credit will be issued for the completion of 15 hours of a competency based assignment.

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 include the following: (Code of Regulations, Title 5, 11703)

1. A copy of the district policy, administrative regulation, and procedures related to independent study.
2. A file of all agreements, with representative samples of each student's completed and evaluated assignments.
3. A list of participating students, showing credits attempted by and awarded to students per agreement.
4. An attendance register separate from other attendance records.
5. A record of grades and other evaluations issued to each student for independent study assignments.

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**Legal References:**

None