

**INDEPENDENT STUDY**

The Governing Board 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 minimum period of time for any independent study option shall be five (5) consecutive school days.

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. 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 one week for all grade levels and types of program. 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.

**INDEPENDENT STUDY** (continued)

When a participating student misses three (3) 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: (see next page)*

## INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)

### *Legal Reference:*

#### EDUCATION CODE

17289 *Exemption for facilities*  
41976.2 *Independent study programs; adult education funding*  
42238 *Revenue limits*  
44865 *Qualifications for home teachers and teachers in special classes and schools*  
46300-46307.1 *Methods of computing average daily attendance*  
47612.5 *Independent study in charter schools*  
48204 *Residency based on parent employment*  
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*  
51225.3 *Requirements for high school graduation*  
51745-51749.3 *Independent study programs*  
52206 *Gifted and talented education; use of independent study to augment program*  
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*

#### 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>