



Welcome to Walnutwood  
Independent Study Program  
Home of the Pathfinders

[www.fcusd.org/whs](http://www.fcusd.org/whs)

# Topics to Be Covered

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- Independent Study Student Expectations
- Attendance
- Instruction and Curriculum
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- High School Credits
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# The Walnutwood Student

A successful Walnutwood student takes advantage of their freedom by relying upon self-discipline skills and a passion for knowledge. Students at varying academic proficiencies thrive in our non-traditional environment where they learn to engage in academic dialogue and get direct teacher feedback on their assignments.

Many different kinds of students attend Walnutwood. Those who excel academically, or are taking college courses, students who have jobs, students with children, students with artistic pursuits, students with emotional or health-related issues, or students who for some other reason are seeking an alternative educational environment. Many have found that Walnutwood has been fine preparation for college and life.

\* Walnutwood is not an NCAA approved school site at this time.

# Independent Study Student Expectations

Independent study students are self-motivated, organized, and can create a schedule for an independent learning environment.

We highly encourage students spend 4-5 hours per-day to study, complete assignments, attend support labs/office hours, ask questions, and prepare for assessments.

High school students are expected to earn 1 credit per week per class. Students take 2- 3 classes at a time/6 classes in a school-year. Students can take additional classes if they wish.

Students receive one week worth of assignments per class to complete by the student's appointment the following week. Students should plan to attend student support if they fall behind in their assignments. Academic student support is available 5-days a week.

# Attendance

Attendance is calculated by assignment completion in our independent study program.

Students must complete weekly assignments to receive 5-days of attendance. Incomplete assignments result in days for which the student is marked absent.

When a student is absent they will be required to attend student support to make-up their absence.

In compliance with Assembly Bill 130, independent study students who are absent 50% of instructional days in a school week are in violation of the independent study agreement and will receive attendance notices.

If the level of unsatisfactory attendance continues it will trigger an evaluation of whether or not the student should be allowed to continue in independent study or return to their resident school.

# Instruction and Curriculum

- Students have the option to meet with their teacher in-person or virtually for 45-minutes once a week.
- Curriculum is delivered on an online district approved education platform called APEX. Students have one teacher for all subject areas.
- Courses are divided into weeks as opposed to semesters. For example, English 1 A is 8-weeks and English 1 B is 8-weeks. There are 16-weeks in a semester. Competency of academic standards and weekly progress is different for every student so some students may need more or less time to complete a subject.
- Academic tutoring and support is offered M-F 8:45am-3:45pm. The student support calendar can be found [here](#). Our teachers also have designated office hours for drop-in support.

# Instruction and Curriculum

In addition to APEX, teachers provide their students with additional academic resources and tools for progress and success including office hours.

Students who wish to take a course that Walnutwood does not offer can elect to concurrently enroll in that course at their resident school if there is space. A “concurrent enrollment” form must be completed to request the class.

Students must complete 30 semester credits or 60 credits per year before transferring back to their resident school. Credits may vary by student. Check with School Counselor to be certain.

Summer School is an option when a student is credit deficient.

# Parent/Guardian Involvement

- Parent/guardian can request to be an APEX "coach". Coaches receive a weekly progress report via email. This report shows a summary for the courses a student is actively enrolled in. This includes course averages, activity scores, on-time information, and time spent in the course. [Here](#) is an APEX coach video tutorial.
- Progress reports are mailed every grading period/4 times a year.
- We encourage collaboration. Feel free to reach out to us if you have questions/ concerns or want to schedule a conference.
- A parent/guardian is required to attend the first meeting with their student's Walnutwood teacher.



# High School Credits

- At the end of 9th grade students should have 55 credits.
- At the end of 10th grade students should have 110 credits.
- At the end of 11th grade students should have 165 credits.
- At the end of 12th students should have 220 credits.

*Students who are credit deficient at the end of May should enroll in Summer School .*

# Orientation

The School Counselor will focus on the following:

- Review credits and schedule coursework in collaboration with the student. Walnutwood course planner can be found [here](#).
- Schedule teacher appointment day/time.
- For additional resources, please check-out our [School Counseling webpage](#)
- Ask about our new Culinary Class for CTE or elective credit! Students attend Wed/Fri 2:05pm-3:15pm at Kinney High School industrial kitchen.

# Walnutwood Contacts

- Kim Walker, Principal [kwalker@fcusd.org](mailto:kwalker@fcusd.org)
- Ann Botsford, Assistant Principal [abotsford@fcusd.org](mailto:abotsford@fcusd.org)
- Sara Cavero, School Counselor [scavero@fcusd.org](mailto:scavero@fcusd.org)
- Jerry Dunlap, Registrar [jdunlap@fcusd.org](mailto:jdunlap@fcusd.org)
- Joan Trotta, School Psychologist
- Jeff Steer, Mental Health Counselor [jsteer@fcusd.org](mailto:jsteer@fcusd.org)
- Diane Aquino, Medical Independent Studies and School Nurse  
[daquno@fcusd.org](mailto:daquno@fcusd.org)
- Vanessa Leslie, Adolescent Parent Program Teacher (pregnant and parenting students) [vleslie@fcusd.org](mailto:vleslie@fcusd.org)
- Teacher contacts can be found [here](#)