

Regulation 6158: Independent Study

Status: ADOPTED

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Definitions

Live interaction means interaction between the student and classified or certificated staff, and may include peers, provided for the purpose of maintaining school connectedness, including, but not limited to, wellness checks, progress monitoring, provision of services, and instruction. This interaction may take place in person, or in the form of Internet or telephonic communication. (Education Code 51745.5)

Student-parent-educator conference means a meeting involving, at a minimum, all parties who signed the student's written independent study agreement pursuant to Education Code 51747 or the written learning agreement pursuant to Education Code 51749.6. (Education Code 51745.5)

Synchronous instruction means classroom-style instruction or designated small group or one-on-one instruction delivered in person, or in the form of Internet or telephonic communications, and involving live two-way communication between the teacher and student. Synchronous instruction shall be provided by the teacher of record for that student pursuant to Education Code 51747.5. (Education Code 51745.5)

Educational Opportunities

For the 2021-22 school year, the district shall offer independent study to meet the educational needs of students as specified in Education Code 51745 unless the district has obtained a waiver. (Education Code 51745)

Educational opportunities offered through independent study may include, but are not limited to: (Education Code 51745)

1. Special assignments extending the content of regular courses of instruction ~~(cf. 6143—Courses of Study)~~
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, but not provided as an alternative curriculum
4. Continuing and special study during travel ~~(cf. 5112.3—Student Leave of Absence)~~
5. Volunteer community service activities and leadership opportunities that support and strengthen student achievement ~~(cf. 0420.4—Charter Schools)~~
~~(cf. 6142.4—Service Learning/Community Service Classes)~~
~~(cf. 6181—Alternative Schools/Programs of Choice)~~

6. Individualized study for a student whose health, as determined by the student's parent/guardian, would be put at risk by in-person instruction

In addition, when requested by a parent/guardian due to an emergency, ~~vacation~~, or illness, independent study may be used on a short-term basis to ensure that the student is able to maintain academic progress in his/her/the student's regular classes.

~~(cf. 5113—Absences and Excuses)~~

No course required for high school graduation shall be offered exclusively through independent study. (Education Code 51745)

~~(cf. 6146.1 – High School Graduation Requirements)~~ **Equivalency**

The district's independent study option shall be substantially equivalent in quality and quantity to classroom instruction to enable participating students to complete the district's adopted course of study within the customary ~~time frame~~timeframe. Students in independent study shall have access to the same services and resources that are available to other students in the school and shall have equal rights and privileges. (5 CCR 11700, 11701.5)

~~(cf. 0410 – Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)~~ Students participating in independent study shall have access to Internet connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work. (Education Code 51747)

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)~~ Providing access to Internet connectivity and local educational agency-owned devices adequate to participate in an independent study program and complete assigned work consistent with Education Code 51747, or to participate in an independent study course, as authorized by Education Code 51749.5, shall not be considered funds or other things of value. (Education Code 46300.6, 51747.3)

Eligibility for Independent Study

~~Provided that experienced certificated staff~~

Students are available to effectively supervise students in ~~eligible for~~ independent study as authorized in law, and as specified in board policy and administrative regulation.

For the 2022-23 school year and thereafter, the Superintendent or designee may approve the participation of a student who demonstrates the motivation, commitment, organizational skills, and academic skills necessary to work independently. ~~provided that experienced certificated staff are available to effectively supervise students in independent study. The Superintendent or designee may also approve the participation of a student whose health would be put at risk by in-person instruction.~~ A student whose academic performance is not at grade level may participate in independent study only if the ~~school program~~ is able to provide appropriate support, such as supplemental instruction, tutoring, counseling, ongoing diagnostic assessments, and/or differentiated materials, to enable the student to be successful. For an elementary student, the Superintendent or designee may consider the parent/guardian's level of commitment to assist the student.

A student participating in independent study must be a resident of the county or an adjacent county. Full-time independent study shall not be available to students whose district residency status is based on their parent/guardian's employment within district boundaries pursuant to Education Code 48204. (Education Code 46300.2, 51747.3)

~~(cf. 5111.12 – Residency Based on Parent/Guardian Employment)~~

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~~For a~~ student with disabilities, as defined in Education Code 56026, ~~participation shall not participate~~ in independent study ~~shall be approved only if his/her~~ unless the student's individualized education program specifically provides for such participation. (Education Code 51745)

~~(cf. 6159 – Individualized Education Program)~~

A temporarily disabled student shall not receive individual instruction pursuant to Education Code 48206.3 by means of independent study. (Education Code 51745)

~~(cf. 6183 – Home and Hospital Instruction)~~

Students age 21 or older, and students age 19 or older who have not been continuously enrolled in school since their 18th birthday, may participate in independent study only through the adult education program for the purpose of enrolling in courses required for a high school diploma by Education Code 51225.3 or the Governing Board. (Education Code 46300.1, 46300.4)

~~(cf. 6200 – Adult Education)~~

No more than 10 percent of the students enrolled in a continuation high school or opportunity school or program, not including pregnant students and parenting students who are primary caregivers for one or more of their children, shall be eligible for apportionment credit for enrolled in independent study. (Education Code 51745)

~~(cf. 5146—Married/Pregnant/Parenting-
Students) (cf. 6184—Continuation Education)~~

~~Written Agreements~~

~~A written agreement shall be developed and implemented for each student participating in independent study for five or more consecutive school days. (Education Code 46300, 51747)~~

~~The agreement shall include general student data, including the student's name, address, grade level, birth date, school of enrollment, and program placement.~~

~~The independent study agreement for each participating student also shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following: (Education Code 51747; 5 CCR 11700)~~

- ~~1. The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting the student's assignments and for reporting his/her progress~~
- ~~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. A statement of the Board's policy detailing 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, with a maximum of one semester or one-half year if the school is on a year-round calendar~~
- ~~6. A statement of the number of course credits or, for an elementary student, 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~~
- ~~8. In the case of a suspended or expelled student who is referred or assigned to any school, class, or program pursuant to Education Code 48915 or 48917, a 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)~~

~~Before the student begins the independent study, the written agreement shall be signed and dated by the student, the parent/guardian or caregiver of the student if the student is under age 18, the certificated employee responsible for the general supervision of independent study, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the student. (Education Code 51747; 5 CCR 11702)~~

Monitoring Student Progress

~~The 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 and/or supervising teacher shall promptly and directly address any failure by the student to meet the terms of his/her the student's written agreement. The following supportive strategies may be used:~~

- ~~1. A letter to the student and/or parent/guardian~~
- ~~2. A meeting between the student and the teacher and/or counselor~~
- ~~3. A meeting between the student and the independent study 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 failed to make satisfactory educational progress or missed the number of assignments specified in the written agreement as precipitating requiring an evaluation, the Superintendent or designee shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether or not independent study is appropriate for the student. This evaluation may result in termination of the independent study agreement and the student's return to the regular ~~school~~ classroom program or other alternative program.

A written record of the findings of any such evaluation shall be treated as a mandatory interim student record which shall be maintained for three years from the date of the evaluation. (Education Code 51747)

Responsibilities of Independent Study Administrator

The responsibilities of the independent study administrator ~~shall be~~ include, but are not limited to:

- ~~1. Ensure that the district's independent study option is operated in accordance with law, Board policy, and administrative regulation and is substantially equal in quality and quantity to the classroom instruction~~
- ~~2. Obtain and maintain current information and skills required for the operation of an independent study program that meets established standards for the district's educational programs~~
- ~~3. Develop and manage the budget for independent study~~
- ~~4. Authorize the selection of~~ Recommending certificated staff to be assigned as independent study teachers
- ~~5.1. Supervise any at the required teacher-student ratios pursuant to Education Code 51745.6 and supervising~~ staff assigned to independent study functions who are not regularly supervised by another administrator
- ~~6.2. Approve~~ Approving or ~~deny~~ denying the participation of students requesting independent study
- ~~7.3. Facilitate~~ Facilitating the completion of written independent study agreements
- ~~8.4. Assure~~ Ensuring a smooth transition for students into and out of the independent study mode of instruction
- ~~9.5. Approve~~ Approving all credits earned through independent study ~~and forward the information to the appropriate staff so that the information becomes part of the student's record~~
- ~~10.6. Complete~~ Completing or ~~coordinate~~ coordinating the preparation of all records and reports required by law, Board policy, or administrative regulation

Assignment and Responsibilities of Independent Study Teachers

Each student's independent study shall be coordinated, evaluated, and carried out under the general supervision of a ~~certificated~~ district employee who possesses a valid certification document pursuant to Education Code 44865 or emergency credential pursuant to Education Code 44300, registered as required by law, and who consents to the assignment. (Education Code 44865, 51747.5; 5 CCR 11700)

~~(cf. 4112.2—Certification)~~

~~(cf. 4112.24—Teacher Qualifications Under the No Child Left Behind)~~

~~The principal and independent study administrator may recommend and the Superintendent shall approve the assignment of teachers to directly supervise independent study and/or work with students on specific subject matter. The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that independent study teachers have access to professional development and support comparable to classroom-based teachers.~~

~~(cf. 4131—Staff Development)~~

The ratio of student average daily attendance for independent study students age 18 years or younger to full-time equivalent certificated employees responsible for independent study shall not exceed the equivalent ratio for all other education programs in the district. ~~(Education Code 51745.6), unless a new higher or lower ratio for all other educational programs~~ offered is negotiated in a collective bargaining agreement or the district enters into a memorandum of understanding that indicates an existing collective bargaining agreement contains an alternative ratio. (Education Code 51745.6)

The responsibilities of the supervising teacher shall ~~be~~ include, but are not limited to:

1. ~~Complete~~Completing designated portions of the written independent study agreement and ~~add additional information to signing~~ the ~~written~~ agreement ~~when appropriate~~

2. ~~Supervise~~Supervising and ~~approve~~approving coursework

3. ~~2. Design lesson plans~~ and ~~make~~ assignments

~~Maintain~~

4. ~~3. Maintaining~~ records of student assignments showing the date the assignment is given and the date the assignment is due

~~Provide~~

4. Maintaining a daily or hourly attendance register in accordance with item #4 in the section on "Records for Audit Purpose" in the accompanying Board policy

5. Providing direct instruction and counsel as necessary for individual student success

6. Regularly ~~meet~~meeting with the student to discuss the student's progress

7. ~~Judge~~Determining the time value of assigned work or work products completed and submitted by the student

8. ~~Assess~~Assessing student work and ~~determine and assign~~assigning grades or other approved measures of achievement

~~Select and save representative samples of the student's completed and evaluated assignments for~~Documenting each subject, signed or initialed and dated in accordance with item #3 in the section on "Records" below

9. ~~Maintain a daily or hourly attendance register in accordance with item #4 in the section on "Records" below~~

10. ~~Maintain any other required records and files on a current basis~~

Records

~~The Superintendent student's participation in live interaction and/or designee shall ensure that records are maintained~~synchronous instruction pursuant to Education Code 51747 on each school day for audit purposes. These records shall include, but not be limited to: (Education Code 51748; 5 CCR 11703)

1. ~~9. A copy of the Board policy, administrative regulation, and other procedures related to which independent study is provided~~

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that independent study teachers have access to professional development and support comparable to classroom-based teachers.

2. ~~A separate listing of the students, by grade level, program, and school, who have participated in independent study. This listing shall identify units of the curriculum attempted and units of the curriculum completed by students in grades K-8 and identify course credits attempted by and awarded to students in grades 9-12 and in adult education, as specified in their written agreements.~~

3. ~~A file of all agreements, with representative samples of each student's work products bearing the supervising teacher's signed or initialed and dated notations indicating that he/she has personally evaluated the work or that he/she has personally reviewed the evaluations made by another certificated teacher.~~

4. ~~A daily or hourly attendance register, as appropriate to the program in which the students are participating, separate from classroom attendance records, and maintained on a current basis as time values of student work products judged by a certificated teacher, and reviewed by the supervising teacher if they are two different persons.~~

~~(cf. 3580—District Records)~~

~~The above records shall be maintained for three years, excluding the current fiscal year. Each school shall maintain records for the students at that school.~~

~~A written record of the findings of any evaluation conducted after the student has missed the number of assignments specified in Board policy shall be treated as a mandatory interim student record which shall be maintained for three years from the date of the evaluation. (Education Code 51747)~~

~~(cf. 5125—Student Records)~~
