

**INDEPENDENT STUDY/INDIVIDUALIZED  
ARRANGEMENT (Continued)**

**A. Purpose and Scope**

The Governing Board of a school district which maintains an elementary school, secondary school, an opportunity/program, a continuation school, summer school, work experience program, or special education program, may adopt rules and regulations which authorize any pupil enrolled to enroll in an independent study program of the district.

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
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
5. Volunteer community service activities that support and strengthen student achievement

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 regular classes.

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

**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. 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)

**INDEPENDENT STUDY/INDIVIDUALIZED  
ARRANGEMENT (Continued)**

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)

**Eligibility for Independent Study**

Provided that experienced certificated staff are available to effectively supervise students in independent study, 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. A student whose academic performance is not at grade level may participate in independent study only if the school 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)

For a student with disabilities, as defined in Education Code 56026, participation in independent study shall be approved only if his/her individualized education program specifically provides for such participation. (Education Code 51745)

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

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)

No more than 10 percent of the students enrolled in a continuation high school or opportunity school or program, not including pregnant and parenting students who are

**INDEPENDENT STUDY/INDIVIDUALIZED  
ARRANGEMENT (Continued)**

primary caregivers for one or more of their children, shall be eligible for apportionment credit for independent study. (Education Code 51745)

**B. General**

Independent Study:

1. Definition: The Independent Study Program is an alternative to classroom instruction consistent with the District's course of study.
2. Rationale: There are times when it is in the student's best interest to include in his or her program, the Independent Study Program instead of, regular course assignments.
2. Scope: An individual student or group of students may engage in the Independent Study Program, on or off campus. The Independent Study Program may range from an activity as part of the regular class to an activity completely separate from the regular program.
4. The Independent Study Program or project need not be limited in time or geographical distance from school site.

Independent Study in the schools is an alternative educational program designed to serve students. The program also serves individuals who are over 18 years of age, up to 21.

The Independent Study Program is primarily for young people who are seeking alternatives to a regular high school education and has an acceptable reason for requesting Independent Study, due to the limitation of having only ten percent of the ADA enrolled in this program.

Student work is based on an Independent Study Agreement written by the student and teacher. This agreement governs such specifics as subject area, meeting times, course credit, and evaluation of student work.

Independent Study allows for flexible scheduling of student work. Of the student's "school time," 90% is spent on independent assignments at home, in the field, or on the job. Approximately 10% of the student's "school time" is spent working directly with the teacher, usually once a week. During these sessions, the teacher and student review

**INDEPENDENT STUDY/INDIVIDUALIZED  
ARRANGEMENT (Continued)**

assigned work, evaluate progress, and make necessary modifications in the contract agreements.

1. Supervision: (1) The Tracy Adult School Principal shall serve as the Coordinator of Independent Study and be responsible for the administration and supervision of the Independent Study Program.
2. Coordination: A manual on Independent Study shall be made available to all students, parents, and the Independent Study teacher. The manual shall include guidelines and procedures including the following:
  - a. Identifying students appropriate for the program
  - b. Enrolling students in the program
  - c. Monitoring students' progress
  - d. Evaluating students' learning
3. Written Agreements: (1) Independent Study shall be based on a written agreement signed by the student, the student's parents or legal guardian for minor students, and the certificated supervisor, and any other person who has direct responsibility to provide instructional assistance to the student. (2) This agreement shall include, but not be limited to: (Education Code 51747; 5 CCR 11700)

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)

- a. The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting the student's assignments and for reporting his/her progress
- b. The objectives and methods of study for the student's work and the methods used to evaluate that work
- c. The specific resources, including materials and personnel that will be made available to the student

**INDEPENDENT STUDY/INDIVIDUALIZED  
ARRANGEMENT (Continued)**

- d. 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
- e. 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 school year.
- f. 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
- g. A statement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate
- h. 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

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)

**D. Monitoring Student Progress**

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 written agreement. The following supportive strategies may be used:

1. A letter to the student and/or parent/guardian

**INDEPENDENT STUDY/INDIVIDUALIZED  
ARRANGEMENT (Continued)**

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 missed the number of assignments specified in the written agreement as precipitating 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 a regular school program.

**E. Responsibilities of Independent Study Administrator**

The responsibilities of the independent study administrator shall be 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 certificated staff to be assigned as independent study teachers
5. Supervise any staff assigned to independent study functions that are not regularly supervised by another administrator
6. Approve or deny the participation of students requesting independent study
7. Facilitate the completion of written independent study agreements
8. Assure a smooth transition for students into and out of the independent study mode of instruction

**INDEPENDENT STUDY/INDIVIDUALIZED  
ARRANGEMENT (Continued)**

9. Approve 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. Complete or coordinate the preparation of all records and reports required by law, Board policy, or administrative regulation

Assignment and Responsibilities of Independent Study Teachers and subject matter specialists assigned to work with independent study students.

Each student's independent study shall be coordinated, evaluated, and carried out under the general supervision of a certificated employee who consents to the assignment. (Education Code 44865, 51747.5; 5 CCR 11700)

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.

The ratio of student average daily attendance 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)

The responsibilities of the supervising teacher shall be to:

1. Complete designated portions of the written independent study agreement and add additional information to the written agreement when appropriate
2. Supervise and approve coursework
3. Design lesson plans and make assignments
4. Maintain records of student assignments showing the date the assignment is given and the date the assignment is due
5. Provide direct instruction and counsel as necessary for individual student success
6. Regularly meet with the student to discuss the student's progress

**INDEPENDENT STUDY/INDIVIDUALIZED  
ARRANGEMENT (Continued)**

7. Judge the time value of assigned work or work products completed and submitted by the student
8. Assess student work and determine and assign grades or other approved measures of achievement
9. Select and save representative samples of the student's completed and evaluated assignments for each subject, signed or initialed and dated in accordance with item #3 in the section on "Records" below
10. Maintain a daily or hourly attendance register in accordance with item #4 in the section on "Records" below
11. Maintain any other required records and files on a current basis

**F. Records**

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that records are maintained for audit purposes. These records shall include, but not be limited to: (Education Code 51748; 5 CCR 11703)

1. A copy of the Board policy, administrative regulation, and other procedures related to independent study.
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.



**INDEPENDENT STUDY/INDIVIDUALIZED  
ARRANGEMENT (Continued)**

The above records shall be maintained for three years, excluding the current fiscal year.

The Superintendent or designee also shall maintain a record of grades and other evaluations issued to each student for independent study assignments.

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)

**G. Forms Used and Additional References**

Independent Study Agreement

**H. Procedures**

Admission to the Independent Study Program

Consistent with the California Education Code, the following process shall be followed for Independent Study for all schools within the District's schools.

1. The parent/Guardian submits request to Principal (K-8) who contacts the Independent Study office.
2. The parent or guardian and the student (9-12) shall submit a request for participation in the Independent Study Program to the student's counselor.
3. The counselor shall review the student's records, determine the feasibility of Independent Study and submit the student's request to the District Student Assistance Team. The Student Assistance Team will consist of an administrator for District high schools, the student's grade level counselor, the Tracy Adult School Principal, and other support staff as needed. The parent/guardian will be notified of the Student Assistance Team meeting to consider placement of the student in Independent Study and the opportunity for the parent/guardian to be present at the meeting.

**INDEPENDENT STUDY/INDIVIDUALIZED  
ARRANGEMENT (Continued)**

The Student Assistance Team will review each student's request and determine if Independent Study is the appropriate program for the student. Typically, students in grades 9-12 must be enrolled in a comprehensive high school for at least one semester before being considered for the District's Independent Study Program. Exceptions to the one semester enrollment provision will be considered on an individual case by case bases. Entrance criteria for:

4. Independent Study shall include, but is not limited to one or more of the following:
  - a. Inappropriate behavior as documented by administrative records of disciplinary referrals and/or suspensions.
  - b. A pattern of irregular attendance as documented by school attendance records.
  - c. Habitual truancy
  - d. Failing grades as documented by academic records (deficiency notices, report cards, transcripts).
  - e. Temporary or short term medical problems not best served by home teaching
  - f. A genuine economic hardship within the student's immediate family that would prevent him/her from attending school on a full-time basis.

**I. Reports Required**

None

**J. Record Retention**

Records shall be maintained at the school site and shall include, but not be limited to:

- a. A copy of this board policy statement in current condition and pertinent administrative regulations.
- b. A file of all agreements, complete, and incomplete.

**INDEPENDENT STUDY/INDIVIDUALIZED  
ARRANGEMENT (Continued)**

- c. A list of students who have participated in Independent Study which shows the credits/units attempted by and awarded to each student per agreement.
- d. The number of students successfully completing a contract or agreement.
- e. Grade and/or evaluation by units of study comparable to classroom work.
- f. Samples of student work which demonstrate quality and scope of study, especially for a typical student program.
- g. A school history in which the student has experienced difficulty in adapting to the regular curriculum and he/she has no other realistic educational options.
- h. If the Independent Study petition is denied, the parent has the right of appeal to the Director for Student Services. The Director for Student Services will review the appeal and his/her decision shall be final.

Students who are 18 years of age or older and are not currently enrolled in a school within the district will submit their request for Independent Study to the Independent Study Coordinator.

- j. The Local School Attendance Review Board and the District Disciplinary Review Board may also place students in the Independent Study Program.

Once the petition has been approved, the program coordinator shall identify the certificated staff member who will supervise the student's Independent Study Program. The Independent Study teacher shall define the appropriate curriculum under the following guidelines:

- 1. The student must complete at least 20 hours of homework per week.
- 2. One (1) credit per subject can be earned by correctly completing assignments that are typically finished in fifteen (15) hours of productive work by the average student.
- 3. The student must meet with the teacher at least once per week for at least one hour.

**INDEPENDENT STUDY/INDIVIDUALIZED  
ARRANGEMENT (Continued)**

4. Typically, students will be limited to no more than two (2) subjects. However, in certain instances, a student who has demonstrated the ability to work effectively on an individual basis may be allowed to contract for additional.
5. A written curriculum plan must accompany each contract.

**K. Travel Study**

1. Travel study is a short-term independent study agreement arranged on school site by petitioning the counselor or principal. Must be a minimum of 5 consecutive school days.
2. Travel study students must request work from their regular teachers and must submit required assignments to receive credit.
3. Travel study is for a minimum of 5 consecutive school days and up to four weeks (20 school days) or less, unless special circumstances exist in which the principal extends the agreement for an additional 10 school days.
4. Travel study contract must be arranged and approved in advanced 10 school days prior to beginning travel study.
5. Principal has discretion to approve/disapprove contracts in regards to student's attendance and academic performance.
6. Travel Study Contract must be signed and approved by principal and returned to Attendance Office prior to student going on travel. Once the Principal signs your forms the dates cannot be changed.
7. All student work shall be turned in on assigned date of return as per Travel Study Contract.

**L. Responsible Administrative Unit**

Educational Services  
Site Principals  
Adult School Principal

**M. Approved by Administrator of Division**

Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services