

## **Instruction**

### **Independent Study**

The Board of Education believes that independent study is a learning activity motivated largely by the learner's own aim and rewarded largely in terms of intrinsic values. It is a course of study which should provide an opportunity for an individual to undertake an in-depth study of particular interest, independent of the class or other group instructional practices. It utilizes the services of teachers and other professional personnel as guides and resources for the learner and often involves in-school and community libraries and informational facilities. A program of independent study recognizes individual differences in interest and abilities and encourages student initiative and self-direction in learning.

A thoughtful Independent Study Program should have the following goals:

1. Expansion of the curriculum to better serve the school philosophy and objects by providing the opportunity for students to develop their unique skills, interests, self-motivation, and responsibility and as a means to respond to individual readiness and maturation for new learning experiences.
2. To encourage students to accept more responsibility for their education.
3. To provide students with the opportunity to research an area of interest.
4. To provide students with the opportunity to learn new skills and behaviors.
5. To provoke a new interest in learning.
6. To lay the foundation for continued self-education.
7. To provide the opportunity for students to share their new knowledge, insight, and/or skills learned by becoming resource personnel available to the school and/or community.
8. To foster pride in the accomplishments of high school students through the provision of visible evidence of student learning.

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### **Independent Study Committee**

The function of the Independent Study Committee will be:

1. To incorporate, implement, and administer all aspects of the Independent Study Program as approved by the Board of Education.
2. To select students.
  - a. The committee will review all student applications for participation in the Independent Study Program.
  - b. The committee will determine the eligibility of all prospective candidates according to criteria outlined below.
3. To participate in the evaluation of student performance in those cases where significant problems require its intervention. Such participation, if necessary, grants the committee full power of arbitration.
4. Evaluate the Independent Study Program on an annual basis and submit to the building administrator a detailed evaluation report if formal recommendations for changes are being proposed in the Independent Study Program policies.

### **Standing Committee**

The Standing Committee will consist of a five-member voting committee.

1. The committee will be composed of:
  - a. The Chairperson -- this post will be filled permanently by the Coordinator or Counseling Services and/or a designee
  - b. Three (3) teachers to be selected from a list of faculty volunteers whose names will be requested by the chairperson
  - c. Two (2) Department Chairs
2. Approval of each student application requires a vote of members of the permanent committee. The committee has the authority to make decisions concerning the scope and objectives of the project; the time to be spent in developing the project; and the methods by the student in organizing, developing, and evaluating the project.

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### **Student Procedures and Responsibilities**

#### **Criteria for Admittance**

The Independent Study Program is open to all eleventh and twelfth grade students without regard to level, track, or class rank.

1. Students must have a minimum unweighted GPA of 2.0.
2. The independent study must be a seventh class.
3. The independent study cannot be used as a distribution requirement for graduation.

#### **Areas of Study**

1. All areas related to the total school curriculum may be included in the Independent Study Program. No student may elect an Independent Study Program in lieu of a presently offered course of study or to fulfill graduation requirements.
2. An individual student may select an independent study project in one area only.

#### **Deadlines**

1. Application must be made the second week of the semester of the junior or senior year.
2. Application Packet may be obtained from the student's counselor or online.

#### **Credit**

1. An Independent Study Program may be selected for units of one or two semesters, depending on the scope of the project and the capability of the student.
2. Honors credit will be given .5 credit for a half-year study or 1 credit for a full-year study.
3. No credit will be given for projects not completed or not accepted by the Evaluation Committee.
4. A letter grade will be given for the final grade by the faculty advisor. An F will be issued for uncompleted studies.

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### **Presentation of Project**

1. The faculty advisor should arrange to meet the student at regular intervals to ascertain progress and to provide assistance.
2. Students may be asked to display projects and/or give oral reports at a meeting and/or reception for the school and community.

### **Responsibilities of the Faculty Advisor**

1. The faculty advisor should be thoroughly familiar with the Independent Study Contract.
2. The faculty advisor must assist the student in planning his/her program, including identifying the ARHS Learning Expectations and content area standards to be met.
3. The faculty advisor must formally notify the Independent Study Committee, should the student fail to meet stated requirements of the program or if any unusual difficulties arise that might impede progress. Such notification should be made as early as possible in the semester.
4. The faculty advisor will meet quarterly with the Independent Study Chairperson.
5. The faculty advisor will award P/F for each quarter.

### **Evaluation of Students**

Evaluation of the student in the program will be done by the faculty advisor.

1. A mid-point student evaluation form is required from the faculty advisor and the student. A form will be sent to each by the Independent Study Chairperson. A P/F will be recorded as a mid-semester grade on the report card.
2. Students must choose two different media when presenting their study.
3. Students will present to a class relevant to the study with the assistance of the faculty advisor.