



Independent Study Contract Request and Procedures **2023-24**

Pleasanton Unified School District believes it is imperative that your student attends school regularly. Lost classroom instructional time is difficult, if not impossible to replace. However, if you find that you need an extended absence of **three (3) to fifteen (15) school days** during the school year, you should request a (short term) Independent Study Contract. The purpose of this contract is intended to be requested by a parent/guardian due to an emergency or illness, independent study may be used on a short-term basis to ensure that the student is able to maintain academic progress in the student's regular classes. The contract assists in preventing your child from falling behind and gives your child attendance credit.

Below are the procedures for requesting an Independent Study Contract,

1. **Parents/Guardians notify school administration at least 10 school days prior to the absence.** School Administrators have the final decision to approve or not approve a request for a student to leave school on an Independent Study contract for travel for unique circumstances.
2. Per California Education Code, Independent Study Contracts are only issued to students who will be absent for a **minimum of 3 school days. The maximum number of school days the contract will be approved for cannot exceed 15 school days. After 15 school days, PUSD cannot guarantee your child will return to the same classroom or the same school.**
3. If an emergency situation occurs while the student is on an approved Independent Study Contract, please understand that we are unable to approve an extension to the existing contract. All efforts to notify the school, submit and return the work to the teachers should be made in accordance with the existing contract. The additional days of absence will be marked according to our District attendance policy. School and classroom placement will be discussed upon return to PUSD if the student was unenrolled due to days absent, as their place will not be guaranteed in their school or classroom.
4. **Students must turn in work by the agreed contract end date.** If the student is on an Independent Study Contract that occurs during the end of a grading period, the student needs to submit the assignments to the teachers **3 days before the end of the grading period.** Students may receive an incomplete on their report card or a lower grade in the class, if the assigned course work is not completed or returned on time.
5. A student with disabilities, as defined in Ed Code 56026, is not eligible for an Independent Study Contract unless his/her Individualized Education Program (IEP) specifically provides for such participation (Ed Code 51745). Please discuss this with your child's case manager.
6. Students whose achievement level is below grade level standards may not be eligible or approved for an Independent Study Contract.
7. Students who have had an Independent Study Contract in the past and did not successfully complete the work or terms of the contract are not eligible for a new contract during the same school year.
8. Students are only eligible for one Independent Study contract per school year for travel for unique travel circumstances.

Beginning of Each School Year

Independent Study Contracts may not be issued during the first twenty (20) school days of the year, as this is a critical time for teachers and students. If a student anticipates being absent for the first day or week of school, the school administrator should be informed prior to the first day of school. If you do not inform the school administrator of your child's anticipated absence, school staff will likely assume that you have moved and may drop your student from enrollment within PUSD.

Please understand, in order to guarantee a space for your child at your school of attendance, your child must return to school prior to or no later than Monday of the second week of school.

Also understand, if your child is absent, our truancy letter notification and follow up procedures will apply and may initiate the Student Attendance Review Team (SART) and/or Student Attendance Review Board (SARB) process.

End of Each School Year

Independent Study Contracts may not be issued during the last 20 school days of the school year. These requests will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Existing policies related to assignments and grading will be upheld for excused and unexcused absences if taken during the final 20 days of the school year. If your child is absent **the last twenty days, we cannot guarantee your child will return to the same school the following school year.**