

## **CSBA POLICY GUIDE SHEET**

### **July 2021**

Note: Descriptions below identify revisions made to CSBA's sample board policies, administrative regulations, board bylaws, and/or exhibits. Editorial changes have also been made. Districts and county offices of education should review the sample materials and modify their own policies accordingly.

#### **DELETE - Board Policy 6157 - Distance Learning**

Policy deleted due to expiration of emergency legislation that temporarily waived apportionment requirements to permit distance learning for the 2020-2021 school year.

#### **Board Policy 6158 - Independent Study**

Policy updated to reflect **NEW LAW (AB 130, 2021)** which requires all districts, for the 2021-22 school year, to offer independent study to meet the educational needs of students unless a waiver is obtained and to adopt policy with specified components in order to generate apportionment for independent study. Policy updates the minimum period of time permitted for independent study to be three consecutive school days, requires an evaluation to determine if the student should continue in independent study if the student fails to make satisfactory educational progress, and requires that content be aligned to grade level standards including the requirement for high schools to offer access to all courses offered by the district for graduation and approved as creditable for A-G admission criteria. Policy also updated to include the requirement for live interaction and/or synchronous instruction based on grade level, tiered reengagement strategies for students not generating attendance for a specified period of time, expeditious transition for students whose families wish to return to in-person instruction, notice to parents/guardians of specified information, the provision of a student-parent-educator conference, upon request, prior to enrollment and/or disenrollment, and the keeping of additional records including documentation of each student's participation in live interaction and synchronous instruction on each school day, as applicable. Policy updated to include material formerly in the AR regarding requirements for independent study and written agreements as well as new requirements regarding the same, including that written agreements must include a detailed statement of academic and other supports that will be provided to address the needs of particular students, that the agreement may be signed electronically as specified, and that, for the 2021-22 school year, the written agreement must be signed no later than 30 days after the first day of instruction. Policy updated to include material formerly in the AR regarding course-based independent study and to generally align the requirements of course-based independent study with the requirements for general independent study.

#### **Administrative Regulation 6158 - Independent Study**

Regulation updated to reflect **NEW LAW (AB 130, 2021)** which includes, adding definitions for "live interaction," "student-parent-educator conference" and "synchronous instruction," the requirement for all districts for the 2021-22 school year to offer independent study to meet the educational needs of students unless the district has obtained a waiver, that independent study may be offered to students whose health would be put at risk by in-person instruction as determined by the parent/guardian, the assurance of access to Internet connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work, and the documentation of each student's participation in live interaction and synchronous instruction pursuant to Education Code 51747 on each school day, as applicable. Material regarding requirements for independent study, written agreements and course-based independent study moved to BP.

# CSBA Sample Board Policy

Instruction

BP 6157(a)

## DISTANCE LEARNING

Note: The following optional policy may be subject to collective bargaining agreements and should be revised to reflect district practice.

For further information regarding the implementation of distance learning in the event of a school closure, see the California Department of Education's COVID-19 Guidance for K-12 Schools.

The Governing Board recognizes that distance learning can be a viable alternative instructional strategy that supports student achievement of academic goals. Distance learning opportunities may be offered to students participating in independent study, credit recovery courses, enrichment courses, or other courses identified by the Superintendent or designee, or in the event that a school site is physically closed due to widespread illness, natural disaster, or other emergency:

*(cf. 3516 – Emergencies and Disaster Preparedness Plan)*

*(cf. 3516.5 – Emergency Schedules)*

*(cf. 4113.5/4213.5/4313.5 – Working Remotely)*

*(cf. 6158 – Independent Study)*

The district may offer distance learning through a variety of delivery methods as appropriate for the grade level and subject matter. Distance learning opportunities may include video, audio, and/or written instruction in which the primary mode of communication between the student and teacher is online interaction, instructional television, live or prerecorded video, telecourses, and other instruction that relies on computer or communications technology. They may also include the use of print materials with written or oral feedback.

The Superintendent or designee shall review and select distance learning courses, which may include those taught by district staff or others, that are of high academic quality and are aligned with district standards and curricula. As appropriate, courses may be self directed to allow students to complete assignments at their own pace and/or may involve real time interaction among the teacher and students.

*(cf. 6141 – Curriculum Development and Evaluation)*

*(cf. 6143 – Courses of Study)*

The Superintendent or designee shall, in collaboration with teachers, plan for schoolwide or long term distance learning in the event of a school closure. In developing the plan, the Superintendent or designee shall analyze the course sequence, prioritize content and standards to be completed, and recommend the grading criteria. In such circumstances, students' social-emotional wellness shall be taken into account, and schedules and learning experiences shall be designed to build continuity, routine, and regular connections with students.

**DISTANCE LEARNING (continued)**

Grading of distance learning assignments and assessments of end of course knowledge and understanding of the subject matter shall be consistent with district policy on grading for equivalent courses.

*(cf. 5121—Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)*

*(cf. 6146.3—Reciprocity of Academic Credit)*

*(cf. 6146.11—Alternative Credits Toward Graduation)*

**Legal Reference:****EDUCATION CODE**

*35182.5—Contracts for electronic products or services; prohibitions*

*51210-51212—Course of study for grades 1-6*

*51220-51229—Course of study for grades 7-12*

*51740-51741—Authority to provide instruction by correspondence*

*51745-51749.3—Independent study*

*51865—California distance learning policy*

**PUBLIC CONTRACT CODE**

*20118.2—Contracting by school districts; technological equipment*

**UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20**

*7131—Internet safety*

**UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 47**

*254—Universal service discounts (E-rate); Internet safety*

**Management Resources:****CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS**

*COVID-19 Guidance for K-12 Schools*

**WORLD WIDE WEB CONSORTIUM PUBLICATIONS**

*Web Content Accessibility Guidelines*

**WEB SITES**

*California Department of Education: <http://www.ede.ca.gov>*

*World Wide Web Consortium, Web Accessibility Initiative: <http://www.w3.org/wai>*

**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

unable to access course(s) due to scheduling problems, and/or who need to make up credits or fill gaps in their learning. As necessary to meet student needs, independent study may be offered on a full-time basis or on a part-time basis in conjunction with part- or full-time classroom study.

The Superintendent or designee may provide a variety of independent study opportunities, including, but not limited to, through a program or class within a comprehensive school, an alternative school or program of choice, a charter school, **a home-based format**, and an online course.

*(cf. 0420.4 - Charter School Authorization)*  
*(cf. 6181 - Alternative Schools/Programs of Choice)*

A student's participation in independent study shall be voluntary. **(Education Code 51747, 51749.5)** ~~Students participating in independent study shall have the right, at any time, to enter or return to the regular classroom mode of instruction. (Education Code 51747, 5 CCR 11700)~~

**Independent study for each student shall be under the general supervision of a district employee who possesses a valid certification document pursuant to Education Code 44865 or an emergency credential pursuant to Education Code 44300. Students' independent study shall be coordinated, evaluated, and documented, as prescribed by law and reflected in the accompanying administrative regulation. (Education Code 51747.5)**

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 46300, **as amended by AB 130**, the attendance of students participating in independent study for **three five** or more consecutive school days will be included in computing average daily attendance for apportionment purposes. The following **optional** paragraph is for use by districts that wish to limit independent study to periods of **three five** or more consecutive school days.

The minimum period of time for any independent study option shall be **three five** consecutive school days.

**Written Agreements**

Note: Education Code 51747 **mandates** that the Board adopt a policy providing that a current written agreement (i.e., the "master agreement") will be maintained for each student who participates in independent study for five or more consecutive school days. ~~As amended by SB 858 (Ch. 32, Statutes of 2014), Education Code 51747 provides that no independent study agreement can be valid for longer than one school year.~~

In addition, Education Code 51749.5, as added by SB 858, **mandates** that the Board adopt a policy providing that a "learning agreement" be maintained for each student participating in course-based independent study.

**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

Note: Education Code 51747 **mandates** that the Board, in a public hearing, adopt a policy on the maximum length of time, by grade level and type of program, which may elapse between the time an independent study assignment is made and the date by which the student must complete the assignment. 5 CCR 11700 defines "type of program" as the statutory program category for purposes of attendance accounting, such as adult education or continuation high school. In addition, 5 CCR 11701 **mandates** that Board policy reflect an awareness that excessive leniency in the duration of independent study assignments can result in a student falling so far behind **his/her** peers as to increase, rather than decrease, the risk of dropping out of school.

The following paragraph sets one week for all grade levels and types of programs as the maximum length of time an independent study assignment should be completed, and **should be revised to reflect the length of time determined by the Board**. In order to ensure that apportionments are received, the length of time determined by the Board in its policy should be reflected in the district's written agreement. See the section on **"Master Agreement Written Agreements"** below and in the accompanying administrative regulation.

Because excessive leniency in the duration of independent study assignments may result in a student falling behind **his/her** peers and increase the risk of dropping out of school, independent study assignments **shall be completed no more than one week after assigned no more than one week** for all grade levels and types of program. However, when necessary based on the specific circumstances of the student's approved program, the Superintendent or designee may allow for a longer period of time between the date an assignment is made and when it is due, up to the termination date of the agreement.

Note: Education Code 51747 **mandates** that the Board, in a public hearing, adopt a policy which specifies **the level of satisfactory educational progress and the number of missed assignments allowed before an evaluation would be required to determine whether it is in a student's best interest to remain in independent study. The following paragraph specifies a maximum of three assignments and should be revised to reflect the Board's determination of the number of missed assignments that will trigger an evaluation.**

The number of missed assignments that will trigger an evaluation must be included in the student's written agreement; ~~see the accompanying administrative regulation. In order to ensure that apportionments are received, the district's written agreement should also be revised to reflect the number of assignments determined by the Board in its policy.~~

An evaluation shall be conducted to determine whether it is in a student's best interest to remain in independent study whenever the student **fails to make satisfactory educational progress and/or misses three assignments. Satisfactory educational progress shall be determined based on all of the following indicators: (Education Code 51747)**

1. **The student's achievement and engagement in the independent study program, as indicated by the student's performance on applicable student-level measures of student achievement and engagement specified in Education Code 52060**
2. **The completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that evidence that the student is working on assignments**
3. **Learning required concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher**

**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that procedures for tiered reengagement strategies are used for all students who are not generating attendance for more than three school days or 60 percent of the instructional days in a school week, or who are in violation of their written agreement. This requirement only applies to students participating in an independent study program for 15 school days or more. The procedures shall include, but are not necessarily limited to, all of the following: (Education Code 51747)

1. Verification of current contact information for each enrolled student
2. Notification to parents/guardians of lack of participation within one school day of the absence or lack of participation
3. A plan for outreach from the school to determine student needs, including connection with health and social services as necessary

Note: Education Code 51747 requires districts to hold a student-parent-educator conference as defined by Education Code 51745.5, at specified times, as reflected below and in the accompanying regulation.

4. A clear standard for requiring a student-parent-educator conference to review a student's written agreement and reconsider the independent study program's impact on the student's achievement and well-being

Note: Education Code 51747, as amended by AB 130, mandates the Board to adopt policy that includes a plan to expeditiously, and not longer than five instructional days, transition students whose families wish to return to in-person instruction from independent study. This requirement only applies to students participating in an independent study program for 15 school days or more.

The Superintendent or designee shall develop a plan to transition students whose families wish to return to in-person instruction from independent study expeditiously, and, in no case later, than five instructional days. This requirement only applies to students participating in an independent study program for 15 school days or more. (Education Code 51747)

Note: Education Code 51747, as amended by AB 130, mandates that the Board to adopt a policy providing that a current written agreement (i.e., the "master agreement") will be maintained for each student who participates in independent study and for whom apportionment is claimed. ~~five or more consecutive school days.~~ As amended by SB 858 (Ch. 32, Statutes of 2014), Education Code 51747 provides that no independent study agreement can be valid for longer than one school year. For the 2021-22 school year only, the district is required to obtain a signed written agreement for independent study no later than 30 days after the first day of instruction.

**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

~~is in a student's best interest to remain in independent study. The following paragraph specifies a maximum of three assignments and should be revised to reflect the Board's determination of the number of missed assignments that will trigger an evaluation.~~

The number of missed assignments that will trigger an evaluation must be included in the student's written agreement; see the accompanying administrative regulation. In order to ensure that apportionments are received, the district's written agreement should also be revised to reflect the number of assignments determined by the Board in its policy.

~~An evaluation shall be conducted to determine whether it is in a student's best interest to remain in independent study whenever the student misses three assignments, unless the student's written agreement specifies a lower or higher number of missed assignments based on the nature of the assignments, the total number of assignments, and/or other unique circumstances.~~

**Master Agreement**

Note: Education Code 51747 mandates that, in order to receive apportionments for independent study, the district must adopt and implement policy providing for a signed written independent study agreement which contains the components listed in the following section. Because apportionments are only provided for independent study of ~~five~~ **three** or more consecutive school days pursuant to Education Code 46300, as amended by AB 130, written agreements are required only in such instances.

Education Code 46300.7 states that apportionments shall be received for a student in independent study only if the district receives written permission from the parent/guardian before the independent study begins, specifying the actual dates of participation, methods of study and evaluation, and resources to be made available for the student's independent study. Since all these components are included in the written agreement which the parent/guardian must sign before the commencement of independent study pursuant to Education Code 51747, the parent/guardian's signature on the agreement satisfies the requirement to obtain the parent/guardian's ~~his/her~~ written permission.

However, for the 2021-22 school year the district must obtain a signed written agreement for independent study no later than 30 days after the first day of instruction, pursuant to Education Code 51747, as amended by AB 130.

**For the 2021-22 school year only, the district shall obtain a signed written agreement for independent study no later than 30 days after the first day of instruction.**

A written agreement shall be developed and implemented for each student participating in independent study for ~~five~~ **three** or more consecutive school days. (Education Code 46300, 51747; 5 CCR 11703)

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 are not limited to, all of the following: (Education Code 51747; 5 CCR 11700, 11702)

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**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

98. 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)*

109. Before the commencement of independent study, the agreement shall be signed and dated by the student, the student's parent/guardian or caregiver if the student is under age 18 years, the certificated employee responsible for the general supervision of independent study, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the student.

However, for the 2021-22 school year, the district shall obtain a signed written agreement for independent study from the student, or the student's parent/guardian if the student is less than 18 years of age, the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the pupil, no later than 30 days after the first day of instruction.

Written agreements may be signed using an electronic signature that complies with state and federal standards, as determined by the California Department of Education (CDE). (Education Code 51747)

The parent/guardian's signature on the agreement shall constitute permission for the student to receive instruction through independent study.

**Course-Based Independent Study**

Note: This section is for districts that provide independent study courses to its students. Education Code 51749.5-51749.6, as amended by AB 130, establish a course-based independent study option that may be offered if certain requirements are met, as described below. As a condition of offering this option, Education Code 51749.5 mandates that boards in the districts district adopt policies policy or regulations that comply with the legal requirements listed in the following section and any applicable regulations adopted by the State Board of Education.

The following paragraph may be revised to reflect the grade levels offered by the district.

The district's district shall offer a course-based independent study program for students in grades K-12 shall be subject to the following requirements: (Education Code 51749.5)

1. A signed learning agreement shall be completed and on file for each participating student pursuant to Education Code 51749.6

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**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

**For each student participating in an independent study course, satisfactory educational progress shall be determined based on the student's achievement and engagement in the independent study program, as indicated by their performance on applicable student-level measures of student achievement and student engagement set forth in Education Code 52060, completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that evidence that the student is working on assignments, learning of required concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher, and progress toward successful completion of the course of study or individual course, as determined by the supervising teacher.**

**If satisfactory educational progress in an independent study class is not being made, the teacher shall notify the student and, if the student is under age 18 years, his/her the student's parent/guardian. The teacher shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the student's best interest to remain in the course or whether he/she the student should be referred to an alternative program, which may include, but is not limited to, a regular school program. A written record of the evaluation findings shall be a mandatory interim student record maintained for three years from the date of the evaluation. If the student transfers to another California public school, the record shall be forwarded to that school.**

**Procedures for tiered reengagement strategies shall be used for all students who are not making satisfactory educational progress in one or more courses or who are in violation of the written learning agreement, as described in the section "Learning Agreement for Course-Based Independent Study" below. These procedures shall include, but are not necessarily limited to, the verification of current contact information for each enrolled student, notification to parents/guardians of lack of participation within one school day of the absence or lack of participation, a plan for outreach from the school to determine student needs, including connection with health and social services as necessary, and a clear standard for requiring a student-parent-educator conference to review a student's written agreement and reconsider the independent study program's impact on the student's achievement and well-being.**

*(cf. 5125 - Student Records)*

**56. Examinations shall be administered by a proctor.**

**67. Statewide testing results shall be reported and assigned to the school at which the student is enrolled and shall be included in the aggregate results of the district. Test results also shall be disaggregated for purposes of comparisons with the test results of students enrolled in classroom-based courses.**

*(cf. 6162.51 - State Academic Achievement Tests)*

**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

Before enrolling a student in a course within this program, the Superintendent or designee shall provide the student and, if the student is under age 18 years, ~~his/her~~ the student's parent/guardian with a written learning agreement that includes all of the following: (Education Code 51749.6)

1. A summary of the district's policies and procedures related to **course-based independent study pursuant to Education Code 51749.5**
2. The duration of the enrolled course(s) and the number of course credits for each enrolled course, consistent with the Board certifications made pursuant to item #2 above
3. The duration of the learning agreement, which shall not exceed a school year or span multiple school years
4. The learning objectives and expectations for each course, including, but not limited to, a description of how satisfactory educational progress is measured and when a student evaluation is required to determine whether the student should remain in the course or be referred to an alternative program, which may include, but is not limited to, a regular school program
5. The specific resources, ~~including materials and personnel~~, that will be made available to the student, **including materials and personnel, and access to Internet connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work**
- ~~6. A statement that the student is not required to enroll in courses in this program~~
6. A statement detailing the academic and other supports that will be provided to address the needs of students who are not performing at grade level, or need support in other areas, such as English learners, students with disabilities with an individualized education program or a Section 504 plan in order to be consistent with their program or plan, students in foster care or experiencing homelessness, and students requiring mental health supports.
- ~~7. Signatures of the student, the student's parent/guardian if the student is under age 18 years, and all teachers providing instruction~~
7. A statement that enrollment is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate. In the case of a student who is suspended or expelled, or who is referred or assigned to any school, class, or program pursuant to Education Code 48915 or 48917, the agreement also shall

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## **INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

The student's or parent/guardian's signature shall constitute permission for the student to receive instruction through independent study. (Education Code 51749.6)

The Superintendent or designee shall retain a physical or electronic copy of the signed learning agreement for at least three years and as appropriate for auditing purposes. (Education Code 51749.6)

### **Student-Parent-Educator Conferences ~~Teacher Conferences~~**

**Note:** Education Code 51747 and 51749.5, as amended by AB 130, require districts to hold student-parent-educator conferences as defined by Education Code 51745.5, at specified times. See the accompanying regulation for the definitions of student-parent-education conference.

A student-parent-educator conference shall be held as appropriate including, but not limited to, as a reengagement strategy and/or if requested by a parent/guardian prior to enrollment in or disenrollment from independent study. (Education Code 51745.5, 51747, 51749.5)

~~Supervising teachers should establish an appropriate schedule for student teacher conferences in order to help identify students falling behind in their work or in danger of failing or dropping out of school. Teachers are expected to monitor student progress and work closely with each student to determine the amount and type of contact needed for the student to be successful in the program.~~

~~Missing appointments with the supervising teacher without valid reasons may trigger an evaluation to determine whether the student should remain in independent study.~~

### **Home-Based Independent Study**

**Note:** The following section is optional.

The Superintendent or designee shall encourage parents/guardians desiring to teach their children at home to have their children participate in independent study. Such participation allows continued contact and cooperation between the school system and the home based student and ensures that the student will be offered a standards-based education substantially equivalent in quality and quantity to the district's classroom instruction.

### **Records for Audit Purposes**

**Note:** Education Code 51745.6, 51747, 51747.5, and 51749.5, as amended by AB 130, require, commencing in the 2021-22 fiscal year, the State Controller to incorporate verifications of compliance with specified components of the laws into the Guide for Annual Audits of K-12 Local Education

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**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

associated grades. Commencing in the 2021-22 fiscal year, the Guide for Annual Audits of K-12 Local Education Agencies and State Compliance Reporting will incorporate compliance reviews of these requirements.

The district shall document each student's participation in live interaction and synchronous instruction pursuant to Education Code 51747 on each school day, as applicable, in whole or in part, for which independent study is provided. A student who does not participate in independent study on a school day shall be documented as nonparticipatory for that school day. (Education Code 51747.5)

The Superintendent or designee also shall maintain a written or computer-based record such as a grade book or summary document of student engagement, for each class, of all grades, assignments, and other evaluations issued to assessments for each student for independent study assignments. (Education Code 51747.5)

*(cf. 3580 - District Records)*

Note: Education Code 51747, as amended by SB 828 (Ch. 29, Statutes of 2016), authorizes specified records to be maintained in an electronic file, as provided in the following paragraph. Pursuant to Education Code 51747, an electronic file includes a computer or electronically stored image of an original document, including, but not limited to, a PDF, JPEG, or other digital file type, that may be sent via fax machine, email, or other electronic means.

The signed, dated agreement, any supplemental agreement, assignment records, work samples, and attendance records may be maintained on file electronically. (Education Code 51747)

**Program Evaluation**

Note: The following **optional** section may be revised to reflect district practice.

The Superintendent or designee shall annually report to the Board the number of district students participating in independent study, the average daily attendance generated for apportionment purposes, student performance as measured by standard indicators and in comparison to students in classroom-based instruction, and the number and proportion of independent study students who graduate or successfully complete independent study. Based on the program evaluation, the Board and Superintendent shall determine areas for program improvement as needed.

*(cf. 0500 - Accountability)*  
*(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)*  
*(cf. 6162.5 - Student Assessment)*  
*(cf. 6162.51 - State Academic Achievement Tests)*

Legal Reference: (see next page)

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**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

*Management Resources:*

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

Elements of Exemplary Independent Study

California Digital Learning Integration and Standards Guidance, April 2021

EDUCATION AUDIT APPEALS PANEL PUBLICATIONS

Guide for Annual Audits of K-12 Local Education Agencies and State Compliance Reporting

WEB SITES

California Consortium for Independent Study: <http://www.ccis.org>

California Department of Education, Independent Study: <http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/eo/is>

Education Audit Appeals Panel: <http://www.eaap.ca.gov>

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Policy Reference UPDATE Service

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**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

*(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

- 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**

*(cf. 0420.4 - Charter School Authorization)*

*(cf. 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)*

*(cf. 6181 - Alternative Schools/Programs of Choice)*

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)*

Note: The following paragraph is for use by districts maintaining high schools.

*Dele*  
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 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)*

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**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

*(cf. 5111.1 - District Residency)*

~~For a~~ A student with disabilities, as defined in Education Code 56026, shall not participate participation in independent study shall be approved only if unless the student's his/her 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)*

Note: Education Code 46300.1 provides that the district may not receive apportionments pursuant to Education Code 42238 for independent study for students age 21 or older, or for students 19 or older who have not been continuously enrolled in grades K-12 since their 18th birthday. However, pursuant to Education Code 46300.4, these students may be eligible for independent study through the adult education program for courses required for high school graduation; see See BP/AR 6200 - Adult Education.

~~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)*

Note: The following paragraph limits enrollment in independent study to those students for whom state apportionments can be claimed. Pursuant to Education Code 51745, no more than 10 percent of the students enrolled in a continuation high school or opportunity school or program are eligible for apportionment credit for independent study. A pregnant student or a parenting student who is the primary caregiver for his/her the student's child(ren) is not included in this cap.

~~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 enrolled in independent study. (Education Code 51745)~~

*(cf. 5146 - Married/Pregnant/Parenting Students)*

*(cf. 6184 - Continuation Education)*

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**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

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)*

Note: Education Code 46300.7 states that apportionments shall be received for a student in independent study only if the district receives written permission from the parent/guardian, before the independent study begins, specifying the actual dates of participation, methods of study and evaluation, and resources to be made available for the student's independent study. Since all these components are included in the written agreement which the parent/guardian must sign, the parent/guardian's signature on the agreement satisfies the requirement to obtain his/her written permission.

9. Signatures of the student, the parent/guardian or caregiver of the student if the student is under age 18 years, the certificated employee responsible for the general supervision of independent study, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the student

The parent/guardian's signature on the agreement shall constitute permission for the student to receive instruction through independent study.

**Course-Based Independent Study**

Note: Education Code 51749.5-51749.6 establish a course-based independent study option that may be offered if certain requirements are met, as described below. As a condition of offering this option, Education Code 51749.5 mandates that the district adopt policy or regulations that comply with the legal requirements listed in the following section and any applicable regulations adopted by the State Board of Education.

The following paragraph may be revised to reflect the grade levels offered by the district.

The district shall offer a course-based independent study program for students in grades K-12 subject to the following requirements: (Education Code 51749.5)

1. Courses shall be taught under the general supervision of certificated employees who hold the appropriate subject matter credential and are employed by the district or by another district, charter school, or county office of education with which the district has a memorandum of understanding to provide the instruction.

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**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

6. Statewide testing results shall be reported and assigned to the school at which the student is enrolled and shall be included in the aggregate results of the district. Test results also shall be disaggregated for purposes of comparisons with the test results of students enrolled in classroom-based courses.

*(cf. 6162.51 - State Academic Achievement Tests)*

7. A student shall not be required to enroll in courses included in this program.

8. The student teacher ratio in the courses in this program shall meet the requirements of Education Code 51745.6.

9. For each student, the combined equivalent daily instructional minutes for courses in this program and all other courses shall meet applicable minimum instructional day requirements, and the student shall be offered the minimum annual total equivalent instructional minutes pursuant to Education Code 46200-46208.

*(cf. 6111 - School Calendar)*

*(cf. 6112 - School Day)*

10. Courses required for high school graduation or for admission to the University of California or California State University shall not be offered exclusively through independent study.

11. A student participating in this program shall not be assessed a fee that is prohibited by Education Code 49011.

*(cf. 3260 - Fees and Charges)*

12. A student shall not be prohibited from participating in independent study solely on the basis that he/she does not have the materials, equipment, or Internet access necessary to participate in the course.

Before enrolling a student in a course within this program, the Superintendent or designee shall provide the student and, if the student is under age 18 years, his/her the student's parent/guardian with a written learning agreement that includes all of the following: (Education Code 51749.6)

1. A summary of the district's policies and procedures related to this program

2. The duration of the enrolled course(s) and the number of course credits for each enrolled course, consistent with the Board certifications made pursuant to item #2 above

**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

When the student has **failed to make satisfactory educational progress or** missed the number of assignments specified in the written agreement as 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 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)

Note: The CDE, in its Frequently Asked Questions available on its web site, clarifies that students in independent study are not subject to truancy laws. The determination of excused and unexcused absences is irrelevant because independent study students may complete assignments at any time and attendance is not the basis for credit.

~~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.~~

**Responsibilities of Independent Study Administrator**

Note: The following **optional** section may be revised to reflect district practice.

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

1. ~~Recommending certificated staff to be assigned as independent study teachers **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~~
2. ~~Approving or denying the participation of students requesting independent study~~
3. ~~Facilitating the completion of written independent study agreements~~
4. ~~Ensuring a smooth transition for students into and out of the independent study mode of instruction~~
5. ~~Approving all credits earned through independent study~~
6. ~~Completing or coordinating the preparation of all records and reports required by law, Board policy, or administrative regulation~~

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**INDEPENDENT STUDY (continued)**

Note: Pursuant to Education Code 51747.5, the district may only claim apportionment credit for independent study based on the time value of student work products as personally judged in each instance by a certificated teacher. Education Code 51747.5 specifies that the teacher is not required to sign and date the work products.

7. Determining the time value of assigned work or work products completed and submitted by the student
8. Assessing student work and assigning grades or other approved measures of achievement

Note: Education Code 51747.5, as amended by AB 130, requires districts to document each student's participation in live interaction and synchronous instruction pursuant to Education Code 51747 on each school day, as applicable, in whole or in part, for which independent study is provided. A student who does not participate in independent study on a school day shall be documented as nonparticipatory for that school day.

9. Documenting each student's participation in live interaction and/or synchronous instruction pursuant to Education Code 51747 on each school day for 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.

(cf. 4131 - Staff Development)

**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 listing of the students, by grade level, program, and school, who have participated in independent study, along with the units of the curriculum attempted and completed by students in grades K-8 and the course credits attempted by and awarded to students in grades 9-12 and adult education
3. A file of all agreements, with representative samples of each student's work products bearing the supervising teacher's notations indicating that he/she has personally evaluated the work or that he/she has personally reviewed the evaluations made by another certificated teacher

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