



## North Monterey County Unified School District

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### INDEPENDENT STUDY

#### *Overview*

Independent study is an optional alternative instructional strategy for eligible students whose needs may be best met through study outside of the regular classroom setting. Independent study offers a means of individualizing the learning plan to serve students who desire an alternative educational experience, whose health or other personal circumstances make classroom attendance difficult, who are unable to access course(s) due to scheduling problems, and/or who need to make up credits or fill gaps in their learning. While schools are not obligated to provide Independent Study, it may be offered on a full-time or part-time basis, alongside regular classroom study to meet student needs.

Students with Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) can participate in IS if the IEP team approves that necessary supports can be met through the program. According to California Education Code 57145(c), students must have a pre-approved IEP specifically allowing for participation in independent study.

#### *NMCUSD's Independent Study Options*

a) Long-Term Independent Study (Long-Term IS)

North Monterey County Unified School District (NMCUSD) offers Long-Term IS through the North Monterey County Center for Independent Study (NMCCIS), an alternative School of Choice. For more information, please visit the website at <https://independentstudy.nmcusd.org/>

b) Short-Term Independent Study (Short-Term IS)

Short-Term IS is an educational option provided as a courtesy to students who will be absent from school for at least one (1) and no more than fifteen (15) consecutive school days. This program allows for temporary, asynchronous learning under the supervision of certified staff, enabling students to keep up with their regular curriculum when away from school due to unique circumstances. As a result, students who have unavoidable absences for events that would otherwise be unexcused, get the classwork ahead of time, complete all work, return it on the assigned due date and receive attendance credit.

#### *Absences and Short-Term IS*

While students are highly discouraged from missing school for reasons other than illness, special circumstances sometimes necessitate some absences. To avoid penalties for missing class, students may contract to do work during the period of their absence. A Short-Term IS contract offers a voluntary alternative to a regular classroom program of instruction when a student will be absent between 1-15 days.