

Independent Study

The Governing Board recognizes its responsibility for the education of all youths in the school system. The Board authorizes Independent Study as an optional alternative instructional strategy for eligible students whose needs may best be met through study outside of the regular classroom setting. Independent Study shall offer a means of individualizing the educational plan and enabling students to reach curriculum objectives and fulfill graduation requirements. 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.

(cf. 0420.4 - Charter Schools)

(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)

(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)

(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)

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

(cf. 6200 - Adult Education)

A student's participation in independent study shall be voluntary. 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)

The district shall provide appropriate existing services and resources to enable students to complete their independent study successfully and shall ensure the same access to all existing services and resources in the school in which the student is enrolled as is available to all other students in the school. (Education Code 51746)

The Superintendent or designee shall approve independent study for an individual student only upon determining that the student is prepared to meet the district's requirements for independent study and is likely to succeed in independent study as well as or better than they would in the regular classroom.

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

Independent Study in grades K-12 will require commitment by the student, parents/guardians, credentialed teacher, and others who may assist directly with instruction.

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

Master Agreements and Assignment Contracts

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that a written Independent Study agreement, as prescribed by law, exists for each participating student. (Education Code 51747)

The written agreement shall specify the length of time in which each independent study assignment must be completed. 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.

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

When any student fails to complete an assignment, the school site may conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the student's best interest to remain in Independent Study. A written report shall be kept in the students' folder and/or permanent file. (Education Code 51747 (b))

The Superintendent or designee shall establish regulations to implement this policy in accordance with law.

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. Except in unusual circumstances, it is expected that the supervising teacher will meet, either in person or by electronic means, with each participating student at least once a week to discuss and collect assigned work.

(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)

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

The Superintendent or designee shall annually report to the Board the number of students participating in 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)

Fresno Unified School District does not harass, intimidate, or discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, ancestry, age, creed, religion, political affiliation, gender, gender identity or expression or genetic information, mental or physical disability, sex, sexual orientation, parental or marital status, military veteran status, or any other basis protected by law or regulation, in its educational program(s) or employment.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

17289 Exemption for facilities

41976.2 Independent study programs; adult education funding

42238 Revenue limits

44865 Qualifications for home teachers and teachers in special classes and schools; consent to assignment
46300-46300.6 Methods of computing ADA
47612.5 Independent study in charter schools
48204 Residency based on parent employment
48206.3 Home or hospital instruction; students with temporary disabilities
48220 Classes of children exempted
48340 Improvement of pupil attendance
48915 Expulsion; particular circumstances
48916.1 Educational program requirements for expelled students
48917 Suspension of expulsion order
51225.3 Requirements for high school graduation
51745-51749.3 Independent study programs
52522 Adult education alternative instructional delivery
52523 Adult education as supplement to high school curriculum
56026 Individuals with exceptional needs
58500-58512 Alternative schools and programs of choice

FAMILY CODE

6550 Authorization affidavits

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

11700-11703 Independent study
19819 State audit compliance

COURT DECISIONS

Modesto City Schools v. Education Audits Appeal Panel, (2004) 123 Cal.App.4th 1365

EDUCATION AUDIT APPEALS PANEL DECISIONS

Lucerne Valley Unified School District, Case No. 03-02 (2005)

Management Resources:

CDE PUBLICATIONS

Independent Study Operations Manual, 2000 edition

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>

Policy FRESNO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Adopted: March 26, 1992 Fresno, California

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