

ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATION
Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District

Instruction

6141.5 - AR

INDEPENDENT STUDY

A. Purpose and Scope

To provide a procedure and a framework for eligible students to enroll in a program of study using the independent study mode of instruction.

B. General

1. Provided that experienced certificated staff are available to effectively supervise students in independent study, the Superintendent or designee may approve the participation of a student who demonstrates the motivation, commitment, organizational skills, and academic skills necessary to work independently. A student whose academic performance is not at grade level may participate in independent study only if the program is able to provide appropriate support, such as supplemental instruction, tutoring, counseling, ongoing diagnostic assessments, and/or differentiated materials, to enable the student to be successful. For an elementary student, the Superintendent or designee may consider the parent/guardian's level of commitment to assist the student.
2. Educational opportunities during an extended absence consist of an independent study arrangement between the student, parent/guardian and the student's teacher.
3. A student participating in independent study must be a resident of the county or an adjacent county. Full-time independent study shall not be available to students whose district residency status is based on their parent/guardian's employment within district boundaries pursuant to Education Code 48204. (Education Code 46300.2, 51747.3)
4. Student enrollment in independent study must be continuously voluntary; students cannot be assigned to independent study or restricted from returning to a general education classroom. A classroom placement must always be available to the student upon request of the parent.
5. Students who have been identified as having a disability shall not be denied the opportunity to participate in independent study solely on the basis of their disability. A student may participate in independent study if the Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) team meets and determines that independent study is an appropriate ongoing educational program for that student. Secondary special education services (i.e. adaptive physical education, speech and language, counseling, psychological services, etc.) shall be continued as appropriate and as specified on the IEP. The IEP must also document the educational placement decision for independent study. (Education Code 51745)
6. Class size reduction funding is not available for any student enrolled in independent study.
7. To receive apportionment, students who are age 19 or 20 must have been continuously enrolled in school since their 18th birthday.
8. A certificated teacher of the school district must generally supervise, coordinate, and evaluate the work of each student engaged in independent study. Apportionment credit for independent study may be claimed only to the extent of the time value of pupil or student work products, as personally judged in each instance by a certificated teacher (E.C. 51747.5).

9. No more than 10% of the ADA of students participating in continuation or opportunity programs may be engaged in independent study education. Pregnant and/or parenting students are excluded from this limit. The number of students is based on ADA as reported at P2.
10. A full-day assignment of study shall be given for each school day. The time value of work product must meet the following minimum daily requirements in order to generate ADA:

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| Transitional Kindergarten | 180 minutes per day |
| Kindergarten | 180 minutes per day |
| Grades 1-3 | 230/240 minutes per day |
| Grades 4-8 | 240 minutes per day |
| Grades 9-12 | 240 minutes per day |
| Continuation/Opportunity | 180 minutes per day |

11. All students participating in independent study must sign a master agreement each year. The agreement shall include general student data, including the student's name, address, grade level, birthdate, school of enrollment, and program placement.

The master agreement must include the following:

- a. The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting the student's assignments and for reporting his/her progress
- b. The objectives and methods of study for the student's work and the methods used to evaluate that work
- c. The specific resources, including materials and personnel, that will be made available to the student
- d. A statement of the Board's policy detailing the maximum length of time allowed between an assignment and its completion and the number of missed assignments, by grade level and type of program, which will trigger an evaluation of whether the student should be allowed to continue in independent study
- e. The duration of the independent study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates for the student's participation in independent study under the agreement, with a maximum of one school year
- f. 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
- g. A statement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate
- h. 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

C. Forms Used and Additional References

Master Agreement

D. Procedure

1. Independent study is an open entry program and shall be available to all students in the district.
2. Parents may submit a request for short-term independent study to the principal of the student's school for an anticipated absence. Parents wishing to enroll their student in Parkview or Buena Vista Virtual Academy may apply directly to these schools.
3. The appropriate administrator, parent/guardian/caregiver, teacher, and student shall develop the master agreement.
4. Students enrolled in independent study must meet with their teacher on a regular basis as determined by California Education Code and documented within the Master Agreement.
5. Independent study attendance credit is earned and reported on the student work product from the assignments given and evaluated by the certificated teacher.
6. Students in Grades TK through six should receive the same amount of assigned work as they would in a regular school day. A minimum day's worth of work will only apply for attendance purposes, not academic grade equivalent to a full day. Recorded attendance in days should not exceed five days in one school week. Attendance shall be counted in days, not hours, except in opportunity, and continuation independent study programs for which recorded hours of attendance should not exceed 15 hours in one week.
7. Students enrolled in independent study have access to all existing services and resources in the district. The teacher, school administrator, and the parent shall determine what services, materials, or resources are necessary for the student to complete the independent study agreement. Independent study students have equal rights and privileges as students in the classroom program. If the student desires to participate in a class and/or co-curricular activity offered at the student's school of residence, the independent study administrator shall notify the appropriate site administrator and arrange for the student's participation. The student's performance in a school class or co-curricular activity shall be evaluated by the classroom teacher according to the standards used for all other students.
8. For the purpose of participation in high school athletics, students in independent study shall meet all requirements as defined by the California Interscholastic Federation (CIF), including status as a full-time student. Participation in CIF sanctioned sports at the resident school is contingent upon the existence of a CIF approved multi-school contract between the comprehensive high school and the independent study high school. Students are considered full-time independent study students upon completion of 20 credits per semester. Participation in CIF sports at comprehensive high schools requires concurrent enrollment in at least one course at the comprehensive school for the entire semester(s) during which the student participates in the sport.
9. Credits and Grades
 - a. Course work will be determined by the master agreement. Course contracts and assignment sheets will indicate the expected assignment to be completed by the student. After the teacher evaluates the completed student work, the teacher shall assign a grade, and determine the appropriate ADA generated.

- b. The teacher shall retain a portion of the student work for audit purposes. Each work sample retained shall have the student's full name, academic subject, and the grade or other appropriate measurement of performance.
- c. Completion of physical education assignments and courses must be verified by a coach or trainer or administrator for students in Grades 9-12 prior to awarding credit. Students in Grades K-8 may receive credit for physical education assignments upon verification by their parent or other responsible adult (e.g. coach).
- d. When a Master Agreement is completed, the independent study teacher will complete all records related to the independent study file, and send the completed file to the site principal/designee for review and file.
- e. When the appropriate school office receives the complete short-term independent study contract, the student's credits and grades will be logged into the student grade file. The representative sample of student work shall also be included in the student file for audit purposes.

10. Retention or Removal of Students

- a. When a student has missed four assignments in one semester, an administrative review will be conducted to determine the student's status, which could include termination, alternative placement, or probationary contract. A written record of the findings shall be maintained in the pupil's permanent record. Students who consistently have incomplete assignments will also have an evaluation to determine whether independent study is the best instructional placement.
- b. Students in independent study programs are subject to all existing district board policies regarding the promotion of a student to the next grade level.

E. Graduation Requirements

- 1. The student enrolled in independent study must complete the graduation requirements as prescribed. (See Board Policy 5128.1, 5128.2, 5128.3, or 5182.4 as applicable.)
- 2. When the requirements for graduation are completed, the student will be awarded the appropriate diploma.
- 3. Students in independent study schools are eligible to participate in graduation ceremonies at and will receive a diploma from the independent study school. They are also eligible to participate in graduation ceremonies at their school of concurrent enrollment.

F. Reports Required

As required by school and State Department of Education

G. Record Retention

- 1. As required by district policy and state law
- 2. A sample of work completed, related contract and logs required for audit

H. Responsible Administrative Unit

Assistant Superintendent - Student Support Services

Home-Based Independent Study

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 to the district's classroom instruction.

Program Evaluation

The Superintendent or designee shall annually report to the Board of Education 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 of Education and Superintendent shall determine areas for program improvement as needed.

I. Approved by:

Renee Gray

10/20/25

Responsible Division Head

Date

Dr. Kym LeBlanc-Esparza

10/20/25

Superintendent

Date