

**CLASSIFICATION: Instruction****ADOPTED: 4/28/82****REVISED: 9/8/21****SUBJECT: Independent Study****PAGE: 1 of 4**

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It is the intent of the County Board of Education that independent study be available to students in all schools and programs operated by the county superintendent of schools.

It is further the intent of the County Board of Education that independent study provide students the opportunity to fulfill regular classroom requirements through an optional alternative instructional strategy outside of the classroom based on the individual needs of the participating student.

The County Board of Education authorizes independent study as an optional alternative instructional strategy for eligible students whose needs may be best 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 through a differentiated experience. Curriculum provided during independent study shall be substantially equivalent to in-person instruction.

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. Due to an emergency circumstance, vacation, or illness, independent study may also be used on a short-term basis to ensure that the student is able to maintain academic progress in their regular classes.

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.

Parents/guardians of students who are interested in independent study shall contact the county superintendent of schools or designee. The county superintendent of schools or designee shall approve independent study for an individual student only upon determining that the student is prepared to meet SDCOE requirements for independent study and is likely to succeed in independent study in a manner comparable to 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. The requirements for daily/weekly synchronous instruction and live interaction as set forth in Education Code section 51747(d) – (f), shall not

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apply to pupils that participate in an independent study program for fewer than 15 school days in a school year.

The county superintendent of schools or designee shall ensure that a written independent study agreement, as prescribed by law, exists for each participating student.

Each student's independent study shall be coordinated, evaluated, and carried out under the general supervision of a certificated employee who consents to the assignment.

Satisfactory educational progress shall be determined by the student's supervising instructor based on criteria which includes but is not limited to: performance and engagement under Education Code section 52060, work completion, learned concepts, and progress toward completed of a course of study or individual course.

For students in transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1 to 3, inclusive, the written agreement shall designate opportunities for daily synchronous instruction throughout the school year.

For students in grades 4 to 8, inclusive, the written agreement shall designate a plan to provide opportunities for both daily live interaction and at least weekly synchronous instruction throughout the school year.

For students in grades 9 to 12, inclusive, the written agreement shall designate a plan to provide opportunities for at least weekly synchronous instruction throughout the school year.

When it has been determined that a student is not making satisfactory progress, SDCOE shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in a student's best interest to remain in independent study as determined by their achievement and engagement in the independent study program, completion of assignments, assessments or other indicators of student participation/work, acquisition of concept knowledge, and progress towards successful completion of required course(s) of study, and/or misses the number of assignments specified in the student's written agreement. Such evaluation is intended as one component of the tiered re-engagement strategies applicable to all students who are not generating attendance

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for more than three school days or 60 percent of the instructional days in a school week, or who are in violation of the students' written agreement.

#### Rights and Access

Students in independent study shall have access to the same services and resources that are available to the other students in the school and shall have equal rights and privileges. The county superintendent of schools or designee shall ensure that procedures for student enrollment, disenrollment, and reenrollment in SDCOE's independent study program are developed and communicated to parents/guardians, which shall include the right of any student participating in independent study to return to the regular in-person instructional program within five school days.

For a student with disabilities, as defined in Education Code section 56026, participation in independent study shall be approved only if the student's individualized education program specifically provides for such participation.

A temporarily disabled student shall not receive individual instruction pursuant to Education Code section 48206.3 by means of independent study.

#### Written Agreement

The county superintendent of schools or designee shall ensure that a written independent study agreement, as prescribed by law, exists for each participating student, and is maintained in the student's education file.

The county superintendent of schools or designee shall annually report to the County Board of Education the number of students participating in independent study, the average daily attendance generated for apportionment purposes, the quality of these students' work as measured by standard indicators, and the number and proportion of independent study students who graduate or successfully complete independent study. Based on the program evaluation, the County Board of Education and county superintendent of schools shall determine areas for program improvement as needed.

The county superintendent of schools shall maintain an administrative regulation that ensures compliance of independent study with the requirements of state laws and

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regulations.

**Administrative Regulation:** 6158

**Derivation:** Former Board Policy 6800 Adopted 4/28/82. Renumbered 6158 and Amended 11/8/95. Amended 6/13/12, 9/8/21.

**Legal Reference:** Education Code  
1983, 44865, 48206.3, 51745 – 51749.3, 52060, 56026  
California Code of Regulations, Title 5  
11700 - 11703