

# Lammersville USD

## Board Policy

### Independent Study

BP 6158

#### Instruction

The Governing Board 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 to serve students who desire a more challenging 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. 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)

The district online pathway at the high school level provides for students an additional option for the pursuit of educational goals. The online pathway independent study program offers an individualized course of study for pupils whose needs may be met outside of the traditional classroom setting while offering the benefits of the traditional comprehensive high school environment. Students engaged in the online pathway shall complete all district core requirements, earn 220 credits and pass all competency tests. These are the same requirements met by all high school students in the district.

(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)

(cf. 6011 - Academic Standards)

(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)

(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements)

(cf. 6146.11 - Alternative Credits Toward Graduation)

(cf. 6172 - Gifted and Talented Student Program)

(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)

Parents/guardians of students who are interested in independent study shall contact the Superintendent or designee. 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 he/she would in the regular classroom setting.

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

#### Written Agreements

Educational opportunities offered through independent study may include, but are not limited to:

1. Special assignments extending the content of regular courses of instruction
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
5. Volunteer community service activities and leadership opportunities that support and strengthen student achievement

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 their regular classes.

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

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)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that a written master agreement and, as appropriate, a learning agreement for students participating in course-based independent study exist for each participating student as prescribed by law. (Education Code 51747, 51749.5)

The written agreement shall include general student data, and shall also include all of the following: (Education Code 51747)

1. The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting the student's assignments for reporting their progress

2. The objectives and methods of study for the student's work and the methods used to evaluate that work
3. The specific resources, including materials and personnel, that will be made available to the student

#### Long-Term Independent Study

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

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.

#### Student-Teacher Conferences

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

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.

#### Program Evaluation

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)  
(cf. 6162.52 - High School Exit Examination)

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

17289 Exemption for facilities  
41976.2 Independent study programs; adult education funding  
42238 Revenue limits  
42238.05 Local control funding formula; average daily attendance  
44865 Qualifications for home teachers and teachers in special classes and schools  
46200-46208 Instructional day and year  
46300-46307.1 Methods of computing average daily attendance  
47612.5 Independent study in charter schools  
48204 Residency  
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  
49011 Student fees  
51225.3 Requirements for high school graduation  
51745-51749.6 Independent study programs  
52522 Adult education alternative instructional delivery  
52523 Adult education as supplement to high school curriculum; criteria  
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

UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20

6301 Highly qualified teachers

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:

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION PUBLICATIONS

Elements of Exemplary Independent Study

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.eap.ca.gov>

Policy LAMMERSVILLE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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