

# **SAN LORENZO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD POLICY**

**Instruction**

**BP 6158 (a)**

## **Independent Study Procedures**

Independent Study is an alternative strategy authorized in Title 5 Administrative Code Chapter 15, Sections 11700-11703, Education Code 51745, and other codes indicated in the California Independent Study Manual. The primary aim of Independent Study is to offer a means of individualizing the education plan of students whose needs may be best met through study outside the regular classroom setting. Circumstances arise in which it is in the best educational interest of students to provide them with varied, non-traditional methods of instruction to ensure attainment of their educational goals and/or to enrich their educational activities.

The Governing Board authorizes independent study as an optional alternative instructional strategy for students, in all grade level requirements. The District will inform all students/parents/caregivers of the existence of this strategy. Students may enroll in the strategy on a full or part-time basis, depending on individual circumstances and with the permission of the site principal or his/her designee.

Students in independent study shall have access to the same services and resources as are available to other students in the school. 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 or better than she/he would in the regular classroom.

In the San Lorenzo Unified School District, with site principal approval, four strategy options are available for students in independent study:

- At the elementary and secondary level, students may enroll in the Dayspring Home School Program in which parents assume primary responsibility for educating students at home while following District and State educational guidelines and regulations under the direct supervision of a validly certificated staff member.
- At the elementary and secondary level, a student may enroll in an independent study placement with one or more teachers on site due to extended illness as verified by a physician. However, a student temporarily disabled will receive instruction pursuant to Ed Code 48206.3.

## **Instruction**

## **BP 6158 (b)**

- At the secondary level, the site principal may permit a student in a special circumstance to enroll in an independent study agreement with an individual teacher supplement/complete graduation requirements only when a District program is not available to meet the student's needs, having exhausted the possibility of attending any District programs including Adult School, Alternative and Summer School.
- At the secondary level, a student may enroll full time in an Independent Study program.

Instruction in all Independent Study strategies will be supervised by a credentialed teacher and adhere to the policies and practices of the San Lorenzo Unified School District and the State of California. Matriculation in Independent Study at the secondary level should lead a student towards graduation.

For all students, a written independent study agreement, not to exceed a duration of one semester, must be signed by parent/guardian/caregiver, district representative (as defined below), and student enrolling in the strategy. Students over the age of 18 may sign in lieu of parent/guardian/caregiver. Each agreement shall be signed and in effect prior to the start of reporting attendance (ADA) pursuant to that agreement.

To foster each participating student's success in independent study, the Board establishes the following maximum lengths of time which may elapse between the date an assignment is made and the date by which the student must complete the assigned work:

1. Four weeks for students in grades K-8
2. Four weeks for students in grades 9-12

When circumstances justify a longer time, the Superintendent or designee may extend the maximum length of an assignment to a period not to exceed eight weeks, pursuant to a written request with justification. Enrollment of Continuation/Opportunity Program Students in Independent Study shall not exceed 10% of the total enrollment in the Continuation/Opportunity Program for each site that offers a Continuation/Opportunity Program.

As required by Education Code Section 51747(C)(8), the District representative authorized to sign the independent study contract will be the certificated employee who has primary responsibility for the general supervision of the independent study contract. At the District level, the Director of Student Support Services shall be designated as Independent Study Administrator; however the Continuation/Opportunity High School

**Instruction****BP 6158 (c)**

Principal will supervise the overall operation of independent study and the Dayspring Home School Program, including maintaining and submitting attendance records to the Director of Student Support Services. At the school site, the principal or designee shall assume the coordination of on-site independent study under the direction and supervision of the Director of Student Support Services.

Except in unusual circumstances, it is expected that the supervising teacher will meet with each participating student at least once a week to discuss the student's progress.

When any participating student fails to complete three consecutive independent study assignments in a period of 15 school days, or misses two appointments with his/her supervising teacher without valid reasons, an evaluation shall be conducted to determine whether it is in the student's best interest to remain in independent study.

Every student engaged in independent study must be enrolled in a school of the District. Independent study students will have the same rights and responsibilities to enroll in daily classes and participate in extracurricular activities as other students in the school record, except where stipulated by the independent study agreement.

ADA will be collected for students in independent study in a manner consistent with the Education Code. Students enrolled in independent study at their school of record campus shall be counted as part of the school's regular enrollment. Students will be counted as absent when they fail to meet their scheduled appointments with their designated instructor.

Students will earn credits in independent study based upon the criteria established for each student in his/her agreement. One unit of credit shall be awarded for not less than 12 hours of student activities with a minimum of proficiency. Units and grades will be assigned at the end of each marking period or upon termination of the student agreement, whichever occurs first. Independent study credit is awarded based upon appropriate assessment of student work in order to accommodate students of all academic needs and abilities who have not met with success in the comprehensive high school program; emphasis is on successful completion of credit toward graduation.

(California Education Code Section – Reference: 46300et seq. and 51745 et seq.)  
California Code of Regulations – Title V (Section 11700-11703)

Date Adopted: 10/15/79; Board approved revision: 11/4/97; 9/7/2004; 3/1/2011