

INSTRUCTION

BP 6583.1 Independent Study

Effective alternative education programs designed to respond to the different ways pupils acquire learning shall be encouraged and maintained. More specifically alternative means for pupils to complete their prescribed course of study shall be provided through independent study which is an educational alternative that allows the flexibility and scheduling in learning activities required by many pupils.

Educational opportunities offered through independent study shall include the following:

1. Special assignments extending the content of regular courses and instruction and;
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;
4. Continuing and special study during travel;
5. Volunteer community service activities that support and strengthen pupil achievement.

Independent study shall not be provided as an alternative curriculum.

No individual with exceptional needs as defined in Education Code Section 56026 may participate in independent study unless his or her individualized education program specifically provides for that participation.

No temporarily disabled pupil may receive individualized instruction pursuant to Education Code Section 48206.3 through independent study.

No course included among courses required for high school graduation under Education Code Section 51225.3 shall be offered exclusively through independent study.

Independent study shall provide appropriate existing services and resources to enable pupils to complete their independent study successfully and shall insure the same access to all existing services and resources as is available to all other pupils in the school.

1 This policy has been continually in effect since its adoption in October of 1990 and is reconfirmed.

Services and resources for independent study shall include:

1. A designated learning center or study area staffed by appropriately trained personnel;
2. The services of qualified personnel to assess the achievement, abilities, interests, aptitudes and needs of participating pupils to determine each of the following:
 - a. Whether full-time independent study is the most appropriate alternative for the pupil;
 - b. A determination of the most appropriate individualized plan and resources to be made available to pupils enrolled in full-time independent study if, in fact, it is the most appropriate alternative for the pupil.

The maximum length of time which may elapse between the time an independent study assignment is made and the date by which the pupil must complete the assigned work is one semester (which shall in no case exceed six months) for all grade levels and types of programs.

The number of missed assignments which will be allowed before an evaluation is conducted to determine whether it is in the best interest of the pupil to remain in independent study or whether he or she should return to the regular school program shall be specified by a written agreement. In any case, the maximum number of missed assignments shall not exceed three consecutive independent study assignments or two appointments without valid reasons.

A written record of findings of any evaluation to determine whether a pupil should remain in independent study shall be maintained in the pupil's program record.

A current written agreement for each independent study pupil shall be maintained on file, which shall include:

1. The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting the pupil's assignments and for reporting his or her progress;
2. The objectives and methods of study for the pupil to work, and the methods utilized to evaluate the pupil's work;
3. The specific resources including materials and personnel which will be made available to the pupil;
4. The statement of the policies adopted herein regarding the maximum length of time allowed between the assignment and the completion of the pupil's assigned work, and the number of missed

assignments, which will require an evaluation of whether or not the pupil should be allowed to continue in independent study;

5. The duration of the independent study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates for the pupil's participation, provided no independent study agreement shall be valid for any period longer than one semester;
6. A statement of the number of course credits or, for the elementary grades, other measure of academic accomplishments appropriate to the agreement to be earned by the pupil upon completion;
7. The inclusion of a statement in each independent study agreement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no pupil may be required to participate;

In the case of a pupil who is referred or assigned to any school, class, or program pursuant to Section 48917, the agreement shall include the statement that instruction may be provided to the pupil through independent study only if the pupil is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.

8. Each written agreement shall be signed prior to the commencement of the independent study by:
 - a. The pupil;
 - b. The pupil's parent or legal guardian if the pupil is less than 18 years of age;
 - c. The certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study;
 - d. All persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the pupil.

Independent study by each pupil or student 18 years of age or less shall be coordinated, evaluated, and under the general supervision of an employee of the County Office of Education who possesses a valid certification document pursuant to Education Code Section 44865 as required by law.

Except in the case of waiver, the ratio of average daily attendance by independent study pupils of 18 years of age or less to the County Office of Education full-time certificated employees responsible for independent study, to be calculated in a manner prescribed by the State Department of Education, shall not exceed the equivalent ratio for all other educational programs operated by the High School or Unified School District with the largest average daily attendance of pupils in the County.

Legal Reference: E.C. §§ 44865; 48206.3; 51225.3; 51745; 51747; 58500-58512; 56026
CAC, Title V, Part I, Division II, Chapter §§ 11702-11704

First Reading: September 4, 1990
Second Reading: October 2, 1990
Adopted: October 2, 1990
Supersedes: New Policy
Revised: April 6, 1993
Revised: May 1, 2001
Re-adopted: June 5, 2001