SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
BOARD OF EDUCATION

Agenda Item# 12.1f

Meeting Date: August 19, 2021

Subject: Approve Revised Board Policy 6158 (Independent Study)

- ☐ Information Item Only
- ☒ Approval on Consent Agenda
- ☐ Conference (for discussion only)
- ☐ Conference/First Reading (Action Anticipated: _____)
- ☐ Conference/Action
- ☐ Action
- ☐ Public Hearing

Division: Curriculum and Instruction/Legal Services

Recommendation: Approve revision to Board Policy 6158.

Background/Rationale: The 2021-2022 Education Omnibus Budget Trailer Bill includes changes to independent study. *See* Education Code 51745, et seq. For the 2021-2022 school year only, school districts are required to offer an independent study program to meet the educational needs of pupils unless a waiver is obtained. School districts are also required to adopt policy with specified components in order to generate apportionment for independent study. Policy updates concern – but are not limited to – the minimum period of time permitted for independent study, evaluations to determine if students should continue in independent study if they fail to make satisfactory educational progress, and content alignment to grade level standards. Such updates include language in the CSBA Gamut model policy.

The District plans to adopt AR 6173, which includes language in the CSBA Gamut model regulation.

Documents Attached:
1. Executive Summary
2. BP 6158 (Redlines)
3. AR 6158 (Redlines)

Estimated Time of Presentation: N/A
Submitted by: Raoul Bozio, In House Counsel
Approved by: Jorge A. Aguilar, Superintendent

Board of Education Executive Summary

Legal Department

Revision to Board Policy (BP) 6158: Independent Study

August 19, 2021

I. Overview/History of Department or Program

On July 9, 2021, Governor Gavin Newsome signed AB 130 into law, which includes changes to independent study. Although this summary is not inclusive of all of the changes, it highlights several of the more pressing new elements for the upcoming school year and requirements with respect to revising Board Policy 6158. These changes include – but are not limited to – independent study offering requirements and pupil-parent-educator conferences and additions to board policies and written agreements.

The proposed revisions to Board Policy 6158 are based on the updates provided by the California School Boards Association (CSBA). Further, the revised board policy now includes the following, which is required under AB 130:

- Satisfactory progress as an added means to evaluate continued independent study participation and placement;
- Provision of standards aligned content in independent study that is substantially equivalent to the quality and intellectual challenge of in-person instruction;
- For high schools, a provision for access to all courses offered by the LEA for graduation and approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the A-G admission criteria;
- Procedures for tiered reengagement strategies;
- A plan to provide opportunities for synchronous instruction for all grade levels and live interaction for grades four through eight; and
- A plan to transition pupils whose families wish to return to in-person instruction from independent study expeditiously and not later than five instructional days.

Subsequent to adoption of the revised policy, the District intends to adopt Administrative Regulation 6158, which is also based on the updates provided by the CSBA and follows AB 130. AR 6158 furthermore addresses details of independent study, including providing definitions for *live interaction*, *student-parent-educator conference*, and *synchronous instruction*.

II. Driving Governance:

Education Code 51745-51749.6 authorize districts to establish independent study programs to meet the educational needs of students. Pursuant to Education Code 51745-51745-51749.6, as amended by AB 130, the following updates and changes are required.

The programmatic changes to independent study include:

- A conference between the LEA and parent/guardian prior to enrolling or disenrolling a pupil from any learning option, if requested by the parent or guardian;
- Instructional content aligned to grade level standards at a level of quality and

intellectual challenge substantially equivalent to in-person instruction;
- For high schools, access to all courses offered by the LEA for graduation and approved as creditable under the A-G admissions criteria;
- For transitional kindergarten and grades 1-3, a plan to provide opportunities for daily synchronous instruction;
- For grades 4-8, a plan to provide opportunities for both daily live interaction and at least weekly synchronous instruction;
- For grades 9-12, a plan to provide opportunities for synchronous instruction at least weekly;
- Documentation of a pupil's participation in live interaction and synchronous instruction;
- Retention of evidence of a pupil's engagement in instruction;
- Confirmation that the pupil has internet connectivity, otherwise the LEA will need to provide adequate connectivity or devices to the pupil; and
- A plan to promptly transition pupils back into in-person instruction within five instructional days of a parent or guardian's request to do so.

See Education Code 51747, 51749.5.

New elements that need to be incorporated into written policies include:
- Identification of the level of "satisfactory educational progress" (in addition to the number of missed assignments) that 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 return to the regular school program. The indicators of "satisfactory educational progress" include the pupil's achievement and engagement, completion of assignments and learning required concepts; and
- Procedures for tiered reengagement of independent study pupils not generating more than three school days or 60% of the instructional days in a school week, or who are not in compliance with the written agreement; tiered reengagement and several other elements are not required for independent study of fewer than 15 days.

See Education Code 51747, 51749.5.

New elements that need to be incorporated into written policies and written agreements with pupils include:
- The manner, time, frequency, and place for communicating with a pupil's parent or guardian regarding a pupil's academic progress; and
- A statement detailing the academic and other supports that will be provided to address the needs of pupils who are not performing at grade level, or need support in other areas, such as English learners, pupils with exceptional needs, pupils in foster care or experiencing homelessness, and pupils requiring mental health supports.

See Education Code 51747, 51749.6.

III. Budget:

The proposed policy is intended to recognize that students' needs may be met best through study outside the regular classroom setting and provide them an optional alternative instructional strategy while enabling them to meet District standards within the customary time frame. There is no direct budget impact from the required revision to this policy.

IV. Goals, Objectives and Measures:

Pursuant to the District's core beliefs under Board Policy 0100, the District believes "that ALL STUDENTS WILL LEARN AT HIGH LEVELS when instruction meets their needs." As such, the goal is for the District to establish sound policy that recognizes and authorizes independent study as an optional alternative instructional strategy for students whose needs may be met best through study outside of the regular classroom setting.

V. Major Initiatives:

This independent study policy is critical to provide an optional alternative instructional strategy as a means to encourage students to remain in school.

VI. Results:

Approval of revision to Board Policy 6158 on consent agenda. Ensure compliance with AB 130 and Education Code.

VII. Lessons Learned/Next Steps:

Adoption of revised Board Policy 6158 concerning independent study. Information and correspondences concerning this matter have previously been shared with the District. Further updates will be provided as necessary.

Sacramento City USD

Board Policy

Independent Study

BP 6158
Instruction

The Governing Board authorizes independent study as an optional alternative instructional strategy ~~by which~~for students ~~in grades K-12 and adult education may reach curriculum objectives and fulfill graduation requirements. Independent study shall offer a means of individualizing the educational plan for students~~ whose needs may be met best 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, and an online course.

(cf. 0420.4 - Charter School Authorization)
(cf. 6181 - Alternative Schools/Programs of Choice)
~~The district's independence study school(s) will provide instruction through the alternative strategy - independent study. (Education code - 51747)~~

A student's participation in independent study shall be voluntary. (Education Code 51747, 51749.5)

Independent study for each student shall be under the general supervision of a district employee who possesses a valid certification document pursuant to Education Code 44865 or an emergency credential pursuant to Education Code 44300. Students' independent study shall be coordinated, evaluated, and documented, as prescribed by law and reflected in the accompanying administrative regulation. (Education Code 51747.5)

The minimum period of time for any independent study option shall be three consecutive school days.
~~(cf. 5147 - Dropout Prevention)~~

General Independent Study Requirements

For the 2021-22 school year, the district shall offer independent study, as specified in Education Code 51745, to meet the educational needs of students unless the district has obtained a waiver. (Education Code 51745)

For the 2022-23 school year and thereafter, the Superintendent or designee may continue to offer and approve independent study for an individual student 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 the student would in the regular classroom setting.

(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)

Because excessive leniency in the duration of independent study assignments may result in a student falling behind peers and increase the risk of dropping out of school, independent study assignments shall be completed no more than one week after assigned 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 fails to make satisfactory educational progress and/or misses three assignments. Satisfactory educational progress shall be determined based on all of the following indicators: (Education Code 51747)

1. The student's achievement and engagement in the independent study program, as indicated by the student's performance on applicable student-level measures of student achievement and engagement specified in Education Code 52060

2. The completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that evidence that the student is working on assignments

3. Learning required concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher

4. Progress towards successful completion of the course of study or individual course, as determined by the supervising teacher

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that students participating in independent study are provided with content aligned to grade level standards at a level of quality and intellectual challenge substantially equivalent to in-person instruction. For high schools, this shall include access to all courses offered by the district for graduation and approved by the University of

California or the California State University as creditable under the A-G admissions criteria. (Education Code 51747)
~~The district's independent study school(s) shall provide equivalency in quality and quantity in instruction, thus enabling students enrolled in independent study to complete the district's adopted course of study and meet district standards within the customary time frame. Students in independent study shall have access to the same services and resources as is available to other students in the traditional schools.~~

~~(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)~~
~~(cf. 6200 - Adult Education)~~

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that students participating in independent study for 15 school days or more receive the following throughout the school year: ~~determine that the prospective independent study student understands and is prepared to meet the district's requirements for independent study. Independent study entails a commitment by both the parent/guardian and the student. As the student gets older, he/she assumes a greater portion of the responsibility involved. Independent study may be offered only to students who can achieve in this program as well as or better than they would in the regular classroom.~~

~~The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that a written independent study agreement, as prescribed by law, exists for each participating student. (Education Code 51747)~~

~~The Board recognizes that independent study may be used as an option to encourage students to remain in school. Teachers should carefully set the duration of independent study assignments, within the limits specified by the Board in order to help identify students falling behind in their work or in danger of failing or dropping out of school.~~

~~To foster each student's success in independent study, the Board establishes the following maximum lengths of time which may elapse between the time an assignment is made and date by which the student must complete the assigned work shall be as follows:~~ (Education Code 51747)

1. For students in grades transitional kindergarten and K-3, opportunities for daily synchronous instruction~~: 1 week~~

2. For students in grades 4-8~~: 2 weeks~~, opportunities for both daily live interaction and at least weekly synchronous instruction

3. For students in grades 9-12, ~~2 weeks continuation and adult education~~ opportunities for at least weekly synchronous instruction

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that procedures for tiered reengagement strategies are used for all students who are not generating attendance for more than three school days or 60 percent of the instructional days in a school week, or who are in violation of their written agreement. This requirement only applies to students participating in an independent study

program for 15 school days or more. The procedures shall include, but are not necessarily limited to, all of the following: (Education Code 51747)

1. Verification of current contact information for each enrolled student

2. Notification to parents/guardians of lack of participation within one school day of the absence or lack of participation

3. A plan for outreach from the school to determine student needs, including connection with health and social services as necessary

4. A clear standard for requiring a student-parent-educator conference to review a student's written agreement and reconsider the independent study program's impact on the student's achievement and well-being

The Superintendent or designee shall develop a plan to transition students whose families wish to return to in-person instruction from independent study expeditiously, and, in no case later, than five instructional days. This requirement only applies to students participating in an independent study program for 15 school days or more. (Education Code 51747)

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that a written master agreement exists for each participating student as prescribed by law. (Education Code 51747, 51749.5)

The district shall provide written notice to the parents/guardians of all enrolled students of the option to enroll their child in in-person instruction or independent study during the 2021-22 school year. This notice shall be posted on the district's web site, and shall include, at a minimum, information about the right to request a student-parent-educator conference before enrollment, student rights regarding procedures for enrolling, disenrolling, and reenrolling in independent study, and the instructional time, including synchronous and asynchronous learning, that a student will have access to as part of independent study. (Education Code 51747)

Upon the request of the parent/guardian of a student, before making a decision about enrolling or disenrolling in independent study and entering into a written agreement to do so, the district shall conduct a telephone, videoconference, or in-person student-parent-educator conference or other meeting during which the student, parent/guardian, or their advocate may ask questions about the educational options, including which curriculum offerings and nonacademic supports will be available to the student in independent study. (Education Code 51747)

Master Agreement

For the 2021-22 school year only, the district shall obtain a signed written agreement for independent study no later than 30 days after the first day of instruction.

A written agreement shall be developed and implemented for each student participating in independent study for three or more consecutive school days. (Education Code 46300, 51747; 5 CCR 11703)

The agreement shall include general student data, including the student's name, address, grade level, birth date, school of enrollment, and program placement.

The independent study agreement for each participating student also shall include, but are not limited to, all of the following: (Education Code 51747; 5 CCR 11700, 11702)

1. The frequency, time, place and manner for submitting the student's assignments, reporting the student's academic progress, and communicating with a student's parent/guardian regarding the student's academic 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 that will be made available to the student, including materials and personnel, and access to Internet connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work

4. A statement of the Board's policy detailing the maximum length of time allowed between an assignment and its completion, the level of satisfactory educational progress, and the number of missed assignments which will trigger an evaluation of whether the student should be allowed to continue in independent study

5. 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

6. A statement of the number of course credits or, for the elementary grades, other measures of academic accomplishment appropriate to the agreement, to be earned by the student upon completion

7. A statement detailing the academic and other supports that will be provided to address the needs of students who are not performing at grade level, or need support in other areas, such as English learners, students with disabilities with an individualized education program or a Section 504 plan in order to be consistent with their program or plan, students in foster care or experiencing homelessness, and students requiring mental health supports.

8. A statement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate

9. 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

(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)

10. Before the commencement of independent study, the agreement shall be signed and dated by the student, the student's parent/guardian or caregiver if the student is under age 18 years, the certificated employee responsible for the general supervision of independent study, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the student.

However, for the 2021-22 school year, the district shall obtain a signed written agreement for independent study from the student, or the student's parent/ guardian if the student is less than 18 years of age, the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the pupil, no later than 30 days after the first day of instruction.

Written agreements may be signed using an electronic signature that complies with state and federal standards, as determined by the California Department of Education (CDE). (Education Code 51747)

The parent/guardian's signature on the agreement shall constitute permission for the student to receive instruction through independent study.

Course-Based Independent Study

The district's course-based independent study program for students in grades K-12 shall be subject to the following requirements: (Education Code 51749.5)

1. A signed learning agreement shall be completed and on file for each participating student pursuant to Education Code 51749.6

2. Courses shall be taught under the general supervision of certificated employees who hold the appropriate subject matter credential and are employed by the district or by another district, charter school, or county office of education with which the district has a memorandum of understanding to provide the instruction.

(cf. 4112.2 - Certification)

3. Courses shall be annually certified by Board resolution to be of the same rigor and educational quality and to provide intellectual challenge that is substantially equivalent to in-person, classroom-based instruction, and shall be aligned to all relevant local and state content standards. For high schools, this shall include access to all courses offered by the district for graduation and approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the A-G admissions criteria. The certification shall, at a minimum, include the duration, number of equivalent daily instructional minutes for each school day that student is enrolled, number of equivalent total instructional minutes, and number of course credits for each course, consistent with that of equivalent classroom-based courses. The certification shall also include plans to provide opportunities for students in grades transitional kindergarten, kindergarten, and grades 1-3 to receive daily

synchronous instruction, for students in grades 4-8, to receive both daily live interaction and at least weekly synchronous instruction, and for students in grades 9-12 to receive at least weekly synchronous instruction.

4. Students enrolled in independent study courses shall meet the applicable age requirements established pursuant to Education Code 46300.1, 46300.4, 47612, and 47612.1, and the applicable residency and enrollment requirements established pursuant to Education Code 46300.2, 47612, 48204, and 51747.3.

5. For each student participating in an independent study course, satisfactory educational progress shall be determined based on the student's achievement and engagement in the independent study program, as indicated by their performance on applicable student-level measures of student achievement and student engagement set forth in Education Code 52060, completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that evidence that the student is working on assignments, learning of required concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher, and progress toward successful completion of the course of study or individual course, as determined by the supervising teacher.

If satisfactory educational progress in an independent study class is not being made, the teacher shall notify the student and, if the student is under age 18 years, the student's parent/guardian. The teacher shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the student's best interest to remain in the course or whether the student should be referred to an alternative program, which may include, but is not limited to, a regular school program. A written record of the evaluation findings shall be a mandatory interim student record maintained for three years from the date of the evaluation. If the student transfers to another California public school, the record shall be forwarded to that school.

Procedures for tiered reengagement strategies shall be used for all students who are not making satisfactory educational progress in one or more courses or who are in violation of the written learning agreement, as described in the section "Learning Agreement for Course-Based Independent Study" below. These procedures shall include, but are not necessarily limited to, the verification of current contact information for each enrolled student, notification to parents/guardians of lack of participation within one school day of the absence or lack of participation, a plan for outreach from the school to determine student needs, including connection with health and social services as necessary, and a clear standard for requiring a student-parent-educator conference to review a student's written agreement and reconsider the independent study program's impact on the student's achievement and well-being.

(cf. 5125 - Student Records)

6. Examinations shall be administered by a proctor.

7. Statewide testing results shall be reported and assigned to the school at which the student is enrolled and shall be included in the aggregate results of the district. Test results also

shall be disaggregated for purposes of comparisons with the test results of students enrolled in classroom-based courses.

(cf. 6162.51 - State Academic Achievement Tests)

8. A student shall not be required to enroll in courses included in the course-based independent study program.

9. The student-teacher ratio in the courses in this program shall meet the requirements of Education Code 51745.6.

10. For each student, the combined equivalent daily instructional minutes for courses in this program and all other courses shall meet applicable minimum instructional day requirements, and the student shall be offered the minimum annual total equivalent instructional minutes pursuant to Education Code 46200-46208.

(cf. 6111 - School Calendar)
(cf. 6112 - School Day)

11. Courses required for high school graduation or for admission to the University of California or California State University shall not be offered exclusively through independent study.

12. A student participating in this program shall not be assessed a fee that is prohibited by Education Code 49011.

(cf. 3260 - Fees and Charges)

13. A student shall not be prohibited from participating in independent study solely on the basis that the student does not have the materials, equipment, or access to Internet connectivity necessary to participate in the course.

14. A student with disabilities, as defined in Education Code 56026, shall not participate in course-based independent study, unless the student's individualized education program specifically provides for that participation.

15. A temporarily disabled student shall not receive individual instruction pursuant to Education Code 48206.3 through course-based independent study.

16. The district shall maintain a plan to transition any student whose family wishes to return to in-person instruction from course-based independent study expeditiously, and, in no case, later than five instructional days.

Learning Agreement for Course-Based Independent Study

Before enrolling a student in a course within this program, the Superintendent or designee shall provide the student and, if the student is under age 18 years, the student's parent/guardian with a

written learning agreement that includes all of the following: (Education Code 51749.6)

1. A summary of the district's policies and procedures related to course-based independent study pursuant to Education Code 51749.5

2. The duration of the enrolled course(s) and the number of course credits for each enrolled course, consistent with the Board certifications made pursuant to item #2 above

3. The duration of the learning agreement, which shall not exceed a school year or span multiple school years

4. The learning objectives and expectations for each course, including, but not limited to, a description of how satisfactory educational progress is measured and when a student evaluation is required to determine whether the student should remain in the course or be referred to an alternative program, which may include, but is not limited to, a regular school program

5. The specific resources that will be made available to the student, including materials and personnel, and access to Internet connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work

6. A statement detailing the academic and other supports that will be provided to address the needs of students who are not performing at grade level, or need support in other areas, such as English learners, students with disabilities with an individualized education program or a Section 504 plan in order to be consistent with their program or plan, students in foster care or experiencing homelessness, and students requiring mental health supports.

7. A statement that enrollment is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate. In the case of a student who is suspended or expelled, or who is referred or assigned to any school, class, or program pursuant to Education Code 48915 or 48917, the agreement also shall include the statement that instruction may be provided to the student through course-based independent study only if the student is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.

8. The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting a student's assignments, for reporting the student's academic progress, and for communicating with a student's parent/guardian regarding a student's academic progress.

9. The objectives and methods of study for the student's work, and the methods used to evaluate that work.

10. A statement of the adopted policies regarding the maximum length of time allowed between the assignment and the completion of a student's assigned work, the level of satisfactory educational progress, and the number of missed assignments allowed before an evaluation of whether the student should be allowed to continue in course-based independent study.

11. A statement of the number of course credits or, for the elementary grades, other measures of academic accomplishment appropriate to the learning agreement, to be earned by the student upon completion.

12. Before the commencement of an independent study course, the learning agreement shall be signed and dated by the student, the student's parent/guardian or caregiver, if the student is less than 18 years of age, the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of the independent study course, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the student. For purposes of this paragraph "caregiver" means a person who has met the requirements of Family Code 6550-6552.

    However, for the 2021-22 school year only, the district shall obtain a signed written agreement for independent study from the student, or the student's parent/guardian if the student is less than 18 years of age, the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of the independent study course, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the pupil no later than 30 days after the first day of instruction.

    Written agreements may be signed using an electronic signature that complies with state and federal standards, as determined by the CDE. (Education Code 51749.6)

The student's or parent/guardian's signature shall constitute permission for the student to receive instruction through independent study. (Education Code 51749.6)

The Superintendent or designee shall retain a physical or electronic copy of the signed learning agreement for at least three years and as appropriate for auditing purposes. (Education Code 51749.6)

Student-Parent-Educator Conferences

A student-parent-educator conference shall be held as appropriate including, but not limited to, as a reengagement strategy and/or if requested by a parent/guardian prior to enrollment or disenrollment from independent study. (Education Code 51745.5, 51747, 51749.5)

Records for Audit Purposes

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that records are maintained for audit purposes. These records shall include, but not be limited to: (Education Code 51748; 5 CCR 11703)

1. A copy of the Board policy, administrative regulation, and other procedures related to independent study

2. A listing of the students, by grade level, program, and school, who have participated in independent study, along with the units of the curriculum attempted and completed by

students in grades K-8 and the course credits attempted by and awarded to students in grades 9-12 and adult education

3. A file of all agreements, with representative samples of each student's work products bearing the supervising teacher's notations indicating that the teacher has personally evaluated the work or personally reviewed the evaluations made by another certificated teacher

4. As appropriate to the program in which the students are participating, a daily or hourly attendance register that is separate from classroom attendance records, maintained on a current basis as time values of student work products judged by a certificated teacher, and reviewed by the supervising teacher if they are two different persons

5. Appropriate documentation of compliance with the teacher-student ratios required by Education Code 51745.6 and 51749.5 (Education Code 51745.6 and 51749.5)

6. Appropriate documentation of compliance with the requirements pursuant to Education Code 51747.5 to ensure the coordination, evaluation, and supervision of the independent study of each student by a district employee who possesses a valid certification document pursuant to Education Code 44865 or an emergency credential pursuant to Education Code 44300 (Education Code 51747.5)

The district shall document each student's participation in live interaction and synchronous instruction pursuant to Education Code 51747 on each school day, as applicable, in whole or in part, for which independent study is provided. A student who does not participate in independent study on a school day shall be documented as nonparticipatory for that school day. (Education Code 51747.5)

The Superintendent or designee also shall maintain a written or computer-based record such as a grade book or summary document of student engagement, for each class, of all grades, assignments, and assessments for each student for independent study assignments. (Education Code 51747.5)

(cf. 3580 - District Records)

The signed, dated agreement, any supplemental agreement, assignment records, work samples, and attendance records may be maintained on file electronically. (Education Code 51747)

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)
~~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.~~

~~When any student fails to complete two consecutive independent study assignments, the Superintendent or designee shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the student's best interest to remain in independent study. Evaluation findings shall be kept in the student's permanent record.~~

~~(cf. 5125 - Student Records)~~

~~The Superintendent or designee shall annually report to the Board the number of students engaged in independent study, the ADA generated, 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.~~

~~Home Schooling Through Independent Study~~

~~The Superintendent or designee shall encourage parents/guardians desiring to teach their children at home to enroll their children in independent study. Such enrollment allows continued contact and cooperation between the school system and home-based student.~~

Legal Reference:
EDUCATION CODE
17289 Exemption for building
41020 Audit guidelines
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; consent to assignment
46200-46208 Instructional day and year
46300-46307.1~~0.6~~ Methods of computing average daily attendance ~~ADA~~
46390-46393 Emergency average daily attendance
46600 Interdistrict attendance computation
47612-47612.1 Charter school operation
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
51745-51749.63 Independent study programs
52060 Local control and accountability plan
52522 Adult education alternative instructional delivery
52523 Adult education as supplement to high school curriculum; criteria~~52000 Improvement of elementary and secondary education: legislative intent~~
~~52015 School improvement plans: components of plan~~
~~52017 Secondary schools: additional plan components~~
56026 Individual 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
UNITED STATES CODE, TITLE 20
6301 Highly qualified teachers
6311 State plans
COURT DECISIONS
Modesto City Schools v. Education Audits Appeal Panel, (2004) 123 Cal.App.4th 1365

Management Resources:
Elements of Exemplary Independent Study
California Digital Learning Integration and Standards Guidance, April 2021
EDUCATION AUDIT APPEALS PANEL PUBLICATIONS
Guide for Annual Audits of K-12 Local Education Agencies and State Compliance Reporting
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.eaap.ca.gov
~~CDE PROGRAM ADVISORIES~~
~~1113.09 Independent Study: New Legislation, SPB: 90/91-04~~
~~0904.86 Independent Study, SPB: 86/7-5~~
~~CDE PUBLICATIONS~~
~~Independent Study Operations Manual, 1993 revised edition, updated 1994, 1996~~
~~WEB SITES~~
~~CDE: http://www.cde.ca.gov~~

Policy SACRAMENTO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
adopted: November 16, 1998 Sacramento, California
revised: April 15, 2002

revised: TBD

Sacramento City USD
Administrative Regulation
Independent Study

AR 6158
Instruction

Definitions

Live interaction means interaction between the student and classified or certificated staff, and may include peers, provided for the purpose of maintaining school connectedness, including, but not limited to, wellness checks, progress monitoring, provision of services, and instruction. This interaction may take place in person, or in the form of Internet or telephonic communication. (Education Code 51745.5)

Student-parent-educator conference means a meeting involving, at a minimum, all parties who signed the student's written independent study agreement pursuant to Education Code 51747 or the written learning agreement pursuant to Education Code 51749.6. (Education Code 51745.5)

Synchronous instruction means classroom-style instruction or designated small group or one-on-one instruction delivered in person, or in the form of Internet or telephonic communications, and involving live two-way communication between the teacher and student. Synchronous instruction shall be provided by the teacher of record for that student pursuant to Education Code 51747.5. (Education Code 51745.5)
~~No student shall be required to participate in independent study. (Education Code 51747)~~

Educational Opportunities

For the 2021-22 school year, the district shall offer independent study to meet the educational needs of students as specified in Education Code 51745 unless the district has obtained a waiver. (Education Code 51745)

Educational opportunities offered through independent study may include, but are not limited to: (Education Code 51745)

1. Special assignments extending the content of regular courses of instruction

(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)

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

(cf. 5112.3 - Student Leave of Absence)

5. Volunteer community service activities and leadership opportunities that support and strengthen student achievement

6. Individualized study for a student whose health, as determined by the student's parent/guardian, would be put at risk by in-person instruction

(cf. 0420.4 - Charter School Authorization)
(cf. 6142.4 - Service Learning/Community Service Classes)
(cf. 6181 - Alternative Schools/Programs of Choice)

In addition, when requested by a parent/guardian due to an emergency or illness, independent study may be used on a short-term basis to ensure that the student is able to maintain academic progress in the student's regular classes.

(cf. 5113 - Absences and Excuses)

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

~~(cf. 6146.1 - High School Graduation Requirements/Standards of Proficiency)~~

~~No individual with disabilities, as defined in Education Code 56026, may participate in independent study unless his/her individualized education program specifically provides for such participation. (Education Code 51745)~~

~~(cf. 6159 - Individualized Education Program)~~

~~Students enrolling in independent study must be residents of the local county or an adjacent county. (Education Code 51747.3)~~

~~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. (Education Code 51747.3)~~

~~(cf. 5111.12 - Residency Based on Parent/Guardian Employment)~~

~~No more than 10% of the students enrolled in continuation or opportunity education may be in independent study at any given time. (Education Code 51745)~~

~~(cf. 6182 - Opportunity School/Class/Program)~~
~~(cf. 6184 - Continuation Education)~~

~~No temporarily disabled student may receive individual instruction pursuant to Education Code 48206.3 by means of independent study. (Education Code 51745)~~

~~(cf. 6183 - Home and Hospital Instruction)~~

Equivalency

The district's independent study option shall be substantially equivalent in quality and quantity to classroom instruction to enable participating students to complete the district's adopted course of study within the customary timeframe. Students in independent study shall have access to the same services and resources that are available to other students in the school and shall have equal rights and privileges. (5 CCR 11700, 11701.5)

(cf. 0410 - Nondiscrimination in District Programs and Activities)

Students participating in independent study shall have access to Internet connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work. (Education Code 51747)

The district shall not provide independent study students and parents/guardians with funds or items of value that are not provided for other students and parents/guardians. Providing access to Internet connectivity and local educational agency-owned devices adequate to participate in an independent study program and complete assigned work consistent with Education Code 51747, or to participate in an independent study course, as authorized by Education Code 51749.5, shall not be considered funds or other things of value. (Education Code 46300.6, 51747.3)

Eligibility for Independent Study

Students are eligible for independent study as authorized in law, and as specified in board policy and administrative regulation.

For the 2022-23 school year and thereafter, 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 provided that experienced certificated staff are available to effectively supervise students in independent study. The Superintendent or designee may also approve the participation of a student whose health would be put at risk by in-person instruction. 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.

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 51747.3)

(cf. 5111.1 – District Residency

A student with disabilities, as defined in Education Code 56026, shall not participate in independent study unless the student's individualized education program specifically provides for such participation. (Education Code 51745)

(cf. 6159 - Individualized Education Program)

A temporarily disabled student shall not receive individual instruction pursuant to Education Code 48206.3 by means of independent study. (Education Code 51745)

(cf. 6183 - Home and Hospital Instruction)

Students age 21 or older, and students age 19 or older who have not been continuously enrolled in school since their 18th birthday, may participate in independent study only through the adult education program for the purpose of enrolling in courses required for a high school diploma by Education Code 51225.3 or the Governing Board. (Education Code 46300.1, 46300.4)

(cf. 6200 - Adult Education)

No more than 10 percent of the students enrolled in continuation high school or opportunity school or program, not including pregnant students and parenting students who are primary caregivers for one or more of their children, shall be enrolled in independent study. (Education Code 51745)

(cf. 5146 – Married/Pregnant/Parenting Students)
(cf. 6184 - Continuation Education)

~~Students 19 or 20 years of age not continuously enrolled in school since their 18th birthday may continue in adult education. (Education Code 46300.1)~~

~~(cf. 6200 - Adult Education)~~

~~Each student's independent study shall be coordinated, evaluated and carried out under the general supervision of a certificated employee. (Education Code 51747.5)~~

~~Criteria for Participation~~

~~Students who are interested in independent study should contact their school principal. Approval for participation shall be based on the following criteria:~~

~~1. Evidence that the student will work independently to complete the program~~

~~2. Availability of experienced certificated staff with adequate time to supervise the student~~

~~effectively~~

~~Written Agreements and Assignments~~

~~The curriculum and methods of study specified in the written independent study agreement shall be consistent with the Board's policies, administrative regulations and procedures for curriculum and instruction. (5 CCR 11702)~~

~~(cf. 6143 - Courses of Study)~~

~~A written independent study agreement shall be executed for each participating student. The agreement shall include, but not be limited to, all of the following: (Education Code 51747)~~

~~1. The manner, frequency, time and place for submitting the student's assignments and for reporting his/her 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 staff, which will be made available to the student.~~

~~4. The district's independent study policy describing the maximum length of time allowed between an assignment and its completion and the number of missed assignments which will trigger an evaluation of whether the student should be allowed to continue in independent study.~~

~~5. The duration of the independent study agreement, including the beginning and ending dates for the student's participation in independent study under the agreement. No independent study agreement shall be valid for any period longer than one semester, or one-half year for a school on a year-round calendar.~~

~~6. A statement of the number of course credits or, for the elementary grades, other measures of academic accomplishment appropriate to the agreement, to be earned by the student upon completion.~~

~~7. A statement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate. In the case of a student who is referred or assigned to any school, class or program pursuant to Education Code 48915 or 48917, the agreement shall also include the statement that instruction may be provided through independent study only if the student is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.~~

~~(cf. 5144.1 - Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process)~~

~~The agreement also may include a schedule for achieving objectives and completing the agreement and a schedule of conferences between the student and supervising teacher.~~

~~Before beginning the independent study, each written agreement shall be signed and dated by the student, the parent/guardian or caregiver of the student under 18 years of age, the certificated employee designated as responsible for the general supervision of independent study, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the student. (Education Code 51747)~~

~~The agreement shall state that the parent/guardian's signature confers his/her permission for the student's independent study as specified in the agreement.~~

~~Records~~

~~District records shall identify all students participating in independent study and shall specify the grade level, program placement, and school in which each of these students is enrolled. (Education Code 51748)~~

~~Each school shall maintain records for the students at that school.~~

~~Records shall be maintained for audit purposes and shall include the following: (5 CCR 11703)~~

~~1. A copy of the Board policy, administrative regulation, and procedures related to independent study~~

~~2. A separate listing of the students and adult education students, by grade level, program and school, who have participated in independent study identifying units of the curriculum attempted and units of the curriculum completed by students in grades K-8 and identifying course credits attempted by and awarded to students in grades 9-12 and in adult education, as specified in their written agreements~~

~~3. A file of all agreements, with representative samples of each student's or adult education student's work products bearing signed or initialed and dated notations by the supervising teacher indicating that he/she has personally evaluated the work or that he/she has personally reviewed the evaluations made by another certificated teacher~~

~~4. A daily or hourly attendance register, as appropriate to the program in which the students or adult education students are enrolled, separate from classroom attendance records, and maintained on a current basis as time values of student or adult education work products are personally judged by a certificated teacher, and reviewed by the supervising teacher if they are two different persons~~

~~The district also shall maintain a record of grades and other evaluations issued to each student for independent study assignments.~~

~~(cf. 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement)~~

~~Student Rights and Responsibilities~~

~~1. Students participating in independent study shall have the same right to all existing services and resources of the school in which the student is enrolled as do all other students enrolled in the school.~~

~~2. Students participating in independent study shall have the right, continuously, to enter or return to the regular classroom mode of instruction.~~

~~3. Independent study students who are late, miss scheduled conferences or do not submit assigned work on time shall not be reported as tardy or truant. However, the independent study administrator shall promptly and directly address any failure by the student to meet the terms of his/her written agreement. The following supportive strategies may be used~~

Monitoring Student Progress

The independent study administrator and/or supervising teacher shall promptly and directly address any failure by the student to meet the terms of the student's written agreement. The following supportive strategies may be used:

1. ~~a.~~ A letter to the student and/or parent/guardian~~, as appropriate~~

2. ~~b.~~ A ~~special~~ meeting between the student and the teacher and/or counselor

3. ~~c.~~ A meeting between the student and the independent study administrator, including the parent/guardian if appropriate

4. ~~d.~~ An increase in the amount of time the student works under direct supervision

When the student has failed to make satisfactory educational progress or missed the number of assignments specified in ~~Board policy as precipitating~~the written agreement as requiring an evaluation, the Superintendent or designee shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether or not independent study is appropriate for the student. This evaluation ~~which~~ may result in termination of the independent study agreement and ~~, with~~ the student's return to a regular classroom or alternative instructional program.

~~(cf. 1312 - Complaints Concerning the Schools)~~
~~(cf. 1312.1 - Complaints Concerning District Employees)~~

~~Supervising Teachers~~

~~The independent study administrator shall approve the assignment of any teachers who directly supervise independent study on a regular basis. The principal may recommend teachers or students for independent study. The teacher may be the student's regular classroom teacher, particularly for elementary students.~~

~~Independent study teachers shall:~~

Responsibilities of Independent Study Administrator

The responsibilities of the independent study administrator include, but are not limited to:

1. Recommending certificated staff to be assigned as independent study teachers at the required teacher-student ratios pursuant to Education Code 51745.6 and supervising staff assigned to independent study functions who are not regularly supervised by another administrator

2. Approving or denying the participation of students requesting independent study

3. Facilitating the completion of written independent study agreements

4. Ensuring a smooth transition for students into and out of the independent study mode of instruction

5. Approving all credits earned through independent study

6. Completing or coordinating the preparation of all records and reports required by law, Board policy, or administrative regulation

~~1. Complete designated portions of the written agreement and add additional information to the written agreement when appropriate~~

~~2. Supervise and approve coursework~~

~~3. Design all lesson plans~~

~~4. Write the assignments for students~~

~~5. Assess all student work~~

~~6. Personally judge the time value of assigned work or work products completed and submitted by the student~~

~~7. Select and save with each agreement representative samples of the student's completed and evaluated assignments on not less than a monthly basis, preferably biweekly~~

~~8. Sign and complete the agreement when the student has reached his/her objectives or the agreement is terminated~~

~~9. Maintain any required records and files on a current basis~~

~~When appropriate, independent study teachers shall determine and assign grades or other approved measures of achievement.~~

~~Administration of Independent Study~~

Assignment and Responsibilities of Independent Study Teachers

Each student's independent study shall be coordinated, evaluated, and carried out under the general supervision of a district employee who possesses a valid certification document pursuant to Education Code 44865 or emergency credential pursuant to Education Code 44300, registered as required by law, and who consents to the assignment. (Education Code 44865, 51747.5; 5 CCR 11700)

The ratio of student average daily attendance for independent study students age 18 years or younger to full-time equivalent certificated employees responsible for independent study shall not exceed the equivalent ratio for all other education programs in the district, unless a new higher or lower ratio for all other educational programs offered is negotiated in a collective bargaining agreement or the district enters into a memorandum of understanding that indicates an existing collective bargaining agreement contains an alternative ratio. (Education Code 51745.6)

The responsibilities of the ~~independent study administrator~~supervising teacher shall include, but are not limited to~~be as follows~~:

1. Completing designated portions of the written independent study agreement and signing the agreement

2. Supervising and approving coursework and assignments

3. Maintaining records of student assignments showing the date the assignment is given and the date the assignment is due

4. Maintaining a daily or hourly attendance register in accordance with item #4 in the section on "Records for Audit Purpose" in the accompanying Board policy

5. Providing direct instruction and counsel as necessary for individual student success

6. Regularly meeting with the student to discuss the student's progress

7. Determining the time value of assigned work or work products completed and submitted by the student

8. Assessing student work and assigning grades or other approved measures of achievement

9. Documenting each student's participation in live interaction and/or synchronous instruction pursuant to Education Code 51747 on each school day for which independent study is

provided

The Superintendent or designee shall ensure that independent study teachers have access to professional development and support comparable to classroom-based teachers.

(cf. 4131 – Staff Development)

~~1. Ensuring that the district's independent study option is operated in accordance with law, Board policy and administrative regulation~~

~~2. Approving the participation of students requesting independent study for a period exceeding five school days~~

~~3. Facilitating the completion of independent study written agreements~~

~~4. Approving all credits earned through independent study supervised at a location apart from the student's regular school and forwarding the information to the appropriate staff so that the information becomes part of the student's record~~

~~5. Authorizing the selection of staff who are assigned to supervise independent study~~

~~6. Supervising any staff assigned to independent study functions who are not regularly supervised by another administrator~~

~~7. Completing or coordinating the preparation of all necessary records and reports~~

~~8. Establishing and maintaining in a systematic manner all records required by law, Board policy and administrative regulation~~

~~9. Monitoring enrollment in independent study to stay within prescribed limits and to maximize income to the district without compromising the educational quality of independent study~~

~~10. Developing and managing the budget for independent study~~

~~11. Obtaining and maintaining current information and skills required for the operation of an independent study strategy that meets established standards for the district's educational programs~~

~~12. Preparing and submitting reports as required by the Board or Superintendent~~

~~13. Assuring a smooth transition into and out of the independent study mode of instruction~~

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