

Mt. Diablo USD

Board Policy

Independent Study

BP 6158

Instruction

The Governing Board recognizes its responsibility for the education of all students in the school system. Therefore the Board authorizes the Superintendent to establish independent study as an optional alternative instructional strategy by which students may reach curriculum objectives and fulfill graduation requirements.

The primary purpose for independent study, K-Adult, is to offer a means of individualizing the educational program for students whose needs may best be met through study outside of the classroom instructional setting. The Independent Study option is to be substantially equivalent in quality and quantity to classroom based instruction. The district shall provide and ensure independent study students the same access to existing services and resources (including co-curricular and extra curricular activities) as are available to all other students in the school of enrollment. 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. No student shall be required to participate in independent study: all students shall have the alternative of classroom instruction.

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

Students enrolled in Horizons School Center for Independent Study (CIS) or Home Study shall have access to existing services and resources (including co-curricular and extra curricular activities) in their home school of attendance (neighborhood school) if such services and resources are not provided at Horizons. All requirements such as minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) and behavior/citizenship requirements must be met. Students must apply through the Horizons Administrator who initiates requests with the comprehensive school principal.

Students enrolled in Horizons School CIS or Home Study shall have access to participation in student athletics in their home school of attendance (neighborhood school) if the following conditions are met:

1. The student is concurrently enrolled in home school and their school of attendance.
2. The student can only participate at their school of attendance.
3. The student must be enrolled in a minimum of 240 minutes of instruction daily.

4. The student must take at least two courses in the school of attendance (subject to space and course availability).
5. The student will be subject to the same graduation requirements of the school of attendance if the student competes on an athletic team.
6. The student must meet all requirements such as minimum GPA and behavior citizenship requirements.

No individual with exceptional needs, as defined in Education Code 56026, may participate in independent study unless his/her individualized education program (IEP) specifically provides for that participation. Where appropriate, the independent study administrator, or designee, should be involved in such IEP meetings as might result in a student's enrollment in independent study. No temporarily disabled student may receive individual instruction pursuant to Education Code 48206.3 by means of independent study.

Students at the elementary level requesting independent study, together with their parents or guardians, should recognize that independent study at the elementary level must emphasize a commitment on the part of the students' parent(s) or guardian. At the secondary level, the student must make the major commitment assisted or supported, as necessary, by parents/guardians and others who may help directly with instruction.

The Superintendent or designee shall determine that the prospective independent study student understands the district's requirements for independent study and is prepared to meet them. The Superintendent or designee shall guarantee that each participating student has an executed written independent study agreement as prescribed by law. The independent study strategy requires a written agreement with all of the required components, agreed to by the student, parent/guardian/caregiver, certificated employee, and all other persons who have direct assistance to the student. Individual independent study agreements, including any subsidiary contract, must be consistent with the district's adopted courses of study.

For students, in all types of independent study, the maximum length of time that may elapse between the time an assignment is made and the date by which the student must complete the assigned work shall be as follows:

1. For students in kindergarten and grades one through eight, two weeks
2. For students in grades nine through twelve, four weeks
3. For students in Adult Education, four weeks

When special or extenuating circumstances justify a longer time for individual students, the Superintendent or designee may approve a period not to exceed one semester, pursuant to a written request with justification.

When any student fails to complete three consecutive independent study assignments in one attendance period, or misses two appointments without valid reasons, the Superintendent or designee shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether the student should be allowed to continue in independent study. A written record of the findings of any evaluation conducted pursuant to this policy shall be maintained in the student's permanent record.

The Superintendent or designee shall establish administrative regulations to implement the above policy in accordance with law.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

17289 Exemption for facilities

42238 Revenue limits

44865 Qualifications for home teachers and teachers in special classes and schools; consent to assignment

46300-46300.6 Methods of computing ADA

47612.5 Independent study in charter schools

48204 Residency based on parent employment

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

51225.3 Requirements for high school graduation

51745-51749.3 Independent study programs

56026 Individuals with exceptional needs

FAMILY CODE

6550 Authorization affidavits

CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

11700-11703 Independent study

COURT DECISIONS

Modesto City Schools v. Education Audits Appeal Panel, (2004) 123 Cal.App.4th 1365

Management Resources:

CDE PUBLICATIONS

Independent Study Operations Manual, 2000 edition

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>

Policy MT. DIABLO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

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