

INDEPENDENT STUDY

The Monterey County Board of Education (County Board) and the Monterey County Office of Education (MCOE) recognize their responsibility for the education of all students, and authorize the Monterey County Superintendent of Schools (County Superintendent) to establish an independent study as an optional alternative instructional strategy by which students may reach curriculum objectives and fulfill graduation requirements.

The primary purpose of independent study is to individualize the educational program for students whose needs may be best met through study outside the regular classroom setting.

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. At the elementary level the parent or guardian must demonstrate a commitment to support the student's instruction and the student demonstrate achievement as well or better through this strategy as in a regular school program. At the secondary level, the major commitment must be made by the student with support from the parent or guardian. The County Superintendent or designee shall determine that the prospective independent study student understands and is prepared to meet the MCOE requirements for independent study. 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 County Superintendent or designee should ensure that a written independent study agreement, as prescribed by law, exists for each participating student. [Education Code (EC) 51747]

The County 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 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 County Board establishes the following maximum lengths of time which may elapse before an independent study assignment is due:

1. Special assignments extending the content of regular course of instruction:

Students in grades K-3: four weeks
Students in grades 4-8: four weeks
Students in grades 9-12: six weeks

2. Individualized study in a particular area of interest or in a subject not currently available in the regular school curriculum:

Students in grades K-3: four weeks
Students in grades 4-8: four weeks
Students in grades 9-12: six weeks

3. Individualized alternative education designed to teach the knowledge and skills of the core curriculum:

Students in grades K-3: four weeks
Students in grades 4-8: four weeks
Students in grades 9-12: six weeks

4. Continuing and special study during travel:

Students in grades K-3: six weeks
Students in grades 4-8: six weeks
Students in grades 9-12: ten weeks

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

All students: two weeks

When circumstances justify a longer time, the County Superintendent or designee may honor the request of an individual student or his/her parent/guardian to extend the maximum length of an assignment as follows:

Students in grades K-3: eight weeks
Students in grades 4-8: eight weeks
Students in grades 9-12: twelve weeks

Consequences for Failure to Complete Assignments

Alternative Education Department:

If twenty percent or more of weekly assignments are incomplete, this will result in review of the agreement, and the student may not be allowed to continue in independent study.

A second infraction of twenty percent or more incomplete weekly assignments will result in termination of the agreement.

Evaluation findings shall be kept in the student's permanent record. [EC 51747]

Monterey County Home Charter School:

If twenty percent or more of weekly assignments are incomplete, this will result in a review of the agreement.

A second infraction of twenty percent or more incomplete weekly assignments will result in a review of the agreement.

A third infraction of twenty percent or more incomplete weekly assignments will result in a review of the agreement, and could result in a termination of the agreement; thus, the student might not be allowed to remain enrolled in Monterey County Home Charter School.

A fourth infraction of twenty percent or more incomplete weekly assignments will result in a termination of the agreement, and the student will not be allowed to continue as a student of Monterey County Home Charter School.

The County Superintendent should provide students enrolled in independent study programs the same access to services and resources as is provided to students enrolled in other programs.

The County Superintendent is encouraged to establish regulations to implement this policy and provide an annual report to the County Board regarding the number of students in each type of independent study programs, 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 this program.

Legal Reference:

EDUCATION CODE

17289	<i>Exemption for facilities</i>
41976.2	<i>Independent study programs; adult education funding</i>
42238	<i>Revenue limits</i>
44865	<i>Qualifications for home teachers and teachers in special classes and schools</i>
46300-46307.1	<i>Methods of computing average daily attendance</i>
47612.5	<i>Independent study in charter schools</i>
48204	<i>Residency based on parent employment</i>
48206.3	<i>Home or hospital instruction; students with temporary disabilities</i>

48220	<i>Classes of children exempted</i>
48340	<i>Improvement of pupil attendance</i>
48915	<i>Expulsion; particular circumstances</i>
48916.1	<i>Educational program requirements for expelled students</i>
48917	<i>Suspension of expulsion order</i>
51225.3	<i>Requirements for high school graduation</i>
51745-51749.3	<i>Independent study programs</i>
52206	<i>Gifted and talented education; use of independent study to augment program</i>
52522	<i>Adult education alternative instructional delivery</i>
52523	<i>Adult education as supplement to high school curriculum; criteria</i>
56026	<i>Individuals with exceptional needs</i>
58500-58512	<i>Alternative schools and programs of choice</i>

FAMILY CODE

6550	<i>Authorization affidavits</i>
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CODE OF REGULATIONS, TITLE 5

11700-11703	<i>Independent study</i>
19819	<i>State audit compliance</i>

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)

Adopted: 11/19/86

Revised: 9/18/91; 6/21/95; 01/09/13; 10/02/13; 02/19/14