



# SPA

Contra Costa School of  
Performing Arts

**Policy Number: 5.082022**

**Policy Type: Governing Board Policy**

**Policy Name: Independent Study Policy**

**Revised 8.22.22**

## **Background**

AB 181 made changes to the long-term independent study (LTIS) policies that AB 130 created. The Contra Costa County School of the Performing Arts offering of Long-Term Independent Study will be operated in such a manner as to prioritize students with medical restrictions first. In consideration of restrictions by the California Department of Education on ADA and education program designation, Long-Term Independent Study will be offered on a first come-first serve basis up to 20% of the enrolled student population established by *EC* Section 51745.6. Eligible students in excess of the 20% threshold will be placed on a waitlist until such a time as space is available. Long-Term Independent Study is an independent study program that extends 15 days or more.

## **Definition**

Short-Term Independent Study provides a small window of time for students who are absent from 3- 14 days. For a pupil participating in an independent study program that is scheduled for less than 15 school days, each written agreement shall be signed within 10 school days of the commencement of the first day of the pupil's enrollment in independent study, by the pupil, the pupil's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, if the pupil 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 the certificated employee designated as having responsibility for the special education programming of the pupil, as applicable.

Long-term Independent Study provides a hybrid option for 6-12 students. Long-term Independent Study programs are voluntary and use alternative instructional strategies that respond to individual student needs and learning styles. The flexibility of long-term independent study programs makes it possible to serve a wide variety of students, enabling some students who otherwise might not graduate to stay in school. Students who enroll in Long-term Independent Study include students who have health problems, are parents, need to work, and are child actors or aspiring Olympic athletes. Additionally, Long-term Independent Study serves students who desire to accelerate or move more slowly through a course, or to make up a subject that they have missed in a traditional classroom.

Traditional Long-term Independent Study (LTIS): Attendance is based on the time value of assignments, and shall be under the general supervision of an LEA employee with a valid credential.

Course-based Long-term Independent Study (CBIS): Attendance is earned if all course requirements are met and the pupil is making satisfactory progress. CBIS replaces time-valued assignments with enrollment and satisfactory progress in certified courses. All courses shall be under the general supervision of a teacher with the appropriate subject matter credential.

A. This Policy shall apply to all pupils participating in Long-term Independent Study. This statute also requires the board policy to reflect an awareness that excessive leniency in the duration of assignment due dates can result in students falling so far behind their peers as to increase, rather than decrease, their risk of failing or dropping out of school.



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B. This Policy confirms access to all pupils to devices and connectivity (as-needed) adequate for participation and completion of work.

C. Educational opportunities offered through Long-term Independent Study may include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

1. Individualized alternative education designed to teach the knowledge and skills of the core curriculum.
2. Individualized study in a particular area of interest or in a subject not currently available in the regular school curriculum.
3. For 9-12 grade students, they will have access to all high school courses offered by the School for graduation and approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the A-G admissions criteria.

D. Contra Costa School of Performing Arts shall comply with all state and federal laws regarding independent instruction.

E. Each student's long-term Independent Study shall be coordinated, evaluated, and carried out under the general supervision of an assigned certificated employee or employees.

F. The maximum length of time that may elapse between the times a Long-term Independent Study assignment is made and the date by which the pupil must complete the assigned work will align with the School's semester calendar. Students will enroll in long-term Independent Study on a semester-by-semester basis.

G. After three missed assignments within an evaluation period and the student fails to make satisfactory progress (as defined below) the School will conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the best interests of the pupil to remain in independent study or to return to the regular school program. A written record of the findings of any evaluation made pursuant to this subdivision shall be maintained in the pupil's permanent record and treated as a mandatory interim pupil record. The record shall be maintained for a period of three years from the date of the evaluation and, if the pupil transfers to another California public school, the record shall be forwarded to that school.

Satisfactory educational progress shall be based on all of the following indicators, as applicable:

- Pupil achievement and engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:
  - Statewide assessments that are part of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (a.k.a., "CAASPP", or any other subsequent assessment as certified by the state board of education),
  - The percentage of pupils that have successfully completed courses that satisfy the requirements for entrance to the University of California and California State University,



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- requirements for career technical education sequences or programs that align with state board-approved career technical education standards and frameworks,
- The percentage of pupils who have successfully completed both the university entrance and career technical courses specified above,
- The percentage of English learner pupils who make progress towards English proficiency as measured by the English Language Proficiency Assessments for California (“ELPAC” or subsequent assessments of English proficiency certified by the state board),
- The English learner reclassification rate,
- The percentage of pupils who have passed an advanced placement exam with a score of “3” or higher, and
- The percentage of pupils who demonstrate college preparedness pursuant to the Early Assessment Program (or any subsequent assessment of college preparedness).
- Pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:
  - School attendance rates,
  - Chronic absenteeism rates,
  - Middle school dropout rates,
  - High school dropout rates, and
  - High school graduation rates.
- The completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that evidence that the pupil is working on assignments.
- Learning requirement concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher.
- Progressing toward successful completion of the course of study or individual course, as determined by the supervising teacher.

H. A current written agreement for each Long-term Independent Study pupil shall be maintained on file for each participating student. The Long-term Independent Study agreement for a student must require and cover a study plan that represents the same amount of study that would be required of a student in the classroom. Written agreements may include subsidiary agreements, such as course contracts and assignment and work records. Also, each agreement shall contain the following:

- The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting a pupil’s assignments and for reporting his or her progress.
- The objectives and methods of study for the pupil’s work, and the methods utilized to evaluate that work.



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pupil.

- A statement of the policies adopted regarding the maximum length of time allowed between the assignment and the completion of a pupil's assigned work, and the number of missed assignments allowed prior to an evaluation of whether or not the pupil should be allowed to continue in long-term Independent Study.
- The duration of the long-term Independent Study agreement, recognizing that no long-term Independent Study agreement shall be valid for any period longer than one semester per instance. The duration of time will be no more than fifteen school days for short-term long-term Independent Study, and no more than the length of a semester for Long-term Independent Study.
- A statement of the number of course credits to be earned by the pupil upon completion.
- The inclusion of a statement that Long-term Independent Study program is optional and pupil may be provided Long-term Independent Study instruction if pupil is also offered classroom instruction. Before the commencement of Long-term Independent Study, master agreement must be signed and dated by pupil, pupil's parent or legal guardian, and employee designated as providing general supervision of the student in Long-term Independent Study.
- Each written agreement shall be signed, prior to the commencement of Long-term Independent Study, by the pupil, the pupil's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, if the pupil is less than 18 years of age, the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of Long-term Independent Study, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the pupil.

I. Students enrolled in Contra Costa School of Performing Arts Long-term Independent Study must be enrolled and participating in at least one arts course, unless they are prohibited to attend campus due to necessary medical treatments or inpatient treatment for mental health care or substance abuse.

J. Contra Costa School of the Performing Arts shall not provide any funds or other things of value to the pupil or his or her parent or guardian that SPA could not legally provide to a similarly situated pupil of the school, or to his or her parent or guardian.

K. Contra Costa School of the Performing Arts may only receive funding for the provision of Long-term Independent Study to pupils who are residents of Contra Costa County or who are residents of a county immediately adjacent to Contra Costa County. Participation by claiming state apportionment for students whose residence status is based on parents' place of employment within district boundaries (ED Code section 51747.3) will not be permitted.

L. Contra Costa School of the Performing Arts must comply with Education Code Section 51745.6 and California Code of Regulations Section 11704 regarding teacher to ADA limits.



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mentor to the home-schooling parent as applicable. The parent will provide the daily instruction or the computer so the student may participate in Long-term Independent Study/online learning, while the teacher will meet with the student(s) and parent(s) on a regular basis (as provided by the written

long-term Independent Study agreement) to provide lesson planning, consultation, and resource check-out.

N. Each enrolled student will be afforded weekly synchronous instruction (classroom-style instruction) or designated small group or one-on-one instruction delivered in person or internet or telephonic communications involving live two-way communication between the teacher and pupil. Synchronous instruction shall be provided by the teacher of record also known as the assigned supervising teacher who must be an employee

O. Contra Costa School of Performing Arts will work with the parents and students to ensure that students are participating in enrichment activities. Contra Costa School of the Performing Arts shall facilitate enriched educational opportunities beyond the standard curriculum such as educational opportunities for students at other institutions of learning when available, shared instruction amongst charter school families, field trips, internships, outdoor education, shared social events for Contra Costa School of the Performing Arts students, and community service according to considerations of student capacity, safety, and wellbeing.

P. The assigned teacher and the parent and student shall evaluate the education program and modify it as necessary, consistent with the written Long-term Independent Study agreement, to maximize student success. The assigned teacher of record will have the final authority with regard to the education program of the student, with the exception of students who qualify for special education services whose services and outcomes will be determined by an Individual Education Plan ("IEP") team pursuant to law.

Q. Contra Costa School of the Performing Arts will provide academic and other supports to address the needs of pupils not performing at grade level, or needed support in other areas such as English learners, individuals with exceptional needs consistent with pupil's IEP or 504 plan, pupils in foster care, pupils experiencing homelessness, and pupils requiring mental health supports.

R. It is understood that no student who qualifies for special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act ("IDEA") shall participate in Long-term Independent Study unless it is specifically authorized under his or her IEP.

S. It is further understood that written agreements must be signed prior to the commencement of Long-term Independent Study.

T. Long-term Independent Study Roles:

*The Assigned Employee will:*

- Be responsible for completing designated portions of the written agreement for long-term Independent Study, and add additional information when appropriate.
- Supervise and approve coursework.
- Design all lesson plans.



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- Assess the student's work, either orally or in written form.
- Suggest reinforcement of content when needed or requested.
- Personally judge the time value of student assignments or work products before ADA is earned.

- Assess the child's level of education, modify the curriculum as necessary to meet district or county guidelines, and administer state-mandated tests as required.
- Inform parents of or offer workshops that will enhance the teaching techniques of the parents as applicable.
- Select and save with each agreement representative samples of the student's completed and evaluated assignments on at least a monthly basis.
- Sign and complete the agreement when the student has reached his or her objectives or the agreement is terminated.
- Maintain any required records and files on a current basis.
- Determine and assign grades or other approved measures of student achievement when appropriate.

#### *Parents will:*

- Be committed to understand and use the Long-term Independent Study strategy appropriately.
- Provide an appropriate environment for the student's study for a total of at least six (6) hours per school day.
- Participate with the assigned employee in the development of the student's educational plan, including goals, objectives, and assignments. (While the assigned teacher is responsible for the educational design, the parent must be concerned about his or her role and the student's needs and interests.)
- Along with the student, prepare a study schedule that incorporates family and educational responsibilities.
- Facilitate and enable, as much as possible, the student's effective and successful study under the written agreement. This would include avoiding disturbances during study such as phone calls, TV watching, and conflicting family duties.
- Supervise the student while following the plan as the student is working on assignments, making sure that the student's effort at least meets the minimum requirement set forth in the written agreement.
- Take steps to ensure the timely submission to the assigned teacher of all student work, completed assignments, and accurate records that will be needed for the assessment of student progress and attendance accounting as specified in the written agreement.
- Participate in a supportive role in regularly scheduled teacher/student meetings.
- Under the direction of the supervising teacher and with the assistance of any other assigned Contra Costa School Of Performing Arts staff, participate in the student's instruction and assessment of learning and skills mastery. This may include the following:
  - Assuming responsibility for supplied textbooks, instructional materials and supplies, and equipment
  - Making intermediate assignments
  - Introducing curricular elements
  - Reinforcing learning
  - Promptly checking student work for errors, which the student should then correct



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make Long-term Independent Study a satisfying and beneficial experience for the participating child and parent/guardian.

- o Ensure the student's voluntary participation in and understanding of Long-term Independent Study and facilitate the student's transfer to traditional instruction when ready or when the student is unwilling to continue in Long-term Independent Study.

### *Students will:*

- Have the right to all existing services and resources of Contra Costa School Of Performing Arts as do all other students enrolled in Contra Costa School Of Performing Arts and engaged in regular classroom study.
- Make regular, scheduled contact with the assigned school employee as specified in the written agreement.
- Complete *at least* the assigned work by the due date.
- Have all possible assignments available at meetings with the assigned certificated employee.
- Make an effort to participate in pertinent public or private extracurricular activities, including social activities with other children and adults.
- Be responsible for other tasks that may be required to fulfill the written agreement.

### *The Director will:*

- Administer the use of Long-term Independent Study by pupils.
- Ensure that Long-term Independent Study occurs in accordance with state law and district policy and regulation.
- Facilitate the completion of Long-term Independent Study agreements.
- Authorize the selection of all staff who are assigned to supervise Long-term Independent Study.
- Supervise any staff assigned to Long-term Independent Study functions.
- Complete or coordinate the preparation of all necessary records and reports.
- Establish and maintain in a systematic manner all records required by state regulations for an audit trail of average daily attendance attributed to Long-term Independent Study and reported by the district.
- Monitor enrollment in Long-term Independent Study and the pupil-to-teacher ratio.

### U. To Succeed in Long-term Independent Study There Must Exist:

- An understanding of Long-term Independent Study by all concerned
- A positive attitude by both the parents and the student about Long-term Independent Study
- The parent's ability to assist their child and participate in instruction for a total of at least six (6) hours per school day.
- The student's agreement to meet the requirements in the written agreement
- The student's ability and willingness to work with limited supervision by a credentialed employee
- Availability of certificated employees to supervise student's Long-term Independent Study effectively.

### V. Attendance Rules





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students participating in Long-term Independent Study.

- Contra Costa School Of Performing Arts shall maintain a file of all agreements with representative samples of completed and evaluated student assignments, with notations on the work samples that indicate the supervising teacher's determination of the time value of the student's work.
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- Contra Costa School Of Performing Arts shall maintain a list showing the credits attempted by and awarded to each student along with a record of grades and other evaluations of Long-term Independent Study assignments issued to the students participating in Long-term Independent Study according to the agreement.
- Students will not be placed in Long-term Independent Study or will be ineligible for participation if they are 19 years of age or older.
- No more than 20% of Contra Costa School Of Performing Arts' population will be allowed to participate in full-time Long-term Independent Study at any given time.
- Students who are temporarily disabled (requiring home/hospital instruction) per EC 48206.3 are not eligible for Long-term Independent Study.

W. Missed Appointments - The Executive Director or designee shall incorporate in program procedures the appropriate use of the following strategies to deal with missed student appointments. The aim is to increase the student's achievement as well as to reduce and prevent the student's failure to meet the terms and conditions of the written agreement. If a student misses two or more appointments, the Executive Director or designee shall:

- Immediately telephone or contact the student and/or parent or have the teacher do so.
- Send a letter of concern to the student and parent, if appropriate.
- Schedule a special appointment.

X. **Return to In-Person Instruction:** For pupils who participate in independent study for 15 or more school days in a school year and whose families wish to return to in-person instruction from independent study, the School shall allow the student to return expeditiously, and in no case later than five instructional days. Contra Costa School of Performing Arts will offer tiered re-engagement strategies for all students who

- Do not generate attendance for 10% of required instructional time over 4 continuous weeks;
- Do not participate in synchronous instruction for more than 50% of the scheduled times of synchronous instruction in a school month (as applicable by grade span);
- Violate the written independent study agreement

Students will be referred to the Executive Director or designee who oversees attendance as a part of the tiered re-engagement process. Tiered re-engagement practices will not apply to any Independent Study program for less than 15 days or for students enrolled in a comprehensive school for classroom-based instruction who, under the care of appropriately licensed professionals, participate in independent study due to necessary medical treatments or inpatient treatment for mental health care or substance abuse. Should this be the case, Contra Costa School of Performing Arts will obtain evidence from appropriate licensed professionals of the need for these students to participate in Long-term Independent Study.





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Tiered re-engagement strategies will include at least:

- Verifying current contact information for the pupil,
- Notifying parents or guardians of lack of participation within one school day of the recording of the absence nonattendance day or lack of participation,
- A plan for outreach from the School to determine pupil needs, including a connection with health and social services, as necessary,
- A clear standard requiring a pupil-parent-educator conference, as defined below, to review the pupil's written agreement, reconsider the independent study program's impact on the pupil's achievement and well-being, consistent with the school's policies regarding the maximum amount of time allowed between the assignment and completion of pupil's assigned work, satisfactory educational progress, and the number of missed assignments allowed before an evaluation of whether the student should be allowed to continue in independent study.

For the purposes of this policy, "pupil-parent-educator conference" means a meeting involving, at a minimum, all parties who signed the pupil's written independent study agreement.

**Y: Opportunities for Live Interaction and Synchronous Instruction:** The School shall plan to provide opportunities for live interaction and synchronous instruction as follows for all pupils participating in independent study for 15 or more school days in a school year:

- For pupils in grades 4 to 8 inclusive, the School shall plan to provide opportunities for both daily live interaction and at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the year,
- For pupils in grades 9-12 inclusive, the School shall plan to provide opportunities for at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the year,

For the purposes of this policy, "live interaction" means interaction between the pupil and certificated or non-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 live interaction may take place in-person, or in the form of internet or telephonic communication.

For the purposes of this policy, "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 of record and the pupil.