

INDEPENDENT STUDY POLICY

REVISED JULY 2021

East Bay Innovation Academy (“Charter School”) may offer independent study to meet the short-term educational needs of pupils enrolled in the Charter School who require independent study based upon extraordinary circumstances which would prevent the pupil from attending in-person instruction. Independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no pupil may be required to participate. The Charter School shall provide appropriate existing services and resources to enable pupils to complete their independent study successfully. The following written policies have been adopted by the East Bay Innovation Academy Board of Directors for implementation at Charter School:

1. “Extraordinary circumstances” may include but is not limited to a documented¹ illness, death of an immediately family member, or mandatory quarantine. Independent study must be pre-approved by the Executive Director and is limited to a total of fourteen (14) schooldays in a school year, unless the Executive Director agrees that a longer period of independent study cannot be avoided due to the extraordinary circumstances which triggered the request for independent study.
2. For pupils in all grade levels and programs offered by the Charter School, the **maximum length of time** that may elapse between the time an assignment is made and the date by which the pupil must complete the assigned work shall be five (5) school days.
3. The Executive Director or designee shall conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the best interests of the pupil to remain in independent study upon the following triggers:
 - a. When any pupil fails to complete **three (3) assignments** during any period of five (5) school days.
 - b. In the event Student’s **educational progress falls below satisfactory levels** as determined by the Charter School’s tiered intervention process which considers ALL of the following indicators:
 - i. The pupil’s achievement and engagement in the independent study program, as indicated by the pupil’s performance on applicable pupil-level measures of pupil achievement and pupil engagement set forth in Education Code Section 52060(d) paragraphs (4) and (5).
 - ii. The completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that evidence that the pupil is working on assignments.
 - iii. Learning required concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher.
 - iv. Progressing toward successful completion of the course of study or individual course, as determined by the supervising teacher.

¹ Supported by a written and signed note from a physician.

A written record of the findings of any evaluation conducted pursuant to this policy shall be treated as a mandatory interim pupil record. The records shall be maintained for a period of three (3) 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.

4. The Charter School shall provide **content aligned to grade level standards** that is provided at a level of quality and intellectual challenge substantially equivalent to in-person instruction, this includes access to all courses offered by the Charter School for graduation and approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the A–G admissions criteria.
5. In the rare case the Executive Director approves any independent study beyond the fourteen-school day limit as described above in paragraph 1, **for independent study of fifteen or more school days in a school year**, the following (a)-(c) shall apply:
 - a. The Charter School has adopted **tiered reengagement strategies** for all pupils who are not generating attendance for more than three (3) school days or 60% of the instructional days in a school week, or who are in violation of the written agreement pursuant to Education Code Section 51747(g). These procedures are as follow:
 - i. Verification of current contact information for each enrolled pupil;
 - ii. Notification to parents or guardians of lack of participation within one school day of the absence or lack of participation;
 - iii. Outreach from the Charter School to determine pupil needs including connection with health and social services as necessary:
 1. Verification of access to connectivity.
 2. Seeking to understand what is happening for pupil and at home;
 3. Establishing an understanding for parents regarding compulsory education and how lack of attendance impacts learning.
 - iv. When the evaluation described above in paragraph 3 is triggered to consider whether remaining in independent study is in the best interest of the pupil, a **pupil-parent-educator conference** shall be required to review a pupil's written agreement and reconsider the independent study program's impact on the pupil's achievement and well-being. This conference shall be a meeting involving, at a minimum, all parties who signed the pupil's written independent study agreement.
 - b. The Charter School serves grades 6-12. For pupils in grades 6-12, all pupils will be provided the opportunity for thirty (30) minutes of office time daily with the assigned certificated teacher either in-person or through virtual or telephonic means for purposes of **daily interaction and synchronous instruction opportunities**. During these opportunities, student and teacher will have the opportunity to interact and individual instruction or group instruction, will be offered to increase pupil academic progress and connectivity with the Charter School.

- c. Upon written parent/guardian request for **return to in-person instruction**, pupil will be expeditiously returned to in-person instruction and in no case later than five instructional days.
6. A **current written agreement** shall be maintained on file for each independent study pupil, including but not limited to, all of the following:
 - a. The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting a pupil's assignments and for reporting the pupil's academic progress, and for communicating with a pupil's parent or guardian regarding a pupil's academic progress.
 - b. The objectives and methods of study for the pupil's work, and the methods used to evaluate that work.
 - c. The specific resources, including materials and personnel, that will be made available to the pupil. These resources shall include confirming or providing access to all pupils to connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work.
 - d. A statement of the policies adopted herein, pursuant to Education Code Section 51747(a) and (b) regarding the maximum length of time allowed between the assignment and the completion of a pupil's assigned work, and the level of satisfactory educational progress, and the number of missed assignments allowed before an evaluation of whether or not the pupil should be allowed to continue in independent study.
 - e. The duration of the independent study agreement, including beginning and ending dates for the pupil's participation in independent study under the agreement. Pursuant to this policy, no pupil may participate in independent study beyond 14 school days in a school year unless approved by the Executive Director or designee.
 - f. 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 pupil upon completion.
 - g. 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, individuals with exceptional needs in order to be consistent with the pupil's individualized education program or plan pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794), pupils in foster care or experiencing homelessness, and pupils requiring mental health supports.
 - h. The inclusion of a statement in each independent study agreement that independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no pupil may be required to participate. In the case of a pupil who is referred or assigned to any school, class or program pursuant to Education Code sections 48915 or 48917, the agreement also shall include the statement that instruction may be provided to the pupil through independent study only if the pupil is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.

- i. Each written agreement shall be signed, prior to the commencement of independent study, by the pupil, the pupil's parent, legal guardian, or care giver, 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 all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the pupil. For purposes of this paragraph "caregiver" means a person who has met the requirements Family Code section 6550. For the 2021-22 school year only, this written agreement shall be signed no later than 30 days after the first day of instruction.
7. The Charter School shall comply with the Education Code sections 51745 through 51749.3 and the provisions of the Charter Schools Act of 1992 and the State Board of Education regulations adopted there under.
8. The Executive Director may establish procedures/regulations to implement these policies in accordance with the law.