

INDEPENDENT STUDY BOARD POLICY

YPI Charter Schools (hereinafter “Charter School”, referring to charter schools operated by YPI Charter Schools) may offer independent study to meet the educational needs of pupils enrolled in the Charter School in accordance with applicable law. Independent study shall be substantially equivalent in quality and quantity to classroom instruction, thus enabling students enrolled in independent study to complete the Charter School’s adopted course of study within the customary time frame. (5 C.C.R. § 11701.5.)

Charter School intends to offer an independent study program featuring “short-term independent study” for classroom-based program students who may benefit from a short-term independent study option and “annual independent study” for students only participating in independent study in a given school year. Charter School shall provide appropriate services and resources to enable pupils to complete their independent study program successfully. Independent study is a voluntary, educational alternative in which no student may be required to participate. (Education Code § 51747.) Students who voluntarily choose to enroll in the Charter School’s independent study program have the alternative option of attending a classroom-based instructional program in a school of their district of residence or potentially at the Charter School subject to capacity.

These independent study policies have been established by Charter School in alignment with Education Code § 51745 et seq., updated to meet the requirements of Assembly Bill 130 (2021), and adopted pursuant to Education Code § 51747 and 5 C.C.R. § 11701. The following policies are effective as of the start of Charter School’s 2021-22 school year:

1. The Executive Director or designee is responsible for managing the independent study program, which includes reviewing and granting requests for short-term independent study from Charter School students. The Executive Director or designee will determine if a student qualifies for short-term independent study based on criteria including the below:
 - a. Experienced certificated staff are available to effectively supervise students in independent study;
 - b. Ensuring the enrollment does not result in noncompliance with independent study ADA requirements (e.g., ADA-to-Certificated Teacher Ratio per Education Code § 51745.6; ensuring 80% of ADA generated by the Charter School is from classroom-based instruction per Education Code § 47612.5; etc.).
 - c. 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 such participation.

- d. No student that is referred or assigned to a Charter School pursuant to Education Code § 48915 or Education Code § 48917, may be provided with instruction through independent study unless they are offered the alternative of classroom instruction and they choose independent study.
- e. In accordance with Education Code § 51747.3(b), students enrolling in the independent study program must be residents of Los Angeles County or an adjacent county.

Executive Director or designee is responsible for establishing the number of available seats for short-term and full-time independent study and must consider the independent study ADA requirements (see Section 1(b)) in making these determinations. The Executive Director or designee may consider factors under Section 1(a)-(e) and other factors in determining the total number of full-time independent study seats and enrollment eligibility.

- 2. For pupils in all grade levels 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 twenty (20) school days. (Education Code § 51747(a).)
- 3. When any pupil fails to complete three (3) assignments during any period of twenty (20) school days, or fails to make satisfactory educational progress (defined below in Section 4), the Charter School will conduct an evaluation to determine whether it is in the best interests of the student to remain in independent study, or whether the student should return to or otherwise be placed in a regular in-person school program. A written record of the findings of any evaluation will be maintained in the student's permanent record. This record will be maintained for a period of three years from the date of the evaluation and if the student transfers to another California public school, the record will be forwarded to that school. (Education Code § 51747(b).) Charter School may disenroll pupils who accrue ten (10) unexcused absences due to failure to turn in assignments.
- 4. For purposes of conducting the evaluation in Section 3, a student is deemed to be making satisfactory educational progress if the student is on track to enter the next grade level at the completion of the current school year and/or progressing toward their goals pursuant to their IEP. The Executive Director or designee is responsible for making this determination based on all of the following indicators:
 - a. The student's achievement and engagement in the independent study program, as indicated by the student's performance on student-level measures of student achievement and student engagement set forth in Education Code § 52060(d)(4)-(5).
 - b. The completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that show the student is working on assignments.
 - c. Learning required concepts, as determined by the supervising teacher.

- d. Progressing toward successful completion of the course of study or individual course, as determined by the supervising teacher. (Education Code § 51747(b)(2).)
5. Charter School will provide content to students aligned to grade level standards that is provided at a level of quality and intellectual challenge substantially equivalent to in-person instruction. For high school students, 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. (Education Code § 51747(c).)
6. For students who participate in independent study at Charter School for any period of time per year:

6.1. If a student does not generate attendance for more than three schooldays or 60 percent of the instructional days in a school week, or for students who are in violation of their independent study written agreement, Charter School shall:

- a. Verify current contact information for each enrolled student;
- b. Notify parents or guardians of lack of participation within one schoolday of the student’s absence or lack of participation (e.g., via email, message, text, telephone, letter, etc.);
- c. Reach out to the student directly and/or parents or guardians, as well as health and social services as necessary, to determine student’s needs for reengagement; and
- d. If the student has failed to complete three (3) assignments during any period of twenty (20) schooldays or is failing to make satisfactory educational progress as defined in Section 4 herein, Charter School will schedule a pupil-parent-educator conference (a meeting involving all individuals who signed the student’s written agreement) to review the student’s written agreement and reconsider the independent study program’s impact on the student’s achievement and well-being. (Education Code § 51747(d).)

6.2 Based on each student’s grade level, their assigned teacher of record will schedule and offer opportunities for synchronous instruction and daily live interaction at least as frequently as set forth in subsections a-b below. (EC § 51747(e).)

“Live interaction” means interaction between the student and Charter School staff, and may include peers, to maintain school connectedness. Examples of live interaction include check-ins, progress monitoring, provision of services, and instruction, and live interaction can be in-person or in the form of internet or telephonic communication.

“Synchronous instruction” means classroom-style instruction, designated small-group instruction, or one-on-one instruction delivered in person or in the form of internet or

telephonic communication by the student's assigned teacher of record, and involving live two-way communication. (EC § 51745.5.)

- a. For students in grades TK-3, inclusive, their assigned teacher of record will schedule and offer opportunities for daily synchronous instruction.
- b. For students in grades 4-12, inclusive, their assigned teacher of record will schedule and offer opportunities for weekly synchronous instruction and daily live interaction.

Charter School will document each student's participation in live interaction and synchronous instruction on each schoolday, as applicable, in whole or in part, for which independent study is provided. A student who does not participate in independent study on a schoolday will be documented as nonparticipatory for that schoolday. (Education Code § 51747.5(c).)

6.3 A student's parent or guardian may request their student return to in-person instruction from independent study by making a written request to Executive Director or designee or their assigned teacher of record. If there is capacity in Charter School's in-person program at the student's grade level, Charter School will transition the student within five schooldays. If there is not capacity in Charter School's in-person program at the student's grade level, Charter School will help the student transition to enrolling in the in-person program offered by their district of residence, will transfer the student's educational records within five schooldays, and offer the student an opportunity to join Charter School's waitlist. (Education Code § 51747(f).)

7. A current written independent study agreement for each independent study student will be maintained on file. Written agreements may include subsidiary agreements, such as course contracts and assignment and work records. Each written agreement will contain the following:
 - a. 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 or guardian regarding a student's academic progress.
 - b. The objectives and methods of study for the student's work, and the methods used to evaluate that work.
 - c. The specific resources, including materials and personnel, which will be made available to the student. These resources will include confirming or providing access to all students to the connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work.
 - d. A statement of the policies adopted herein regarding the maximum length of time allowed between the assignment, the level of satisfactory educational progress, and the number of missed assignments allowed prior to an evaluation of whether or not the student should be allowed to continue in independent study.

- e. The duration of the independent study agreement, including beginning and ending dates for the student’s participation in independent study under the agreement. No independent study agreement will be valid for any period longer than one school year.
- 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 student upon completion.
- g. 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, individuals with exceptional needs in order to be consistent with the student’s IEP or plan pursuant to Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794), students in foster care or experiencing homelessness, and students 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 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 EC § 48915 or 48917, the agreement also will include the statement that instruction may be provided to the student through independent study only if the student is offered the alternative of classroom instruction. (Education Code § 51747(g).)
- i. Charter School will comply with the written independent study agreement signature requirements set forth in Education Code § 51747(g)(9), including:
 - i. For the 2021-22 School Year Only (Must Obtain Signatures Within 30 Days of First Day of Independent Study Instruction): Charter School will obtain a signed written agreement from the student, or the student’s parent or legal 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 student no later than 30 days after the first day of instruction.
 - ii. For School Years After 2021-22 (Must Obtain Signatures Before Independent Study Instruction): Each independent study agreement will be signed, prior to the commencement of independent study, by the student, the student’s parent, legal guardian, or care giver, 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 student. For purposes of this paragraph, “care giver” means a person who has met the requirements of Part 1.5 (commencing with Section 6550) of the Family Code.

- j. Before signing a written agreement, and upon the request of the parent or guardian of a student, the Charter School will conduct a phone, videoconference, or in-person pupil-parent-educator conference or other school meeting during which the student, parent or guardian, and, if requested by the student or parent, an education advocate, may ask questions about the educational options, including which curriculum offerings and nonacademic supports will be available to the student in independent study, before making the decision about enrollment or disenrollment in the various options for learning. (Education Code § 51747(h)(2).)
8. Family Rights and Responsibilities: The independent study program entails a commitment by the parent/guardian and the student. Families participating in independent study agree to:
- a. Support the student, including by monitoring the student’s progress in the independent study program and helping the student track important deadlines (e.g., assignment deadlines).
 - b. Complete the independent study agreement.
 - c. Participate in any interventions recommended by the school to promote academic success.
9. Supervising Teacher Responsibilities:
- a. Each student’s independent study shall be coordinated, evaluated and carried out under the general supervision of a certificated employee of the Charter School. (Education Code § 51747.5.)
 - b. Executive Director or designee shall oversee the teacher(s) who directly supervise independent study on a regular basis and ensure that the teacher(s):
 - i. Complete designated portions of the independent study agreement and add additional information to the agreement when appropriate.
 - ii. Supervise and approve coursework.
 - iii. Design/identify curriculum objectives.
 - iv. Communicate with students as required by the independent study agreement.
 - v. Assess all work that students are required to submit to the teacher.
 - vi. Personally judge the time value of assigned work or work products completed and submitted by the student.
 - vii. Select and save with each independent study agreement, representative samples of the student’s completed and evaluated assignments.
 - viii. Maintain any required records and files on a current basis.
 - ix. When appropriate, determine and assign grades or other approved measures of achievement.
10. Charter School Administrative Responsibilities:

- a. Charter School will not provide independent study students and parents/guardians with funds or items of value that are not provided for other students and parents/guardians. (Education Code § 51747.3(a).)
- b. Charter School may claim apportionment credit for independent study only to the extent of the time value of pupil or student work products, as personally judged in each instance by a certificated teacher. (Education Code § 51747.5(b).)
- c. Charter School will maintain records of the independent study program as required by law. School records maintained by Charter School shall identify all students participating in its independent study program and shall specify the grade level in which each of these students is enrolled.
- d. Charter School will maintain written or computer-based evidence of student engagement that includes, but is not limited to, a grade book or summary document that, for each class, lists all assignments, assessments, and associated grades. This includes documenting each student’s participation in live interaction and synchronous instruction as described above in Section 6.2. (Education Code § 51747.5(c)-(d).)
- e. Records of the independent study program shall be maintained for audit purposes and shall include the following:
 - i. A copy of the Board policy and procedures related to independent study.
 - ii. A separate listing of the students, by grade level, who have participated in independent study identifying units of the curriculum attempted (also known as the “course of study”) and units of the curriculum completed by students, as specified in their independent study agreements.
 - iii. A file of all independent study agreements, with representative samples of each student’s work products and a signed acknowledgement 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.
 - iv. A daily attendance register, as appropriate to the program in which the students are enrolled, separate from classroom attendance records, and maintained on a current basis as time values of student work products are personally judged by a certificated teacher, and reviewed by the supervising teacher if they are two different individuals. (5 C.C.R. § 11703.)

11. Charter School will comply with all applicable law regarding independent study, including ADA-to-certificated employee ratio requirements and course-based independent study requirements (if applicable). (EC § 51745 et seq.; 5 C.C.R. 11700 et seq.)

Adopted: July 26, 2021