



PALISADES CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

Empowering Educational Excellence.

PALISADES CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL VIRTUAL ACADEMY INDEPENDENT STUDY CONTRACT 2024-2025

Student Name:

Parent Name:

Grade Level:

Parent Email:

Student PCHS Email:

Contract Duration: 2024–25

Beginning Date:

End Date:

All virtual classes follow the same semester timeline as the traditional school year with assignments due on a weekly basis. Because of the independent nature of this course, it is important that the teacher, parents/guardians, and student agree to commit the time, energy, and responsibilities needed to complete it successfully.

Program Information:

Academic Delivery: The Virtual Academy content is delivered through online material that students read or listen to independently. Teachers of record will provide a required seminar opportunity on zoom during their designated course period (s) although students who are able, may attend in-person. This seminar is not required but encouraged. Additionally, Virtual Academy Teachers will also be available during each of their Virtual Academy periods for student drop-ins in-person or on Zoom.

The manner, time, frequency, and place for submitting a pupil's assignments, for reporting the pupil's academic progress, and for communicating with a pupil's parent or guardian regarding a pupil's academic progress:

- a. **Manner of Reporting:** Virtual
- b. **Time:** School Hours 8:30-2:46
- c. **Frequency:** Every 5 school days
- d. **Place:** At the school site or online via virtual live connection

Parent Support: Families should contact Virtual Academy supervising teacher, coordinator, and the counselor if their child is having difficulty (academically or emotionally) in a subject area or in the program itself.

Communication: Students are required to check both their PCHS email, PCHS Parent Square communication, and Schoology on a daily basis for messages or updates from the instructor and/ or coordinator unless at a Educational Site, which is handling this.

PCHS Attendance Policy: Student must adhere to the PCHS Attendance policy concerning the "No-Go" list

for school events and activities including but not limited to senior events, athletics etc.

Method of Study: Specific methods of study for each course will be explained on Schoology. Methods of study will include but are not limited to: State Testing, Independent Reading, Problem Solving, Study Projects, Drill & Practice, Computerized Curriculum, Synchronous instruction, Web/Internet Research, and Library Research. Assignments are found on Schoology with directions about learning platforms. All work will be available through the different curricular programs and accessible for independent learning.

Method of Evaluation: All exams are required to be taken with Virtual Academy instructors unless in a specific program where the tests will be proctored at that site or through the IEP case carrier and approved by PCHS. Academic evaluation dates will be designated on the Student Pacing Sheet on Schoology. Evaluations will be available through and aligned with the Virtual Academy curricular program.

Grades: Grades will be entered on the school's Infinite Campus/Schoology portal. This system is accessible to all students and their families. Students and families are responsible for keeping track of grades earned, work completed, and work missing.

Resources: The school will provide appropriate instructional materials (texts) and personnel (tutoring centers and teachers) to assist the student in completing the assigned work. Assignments and specific resources will be designated on the Assignment Sheet/Pacing Plan on Schoology. Use of the school tutorial Study Center, Library, and Math Lab is highly encouraged. Resources must include those reasonably necessary to the achievement of the objectives and must include resources that are normally available to all students on the same terms as the terms on which they are available to all. The school will confirm or provide access to all pupils to the connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work.

Meeting Requirements: Students are expected, but not required, to meet with each teacher during the teacher's academic seminar meeting on Zoom or in-person. Module exams are proctored by a Virtual Academy teacher in a V.A. classroom/zoom. Students are not required to attend the seminar; however, they are encouraged to attend. Teachers will begin a tiered re-engagement for students not attending seminars or falling behind in work.

Board Policy Requirements:

Palisades Charter High School (the "Charter School") may offer independent study to meet the short or long-term educational needs of pupils enrolled in the Charter School. Independent study is an optional educational alternative in which no pupil may be required to participate and is designed to teach the knowledge and skills of the core curriculum. The Charter School shall provide appropriate existing services and resources to enable pupils to complete their independent study successfully.

Participation in independent study shall be limited to staffing capacity and shall be maintained to be lower than 20% of the overall attendance of PCHS. Should interest in independent study exceed capacity, participation shall be determined by public random drawing. Priority for independent study shall be provided to those students with written documentation from a physician that student is unable to attend that states that a student cannot safely attend school in-person even with appropriate safety measures as required by the local, state, and federal departments of health.

The following written policies have been adopted by the Palisades Charter High School Board of Directors for implementation at Charter School:

1. 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.
2. The Executive Director/Principal 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 four (4) assignments in any course in which the pupil is enrolled.
 - b. In the event pupil's educational progress falls below satisfactory levels which is indicated by failing to earn a passing grade in any course in which the pupil is enrolled and/or as determined by the assigned supervising teacher which considers ALL of the following indicators:
 - 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).
 - The completion of assignments, assessments, or other indicators that evidence that the pupil is working on assignments.
 - Learning required 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.

A written record of the findings of any evaluation conducted pursuant to this policy shall be 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.

3. The Charter School shall provide content aligned to grade level standards that is substantially equivalent to in-person instruction. This shall include access to all courses offered by the Charter School for graduation and approved by the UC or CSU as credible under the A-G admissions criteria.
4. The Charter School has adopted tiered reengagement strategies* for the following pupils:
 - a. All pupils who are not generating attendance for more than 10% of required minimum instructional time over four continuous weeks of the Charter School's approved instructional calendar.
 - b. Pupils found not participatory in synchronous instructional offerings pursuant to Education Code Section 51747.5 for more than 50 percent of the scheduled times of synchronous instruction in a school month as applicable by grade span; or
 - c. Pupils who are in violation of the written agreement pursuant to Education Code Section 51747(g).

These procedures shall include local programs intended to address chronic absenteeism, as applicable, with at least all of the following:

- a. Verification of current contact information for each enrolled pupil.
- b. Notification to parents or guardians of lack of participation within one school day of the recording of a non-attendance day or lack of participation;
- c. Outreach from the Charter School to determine pupil needs including connection with health and social services as necessary;
- d. When the evaluation described above under paragraph 2 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.

5. The following plan shall be in place in accordance with Education Code Section 51747(e) for synchronous instruction*:
 - a. For pupils in grades 9-12, inclusive, the plan to provide opportunities for at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year by each pupil's teacher or teachers of record shall be as follows: PCHS teachers will offer virtual and/or in-person office hours two days weekly along with a once weekly virtual and/or in-person instructional seminar.
6. The following plan* shall be utilized to transition pupils whose families wish to return to in-person instruction from independent study expeditiously, and, in no case, later than five instructional days: Within five instructional days of receipt of a communication from a family of their desire to transition their pupil to in-person instruction, PCHS will hold a meeting to consider the timing of the pupil's transition to in-person instruction, the impact of any move mid-semester to the pupil's credit and/or progress towards completion of graduation requirements, and the availability and capacity of the in-person classes to which the pupil wishes to enroll.

The tiered reengagement strategies, plan for synchronous instruction and live interaction, and plan to transition pupils whose families wish to return to in-person instruction shall not apply to pupils who participate in an independent study program for fewer than 16 schooldays in a school year and pupils 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. Local educational agencies shall obtain evidence from appropriately licensed professionals of the need for pupils to participate in independent study pursuant to this subdivision. These sections shall not apply to independent study offered due to school closure or material decrease in attendance for 15 school days or less for affected pupils under one or more of the circumstances described in Education Code Sections 41422 and/or 46392, and 46393 for which the Charter School files an affidavit seeking an allowance of attendance due to emergency conditions.

7. 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, 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 the connectivity and devices adequate to participate in the educational program and complete assigned work.
 - d. A statement of the policies adopted pursuant to subdivisions (a) and (b) of Education Code Section 51747 regarding the maximum length of time allowed between the assignment and the completion of a pupil's assigned work, 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 the beginning and ending dates for the pupil's participation in independent study under the agreement. No independent study agreement shall 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 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 Section 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. For a pupil participating in an independent study program that is scheduled for more than 15 school days, each written agreement shall be signed, before the commencement of 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. For a pupil participating in an independent study program that is scheduled for 5 schooldays or fewer, each written agreement shall be signed during the school year in which the independent study program takes place, by the pupil, the pupil's parent, legal guardian, or caregiver, if the pupil is less than 8 year of age the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of the special education programming of the pupil, as applicable. The written agreement may be signed at any time during the school year, but it is the intent of the Legislature tha parents or guardians of pupils be provided the agreement at or before the beginning of the school year. For purposes of this paragraph caregiver' means a person who has met the requirements of Part 1.5 (commencing with Section 6550) of Division 11 of the Family Code.
 - Written agreements may be signed using an electronic signature that complies with state and federal standards, as determined by the California Department of Education, that may be a marking that is either computer generated or produced by electronic means and is intended by the signatory to have the same effect as a handwritten signature. The use of an electronic signature shall have the same force and effect as the use of a manual signature if the requirements for digital signatures and their acceptable technology, as provided in Section 16.5 of the Government Code and in Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 22000) of Division 7 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, are satisfied.
8. The Charter School shall comply with the Education Code sections 5744 through 51749.3 and the provisions of the Charter Schools Act of 992 and the State Board of Education regulations adopted thereunder.
 9. The Executive Director/Principal may establish regulations to implement these policies in accordance with the law

A written record of the findings of any evaluation conducted pursuant to this policy shall be treated as a mandatory interim pupil record. This 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. A missed appointment shall be considered a "missed assignment" for purposes of the Board Policy.

Objectives: The student will complete the courses registered on Infinite Campus/Schoology. All course

objectives will be consistent with the established charter school’s board policy above and are consistent with state standards. The pupil shall engage in content provided by the Charter School which is aligned to grade level standards that is substantially equivalent to in-person instruction. As a high school, this shall include access to all courses offered by the local educational agency for graduation and approved by the University of California or the California State University as creditable under the A–G admissions criteria. The Assignment Sheet on Schoology will include descriptions of the major objectives and grading policy covered by this agreement and PCHS procedures and policies including the evaluation of student work.

Statement of Academic and Other Supports for Special Populations: The Charter School shall utilize its intervention and re-engagement procedures to address the needs of pupils who are not performing at grade level, or who need support in other areas, such as English Learners, pupils in foster care or pupils who are experiencing homelessness, and/or pupils requiring mental health support. The Charter School complies with the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (“IDEA”) and is committed to meeting the needs of individuals with exceptional needs in order to be consistent with the pupil’s individualized education program (“IEP”). Policies, procedures, and guidelines are in place to ensure that pupils are identified, assessed, and provided a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment. The Charter School complies with Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Sec. 794) and is committed to provide equivalent access to and providing a free appropriate public education to all students with disabilities.

Statement of the Measures of Academic Achievement to be Earned by the Pupil Upon Completion: Students, grades 9-12, shall obtain academic credits towards Charter School graduation requirements as follows.

To be completed by coordinator: Courses and Credits to be Earned Upon Completion of the Semester/Year

Course Name	Credit

Voluntary Statement: It is understood that independent study through the Virtual Academy 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 Section 48915 or 48917, instruction may be provided to the pupil through independent study only if the pupil is offered the alternative of classroom instruction.

Pupil-Parent-Educator Conference: Before signing this written agreement, the parent or guardian of a pupil may request that the Charter School conduct a telephone, videoconference, or in-person pupil-parent-educator conference or other school meeting during which the pupil, parent or guardian, and, if requested by the pupil or parent, an education advocate, may ask questions about the educational options, including which curriculum offerings and nonacademic supports will be available to the pupil in independent study, before making the decision about enrollment or disenrollment in the various options for learning.

By completing the information below all Parties signing below, agree to be bound by the terms of this Contract and the Virtual Academy Student Rules and Responsibilities incorporated herein. This Contract is for students attending the Virtual Academy during the 2024-2025 school year.

By signing my name below and submitting this form to the Virtual Academy, I affirm that I have read the PCHS Virtual Academy Contract on the above pages and agree to its terms¹.

Title	Signature	Date
Pupil		

¹Written agreements may be signed using an electronic signature that complies with state and federal standards, as determined by the California Department of Education that may be a marking that is either computer generated or produced by electronic means and is intended by the signatory to have the same effect as a handwritten signature. The use of an electronic signature shall have the same force and effect as the use of a manual signature if the requirements for digital signatures and their acceptable technology, as provided in Section 16.5 of the Government Code and in Chapter 10 (commencing with Section 22000) of Division 7 of Title 2 of the California Code of Regulations, are satisfied

Title	Signature	Date
Parent/Guardian/Caregiver (if pupil is under the age of 18)		
Certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of independent study		
Certificated employee designated as having responsibility for the dspecial education programming of the pupil, as applicable		