Voices College-Bound Language Academies

Board Meeting

Date and Time

Saturday August 20, 2022 at 1:00 PM PDT

Location

6840 Via Del Oro San Jose, 95119
Alternative Address: 252 Devonshire Blvd. San Carlos CA 94070; 428 Calle Cerro, Morgan Hill CA 95037

Note:
SPANISH TRANSLATION: If you need Spanish audio translation in order to access the Voices Board meeting, please send a request to info@voicescharterschool.com or call Lizzette Ramirez at (408) 791-1609 Ex 1052 at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting. If you would like to make a public comment in Spanish and would like us to translate to English for the Board, please send a request to info@voicescharterschool.com or call Lizzette Ramirez at (408) 791-1609 Ex 1052 at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting.

Si necesita traducción de audio al español para acceder a la reunión de la Mesa Directiva de Voices, envíe una solicitud a info@voicescharterschool.com o llame a Lizzette Ramirez a (408) 791-1609 Ex 1052 por lo menos 24 horas antes del inicio de la reunión. Si desea hacer un comentario público en español y desea que lo traduzcamos al inglés para la Mesa Directiva, envíe una solicitud a info@voicescharterschool.com o llame a Lizzette Ramirez a (408) 791-1609 Ex 1052 por lo menos 24 horas antes del inicio de la reunión.

Instructions For Presentations To The Board By Parents and Citizens
PUBLIC COMMENTS OF PERSONS DESIRING TO ADDRESS THE BOARD
At this time, members of the public may address the Board on any issue within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board that is not listed on this agenda. Members of the public may also address the Board on an agenda item before or during the Board's consideration of the item. Submitted comments may be read into the record to the extent practicable based upon factors such as the length of the agenda and available time. Comments

received within the window of the board meeting whether read or not, will be shared with the board and noted in the minutes.
Individual commenters are limited to a single comment per agenda item.
Public comments will be accepted prior to, and during the board meeting, subject to limitations discussed here.
Comments may be read in the order received and will be accepted up to the point each agenda item is heard, acted upon or when the Board President has completed the call for public comment on that agenda item.
Comments submitted during the board meeting but after the agenda item has been called for a vote, or has already been completed will not be read publicly, but may be entered into the record.
Comments should be limited to 400 words or less, and will need to be readable within the time allocated for each comment. These presentations are limited to no more than 15 minutes total and 3 minutes per person. A full comment may not be read if the length of time to read the comment exceeds the designated limit. No action can be taken on an item not on the agenda at this time but may be referred to the administration or put on a future agenda.

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1. When addressing the Board, speakers are requested to state their name and address and adhere to the limits set forth.
2. Any public records relating to an agenda item for an open session of the Board which are distributed to all, or majority of all, of the Board members shall be available for public inspection at 6840 Via Del Oro, Suite #160. San Jose, CA 95119.
3. REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION WILL BE PROVIDED FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY: Pursuant to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, any individual with a disability who requires reasonable accommodation to attend or participate in this meeting may request assistance by contacting Lizzette Ramirez at (408)791-1609 Ex.1052
4. All matters listed under the consent agenda are considered by the Board to be routine and will be approved/enacted by the Board in one motion in the form listed below. Unless specifically requested by a Board member for further discussion or removed from the agenda, there will be no discussion of these items prior to the Board votes on them. The executive director recommends approval of all consent items.
5. Members of the public attending a meeting conducted via teleconference need not give their name when entering the conference call.
6. All time duration are estimates and may run shorter or longer.

Agenda

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
I.	**Opening Items**			**1:00 PM**
	Opening Items			

		Purpose	Presenter	Time
A.	Record Attendance		Servando Sandoval	
B.	Call the Meeting to Order		Servando Sandoval	
C.	Public Comment (on items not on the Agenda)		Servando Sandoval	

Non-agenda items: No individual presentation shall be more than 3 minutes and the total time for this purpose shall not exceed 15 minutes. Ordinarily, Board members will not respond to presentations and no action can be taken. However, the board may give direction to staff following a presentation.

II. Board Business

A.	Approve Independent Studies Policy	Vote		

III. Closing Items

A.	Adjourn Meeting	Vote	Servando Sandoval	

Coversheet

Approve Independent Studies Policy

Section: II. Board Business
Item: A. Approve Independent Studies Policy
Purpose: Vote
Submitted by:
Related Material: Independent Study Policy 08.20.2022 (4883-0448-4399.v1).docx

Student

INDEPENDENT STUDY POLICY

Voices College-Bound Language Academies, which operates Voices College-Bound Language Academy, Voices College-Bound Language Academy at West Contra Costa, Voices College-Bound Language Academy at Stockton, Voices College-Bound Language Academy at Morgan Hill, and Voices College-Bound Language Academy at Mount Pleasant (collectively referred to herein as the "Charter School") may offer independent study ("IS") 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.

No student is required to participate in IS. When possible, parents are to request IS no fewer than five (5) school days prior to the ~~absence~~desired start of IS. In an extenuating circumstance (e.g., a serious illness, injury or family emergency), and with School Leader~~Principal~~ approval, a certificated staff member/teacher may work with the parent to implement IS in an expedited manner.

The following written policies have been adopted by the Voices College-Bound Language Academies Board of Directors for implementation at Charter School:

1. "Short--term" independent study as an optional alternative instructional strategy for the purpose of allowing students to achieve curriculum objectives is permitted during periods of absence of at least one (1) school day, not to exceed fourteen (14) cumulative school days per school year.

2. "Long--term" independent study is defined as independent study for fifteen (15) or more school days in one school year. As the Charter School offers classroom-based programming, long term independent study is intended to provide ongoing progress towards course objectives despite extenuating circumstances which may include but are not limited to health conditions which prevent participation in in-person instruction.

3. Short- and long--term independent study may be offered at the sole discretion of the School Leader ("SL"). Instances of when to provide IS:

   - Special assignments extending the content of regular courses of instruction.
   - Individualized study in a particular area of interest or in a subject not currently available in the regular school curriculum.
   - Continuing and special study during travel.
   - Volunteer community service activities and leadership opportunities that support and strengthen pupil achievement.
   - Individualized study for a pupil whose health would be put at risk by in-person instruction, as determined by the parent or guardian of the pupil, or a pupil who is unable to attend in-person instruction due to a quarantine due to exposure to, or infection with, COVID-19, pursuant to local or state public health guidance.

~~3.~~4. The SL's considerations may include, but are not limited to, budgetary, staffing and other operational considerations for their school.

~~4.~~5. Long-term i~~I~~ndependent study is available to Transitional Kindergarten through 8th grade students currently enrolled in the Charter School whose health would be put at risk by in-person instruction, as determined by a medical professional or the parent or guardian of the student. A limited number of independent study spaces will be available and therefore priority of available spaces will be determined by the criteria listed below. If interest in independent study exceeds the number of available spaces, a lottery will be conducted to determine enrollment in the program.

a. Medical condition of a student that would put them at a health risk by participating in in-person instruction, as verified by a doctor,

b. Medical condition of a student that would put them at a health risk by participating in in-person instruction, as attested to by parent or guardian,

c. Health concern of parent or guardian that cannot be remedied/addressed by the school

6. Students with disabilities may participate in IS if their Individual Education Plan("IEP") team makes the decision that they can receive a free appropriate public education ("FAPE") in that setting.

~~5.~~7. 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.

~~6.~~8. The School Leader~~Principal~~ or designee has the right to deny requests should it be determined that independent study is not in the best academic interest of the student. The SL's considerations may include, but are not limited to, the student's current academic standing, the student's grade level, the timing during the grading period, the purpose of the absence for which independent study is requested, previous participation in independent study, and input from teachers, MTSS team or IEP team as applicable. The SL shall not deny a request for independent study on the basis of race, ethnicity, age, gender, mental or physical disability or on the basis of any other protected characteristic, either actual or perceived.

~~7.~~9. No independent study agreement shall be valid for any period longer than one (1) school year. The Charter School~~s~~ will consult with the student's parent or guardian to determine the appropriate length of time, and request, but not require, a commitment to participate in independent study that is aligned with the Charter School's grading term or other length of time deemed to be in the best academic interest of the student.

~~8.~~10. The School Leader~~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 two (2) assignments during any period of five (5) school days.

b. In the event a student's educational progress falls below satisfactory levels as determined by the Charter School's MTSS, SST or Tiered Engagement procedures which consider 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.
   v. Students' school attendance rates.
   vi. Students' cChronic absenteeism rates.

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.

~~9.~~11. 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.

~~10.~~12. ~~For students who participate in independent study for fifteen (15) or more days in a school year, t~~The Charter School has adopted tiered reengagement strategies* for all pupils who are not generating attendance for more than 10 percent of required minimum instructional time over four continuous weeks of the Charter School's approved instructional calendar~~three (3) school days or 60% of the instructional days in a school week~~, 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 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~~are as follows~~:

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 absence or lack of participation;
c. Outreach from the Charter School to determine pupil needs including connection with health and social services as necessary, including , but not limited to referral

to nurse, counselor, social worker, or other student support for case management and counseling, coordinate with protective services/child welfare services, law enforcement, courts, public health care agencies, or government agencies, or medical, mental health, and oral health providers to receive necessary services;

d. A clear standard for requiring a pupil-parent-educator conference to review a pupil's written agreement, and reconsider the independent study program's impact on the pupil's achievement and well-being, consistent with the policies adopted pursuant to paragraph (4) of subdivision (g) of Education Code Section 51747~~When the evaluation described above under paragraph 8.b.iv. is triggered to consider whether remaining in independent study is in the best interest of the pupil, a pupil-parent-education 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~~.

~~11.~~13. ~~For students who participate in independent study for fifteen (15) or more days in a school year, t~~The following plan shall be in place in accordance with Education Code Section 51747(e) for synchronous instruction and live interaction*:

a. For pupils in transitional kindergarten through grade 3, inclusive, the plan to provide opportunities for daily synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year by each pupil's ~~assigned supervising~~ teacher or teachers of record shall be as follows: students participating in long-term independent study will be enrolled in a live, daily, scheduled online class where they may engage with peers, and receive synchronous instruction and support. Instruction will be delivered in the form of video conferencing or other form of live communication between the pupil and the supervising teacher.

b. For pupils in grades 4-8, inclusive, the plan to provide opportunities for daily live interaction between the pupil and a certificated or non-certificated employee of the Charter School and at least weekly synchronous instruction for all pupils throughout the school year by each pupil's ~~assigned supervising~~ teacher or teachers of record shall be as follows: students participating in long-term independent study will be enrolled in a live, daily, scheduled online class where they may engage with peers, and receive synchronous instruction and support.

~~12.~~14. 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.

~~13.~~15. 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 or teachers of record and the pupil.

~~14.~~16. ~~For students who participate in independent study for fifteen (15) or more days in a school year, t~~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 (5) instructional days:

a. The Charter School will alert front office staff and the pupil's teachers that the pupil ~~-~~will be returning to in-person instruction;
b. The Charter School will provide the pupil with their weekly schedule and any other ~~-~~necessary material;
c. The Charter School will check-in with the student, the morning of return, to ensure the ~~-~~pupil is ready for classes;
d. The Charter School will monitor the pupil's progress for two weeks and check-in with ~~-~~the pupil at least twice over the two-week period.

** The tiered reengagement strategies, plan for synchronous instruction and live interaction, and plan to transition pupils whose families with to return to in-person instruction shall not apply to pupils who participate in an independent study program for fewer than 15 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.*

~~15.~~17. Voices shall maintain on file a written independent study master agreement for each student participating in IS. ~~Before the IS may begin, the master agreement shall be signed and dated by the student, the student's parent, the certificated employee who has been designated as having responsibility for the general supervision of IS, and all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the student.~~ A current written agreement shall be maintained on file for each independent study pupil, including but not limited to, all of the following:

Commented [1]: Stated below.

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 Education Code Section 51747, subdivisions (a) and (b) 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 14 school days, e~~E~~ach 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~~all persons who have direct responsibility for providing assistance to the pupil~~. Beginning in the 2022–23 school year, 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. 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.

~~16.~~18. 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.

~~17.~~19. The Executive Director ~~shall~~ may establish regulations to implement these policies in accordance with the law.

~~18.~~20. Voices recognizes that families may not evenly distribute student's work assignments over weekdays. However, due to strict State law requirements for charter school attendance, the Charter School expects each student to be engaged in an educational activity required of them in the assignment on each weekday that Voices is in session, and requires that this "daily engagement" shall be documented on a daily basis in the student log by the parent/guardian. This should not be read to prohibit schoolwork on weekends and should not be read to dictate the manner in which a family distributes the assignments over the independent study period.

~~19.~~21. A parent/guardian shall refrain from documenting any "daily engagement" on a day where a student did not engage in any educational activity required of them by the assignment. Work done on weekends or other days when school is not in session cannot be used to "make-up" weekdays where no "daily engagement" occurred.

~~20. For the 2021-22 school year only, written agreements may be completed and signed as provided above no later than 30 days after the first day a pupil commences independent study.~~